

Integrated leadership: How principals and teachers share  
transformational and instructional influence

Manuscript to be published in an upcoming edition of

Journal of School Leadership

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The project from which this study draws its data was conducted under the auspices of the  
Wisconsin Center for Education Research and the Center on Organization of Schools and  
supported by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and  
Improvement (Grant No. R117Q000005-95). The opinions expressed are those of the  
authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the supporting agencies.

## Abstract

Transformational leadership by the principal appears to be a pre-condition of shared instructional leadership in schools, but does not guarantee that principals and teachers will collaborate on curriculum and instruction. The present study, a content analysis of existing case studies, explores the ways in which teachers respond to transformational leadership by the principal, with particular attention to the influence and conditions that activate interdependent relationships and enhance both shared transformational leadership and shared instructional leadership. A contrast school, where shared instructional leadership did not take hold, suggests that structures and processes that organize teachers' work differently do not automatically result in the kinds of interactions associated with quality teaching and learning.

## Indexing

Instructional Leadership

Transformational Leadership

Principal Leadership

Teacher Leadership

Shared Leadership

Two models of principal leadership – instructional and transformational – have dominated theoretical discussions and research in the current reform era that traces its roots to the 1980s. Research taking shared or distributed perspectives, in addition, has contributed to our understandings of how leadership practice sufficient to improving educational quality necessarily engages principals and teachers. In this study, we build on our previous research findings to discern how principals and teachers contribute mutually to leadership in high-performing schools (Marks & Printy, 2003). The qualitative analysis presented here supports and extends our earlier quantitative work. Taken together, the findings of our studies offer evidence that schools prosper when principals and teacher leaders, whether formal or informal, integrate transformational and instructional leadership approaches in their interactions with others. Principals who are transformational leaders play a key role in establishing the school as an intellectual environment and teachers, sharing the responsibility for transformational leadership, enhance this intellectual atmosphere, model what it means to be professional educators, extend personal concern for colleagues and inspire them to their best efforts. In sharing instructional leadership, by way of simple definition, principals and teachers mutually influence curriculum, instruction, and assessment. In schools where leadership integrated in these ways occurs, instruction and achievement tend to be of high quality (Marks & Printy, 2003). Our intention in the current study is to present images of such integrated leadership in schools and to seek an understanding of the interdependencies that occur in the enactment of such leadership by the principal and by teachers.

## **Background**

A brief review of a previous quantitative study (Marks & Printy, 2003) establishes the focus for the current investigation. A first stage of the earlier study explored the relationship between transformational leadership (by the principal) and shared instructional leadership (mutual influence of principal and teachers). An intriguing pattern emerged from scatterplot analysis, namely, shared instructional leadership existed in only half the schools where principals demonstrated relatively high levels of transformational leadership. As shown in Figure 1, teachers in 13 schools in the sample of 22<sup>1</sup> reported that their principals exhibited characteristics of above average transformational leaders. However, researchers studying these schools detected above average shared influence for curriculum, instruction, and assessment (i.e. shared instructional leadership) in only 7 of the schools (the High-High quadrant).

<b>Shared Instructional Leadership</b>	High		High-High Leadership 7 schools
	Low	Low-Low Leadership 9 schools	High-Low Leadership 6 schools
		Low	High
		<b>Principal Transformational Leadership</b>	

Figure 1: Leadership Patterns from Quantitative Study (Marks & Printy, 2003) Principal Transformational Leadership and Shared Instructional Leadership are standardized measures, M=0, SD=1. Schools scoring Low are below average for the sample; schools scoring High are above average.

These results were interpreted to mean that transformational leadership, while proving a necessary condition for shared instructional leadership, does not guarantee that principals and teachers will collaborate to a high degree on curriculum, instruction, and assessment issues.

The second stage of the previous study evaluated the importance of the High-High leadership condition (Figure 1) to the quality of instruction and student achievement. Quantitative hierarchical linear models, contrasting the High-High schools to all others, suggest that teaching quality and authentic student learning prospered when shared instructional leadership occurred in tandem with transformational leadership. (Schools in the High-High quadrant are those with Integrated Leadership, also referred to as IL schools.)

The original plan for our current study was to seek understanding of why transformational leadership by the principal appears to be a necessary, but insufficient, condition for activating shared instructional leadership and to explore the variety of ways in which teachers responded to transformational principals, with particular attention to the influence and conditions that appeared to activate shared instructional leadership. Our focus broadened a bit when we realized that teachers, as well as principals, contributed transformational influence to the leadership present in these schools.

Analysis for the current study focused primarily on the seven schools where principals exercised high levels of both transformational and shared instructional leadership, though, due to space limitations, we illustrate the lessons learned from those schools with portraits of three schools. We begin with a review of the relevant leadership models, shared transformational leadership and shared instructional leadership. We then

present a cross-case analysis of three representative schools, locating the interdependencies in principals' and teachers' enactment of transformational and instructional leadership. We also present a contrast case (a school from the High-Low quadrant in Figure 1) as evidence of how transformational leadership by the principal might be insufficient to activate shared leadership by teachers.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Leadership, as we understand it, is a relationship that influences organizational members to work toward achieving organizational goals. Transformational leadership influences followers to go beyond normal work requirements and strive to reach their fullest potential to advance the work of the school. While principals are central agents in this type of leadership, teachers are equally capable and important inspirational sources. If leadership is instructional, the influence relationship is oriented toward improvement of instructional, curricular, and assessment practices to improve pedagogical quality and to raise student achievement. Shared instructional leadership defines a relationship where both principal and teachers influence core instructional processes. Evidence that transformational leadership is a necessary but insufficient condition for the emergence of shared instructional leadership (Marks & Printy, 2003) suggests that these leadership forms might interact in some fashion. The leadership models discussed next provide the foundation for the subsequent analysis.

### **Shared Instructional Leadership**

A powerful articulation of instructional leadership drawn from effective schools research was offered by Rosenholtz (1985):

Principals of effective schools have a unitary mission of improved student learning, and their actions convey certainty that these goals can be attained. Such actions include recruiting outstanding teachers who have goals similar to their own and to those of other staff, organizationally buffering teachers to ensure that their efforts are directed toward raising student achievement, monitoring the academic progress teachers make, supplying additional technical assistance to needy teachers, and providing – mostly in concert with teaching colleagues – the opportunities to establish strategies to achieve instructional goals. Because the work of these principals pivots around improving student achievement, teachers have specific, concrete goals toward which to direct their efforts and know precisely when those efforts produce the desired effects. They are further encouraged by a supportive collegial group that lends ideas and assistance where needed. In turn, by achieving goals of student learning, teachers are provided with necessary motivation to continue to produce. The more teachers succeed with students, the greater their certainty that it is possible to succeed and the greater their experimentation procuring success. (p. 354-355)

As with others writing about effective schools, Rosenholtz put the principal in a central position and placed heavy emphasis on organizational goals, rational planning, and action. Critical principal actions included selecting capable teachers who embraced the school goals, protecting teachers' technical work with students, monitoring performance, and offering assistance where needed, all means by which principals can influence the core instructional technologies, even if indirectly. Importantly, Rosenholtz also suggested that principals, alone, could not exert sufficient influence to engage

teachers optimally. Principals should mobilize teachers toward collective efforts as the best means for achieving the unitary goal of student achievement; however, she noted, teachers provide their colleagues with essential technical support for teaching as well as motivational support to continue working toward the goal. From her observations, quality teaching and learning occurred in schools where teachers dedicated collective efforts to achieve desired results – in the direction established by the principal.

The image of the principal as instructional leader presented by Rosenholtz was more nuanced than the heroic, top-down approach sometimes associated with effective schools research (Hallinger, 1992, 2005). The reality was that typical principals did not provide sufficient instructional leadership. Administrative preparation programs did not prepare principals for this role, and school districts generally failed to provide adequate technical assistance, such as coaches, to fledgling principals. Moreover, the effects of principal influence on teaching and learning could not be demonstrated empirically (Cuban, 1984; Murphy & Hallinger, 1987).

The growing recognition that teachers had both the professional expertise and the willingness to make curricular and instructional decisions encouraged principals to expand the decision-making of teachers (Marks & Louis, 1997; Glanz & Neville, 1997; Malen, Ogawa, & Kranz, 1990; Serviovanni, 1991). To meet the changing needs of students, reformers proposed that schools restructure governance to engage teachers in designing sophisticated approaches to teaching and learning. Teachers, who knew how to help students learn, needed discretion to make curricular and instructional decisions (Sykes, 1990). The idea of teachers as leaders gained momentum since it was clear that instructional reform had a better chance of success when teachers participated fully

through roles as site coordinators, lead teachers, and professional developers (Conley & Goldman, 1994; Little, 1993; Smylie & Denny, 1990). For the principal, a new image rapidly took hold, the “leader of instructional leaders” (Glickman, 1989, p. 6). A highly divergent and largely atheoretical literature on teacher leadership has emerged since that time (York Barr & Duke, 2004), with recent efforts bringing more focus, such as Mangin and Stoelinga’s (2008) volume on formal instructional teacher leadership roles.

*Shared instructional leadership*, from our perspective, acknowledges the critical contributions of both principals and teachers to the central activities of schooling: curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Principals and teachers, together, craft a leadership relationship that promotes an educational program characterized by focus, coherence, and consistency. Educational researchers currently working with shared leadership ideas have moved beyond the study of teacher leadership to describe how leaders and followers construct leadership around curriculum, instruction, and assessment, variously termed shared leadership (Marks & Printy, 2003; Chrispeels, 2004), distributed leadership (Gronn, 2002; Spillane, 2006), parallel leadership (Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson, & Hann, 2002), or leadership capacity (Lambert, 2006).

### **Shared Transformational Leadership**

Functioning as the “leader of instructional leaders” (Glickman, 1989, p. 6) and adjusting to decentralization and new governance processes placed new demands on principals. Those writing about and researching formal school leaders adopted the transformational leadership model as the most appropriate guide for optimizing new routines and authority relationships in restructuring schools (Leithwood, 1994).

Transformational leadership, introduced by Burns (1978) and specified by Bass (1985), set off a rapid course of theorizing and research in multiple organizational contexts, including schools. The transformational approach to leading emphasized reciprocal relationships as the basis of influence rather than authority, power, or exchange-based influence. Under the transformational model, the leader seeks to redefine the purposes of organizational work to capture the values, aspirations, needs, and expectations of leaders and followers and to allocate resources toward the common good (Burns, 1978). By appealing to the personal goals and values of organizational members, transformational leaders seek to raise the level of human conduct and the aspirations of leaders and followers. Feeling trust, admiration, loyalty, and respect for the transformational leader, followers are motivated to do more to advance the work of the organization, going beyond basic expectations. Four transformational dimensions, as specified by Bass (1998), include (1) Idealized influence, (2) Intellectual stimulation, (3) Individual consideration, and (4) Inspirational motivation (also referred to as 4 Is). Through *idealized influence* the leader arouses strong follower emotions and identification with the leader. The *intellectual stimulation* of the leader increases awareness of problems and encourages new perspectives. Using *individualized consideration*, the leader provides encouragement, support, and coaching. As part of *inspirational motivation*, the leader communicates an appealing vision, invokes symbols and metaphors, and models appropriate behavior (Bass, 1998). Many theorists agree that transformational leadership is more far-reaching and satisfying to followers than hierarchical, exchange-based influence (Bass, 1985).

Using the 4 I specification, recent work has examined transformational leadership at the group level.<sup>2</sup> The central idea is that a shared system of perceptions, expectations, beliefs or understandings create the context for collective action and group identity critical to shared leadership (Avolio, Sivasubraminiam, Murry, Jung, & Garger, 2003). In essence, as group identity strengthens, the mental model each member holds about what the group values, accepts, or rejects influences both the individual and collective actions of all members (Wenger, 1998). Being part of a group can inspire and motivate members to reach performance levels beyond expectations in much the same way that an individual leader influences followers to extraordinary efforts (Bass, 1985). Thus, shared leadership of the group might add incrementally to the effect of leadership by an individual leader, in much the same way that team or collective efficacy (group level) has been shown to add to the self efficacy of team members (individual level) in predicting team performance (Gully, Joshi & Incalcaterra, 2001). These findings suggest that transformational leadership, in addition to instructional leadership, can be a shared phenomenon. Indeed, an essential leadership contribution of teachers is that they inspire, support, and motivate one another to continue to refine their practice as needed to achieve success with students, clearly demonstrating transformational influence.

*Shared transformational leadership*, as we apply the term, highlights the ideal influence, intellectual stimulation, individual consideration, and inspirational motivation of the principal, yet recognizes that the same qualities can be taken up and extended by teachers. Indeed, while our earlier quantitative study did not examine the possibility that teachers contribute transformational leadership to the school leadership equation, the case studies we review for the current account offer substantial evidence on that point.

## **Integrating Shared Instructional and Transformational Forms**

Both instructional and transformational models are consistent with the notion that leadership emerges from all levels of the school organization. Principals practicing instructional leadership in effective schools mobilize teachers' concerted efforts toward improvement through collegial action (Rosenholtz, 1985). Both formal and informal influence by teachers, individually and collectively, establishes professional norms for all teachers' work and creates a common culture inviting teacher leaders to step forward. Because transformational leaders seek to engage all organizational members in setting organizational goals and continuously improving practices, they tap the expertise and leadership of teachers, whose influence subsequently extends throughout a faculty, inspiring and sustaining the best efforts of teaching colleagues. Whether the label "instructional" or "transformational" is attached, leadership in schools can be understood as a shared property. From either leadership perspective, the achievement of school goals depends on the direction and support of the principal and the influence and focused engagement of competent teachers.

In truth, while quantitative methods such as the utilization of surveys permit the isolation of transformational and instructional forms based on the content of questions, these forms are likely to cohere in practice. As such, it is sometimes difficult with case study data to disentangle a transformational behavior from an instructional one or determine whether any specific action or comment represents instructional or transformational influence. These challenges also underscore the interdependent nature of leadership enacted by principals and teachers we wish to highlight with the term *Integrated Leadership*. (Leithwood and Mascall, 2008, who find benefits of shared or

collective leadership on student learning, also recognize the difficulty in sorting out types of leadership influence.)

Highlighting interdependencies among multiple leaders and followers is an approach taken by other researchers investigating the school leadership shared by teachers and principals (Gronn, 2002; Spillane, 2006) and their work is compatible with our approach. Gronn (2002) points out that most research on shared conceptions of leadership assumes either an additive approach (dispersal of leadership without coordination) or a holistic approach (dispersal of leadership with coordination). Additive leadership is simply the sum of the leadership parts, as various individuals undertake tasks that enable work to be accomplished (see also Firestone, 1996). Holistic demonstrations of leadership are more than the sum of its parts, seen as “concertive action, rather than aggregated behavior” (Gronn, 2002, p. 656). These demonstrations reflect three main patterns: informal, spontaneous forms of collaboration; emergent interpersonal synergies that develop as colleagues work together closely; and action regularized through institutionalized structures. Several of these are compatible with our understanding of integrated leadership, as we point out in the discussion of results.

The study presented here adds to the research base by detailing the enactment of an integrated model of leadership. Specifically, we focus on the intersection of shared forms of transformational and instructional leadership models as they are reflected in the work of principals and teachers in a set of restructured schools and on the interdependencies that result. We maintain the importance of the principal’s transformational leadership as an activating influence – a necessary condition, in other words – for shared forms of leadership to emerge.

## **Research Questions**

To this point, we have summarized shared conceptualizations of two dominant models of school leadership: instructional and transformational. The purpose of the present study is to arrive at a better understanding of how these theoretically distinct approaches to leadership intersect so that we might refine our conceptualization of integrated school leadership. Given our assumption that leadership is dependent on and works through relationships, we explore the nature of interactions among all school members as reported in the cases while also summarizing the distinct leadership contributions of principals and teachers. Finally, we search out interdependencies among those involved in leadership. At each stage, we offer images from a contrast school which has limited leadership. The investigation is guided by the following research questions:

- 1) What evidence do the cases offer for transformational leadership and instructional leadership by principals? Similarly, how do the cases show teachers contributing to these types of leadership?
- 2) What factors explain why transformational principals activate shared instructional leadership in some schools but not in others?

## **METHOD**

### **Sample and Data**

The study reported in this article is a content analysis of a subset of extensive case studies, each of which follows a common outline, prepared by researchers at the Center on Organization and Restructuring of Schools for the School Restructuring Study (SRS) from 1992-1994. More detailed information on the SRS study may be found in Berends

and King (1992) and Newmann and Associates (1996). A brief review of the SRS study and sample schools can be found in our earlier quantitative study that prompted the investigation reported here (Marks & Printy, 2003). The entire SRS sample comprised 24 schools, including 8 elementary, 8 middle, and 8 high schools. During each school's study year, teams of three researchers spent a week in the fall and a week in the spring at the school. The data collection process was extensive at each site, including interviews with school and district administrators and with teachers and other staff members (generally 20-30 in each school). Researchers also observed governance and professional meetings and collected written documents pertinent to the school's restructuring efforts.

Our previous study also employed additional data collected by the SRS team, including a survey asking teachers about their instructional practices, professional activities, and perceptions of their school and its organization, as well as SRS research teams' assessments of school leadership and other organizational dimensions. School performance data for the previous study came from expert rubric-based ratings of the intellectual quality of mathematics and social studies teachers' instructional and assessment practices and the quality of student work on authentic measures of assessment.

The subset of schools we use for analysis in the present study are those that had above average scores on indexes of transformational leadership and shared instructional leadership (Integrated Leadership or IL). In this report, we select three representative schools to illustrate the findings of our analysis. We also present a contrast case of a school with Limited Leadership (LL) in order to consider how individuals in a school with a transformational principal fail to engage in shared instructional leadership. As

indicated earlier, we go beyond our initial intentions to understand the important contribution of teachers' transformational leadership to integrated leadership.

### **Analytic Approach**

The original data collection framework for the SRS case studies was organized around concepts central to restructured schools such as authentic instruction, equity, empowerment, professional community, reflective dialogue, assessment and accountability, use of community resources, and influences by external agencies. Within each category, researchers deliberately sought evidence for leadership (that is, every section above had sub-sections related to leadership). We believe that these data provide valid and important insight into the leadership relations between principals and teachers in the schools and how principals and teachers exercised instructional leadership.

Because these restructured schools were studied in the mid 90s, questions of the reliability of the data are important. Professional practices and organizational structures that set these schools apart then are more common today, such as faculty involvement in decision making, faculty presenting to colleagues as professional development, alternate grouping structures such as families or houses, and efforts at personalizing schooling for students. Importantly, validity and reliability concerns were present as we worked because the second author was part of the original SRS research team.

As with original research, the analyst taking a secondary look at case studies must make public the process by which the data were “compressed and rearranged so as to be credible” (Anfara, Brown & Mangione, 2002; Lincoln, 2001, p. 5). Simply, the researcher must interpret and translate what was learned in analyzing across the original cases into text that communicates new understandings to the reader (VanMaanen, 1988).

The following section details this process of interpretation and translation to an application of leadership theory (Anfara, Brown & Mangione, 2002).

The current content analysis of the cases involved multiple iterations. The first stage involved reading the case study reports for each of the seven schools in the Integrated Leadership quadrant and preparing a visual map for each school of salient details highlighted by the original SRS research team. A cross-case analysis followed, which resulted in identifying themes associated with schools in this category. We then refined these codes as applicable to Rosenholtz's review of instructional leadership and Bass's model of transformational leadership, and shared leadership. Using these codes, we conducted a content analysis of the case studies, reviewing them carefully for evidence of leadership by school principals and teachers. We present evidence from three schools with Integrated Leadership as the basis for this article. As a last step, we examined the case of the contrast school to glean insight into conditions that enable transformational leaders to activate shared instructional leadership.

## **RESULTS**

We present the cases of the three schools with IL in several stages. In developing the cases, we identify the restructuring programs in place, introduce the principals, and explore the professional and personal relationships among principals and teachers, important because leadership has its basis for influence in reciprocal relationships. Next we summarize salient details of shared transformational leadership and shared instructional leadership. To do so, we employ Bass's (1985) 4 Is of transformational leadership (idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, individual consideration, and

inspirational motivation) and Rosenholtz's (1986) five characteristics of instructional leadership (unitary goal of student achievement, maintaining quality staff, buffering the technical core, opportunities to establish strategies, and monitoring progress toward goals). To highlight integrated leadership, we point to interdependencies among principals and teachers as we consider a key activity structure in the school related to quality instruction (Gronn, 2002). Following the three IL cases, we discuss another SRS school, a contrast case in which the principal received high transformational leadership scores but where shared instructional leadership was not in evidence (from the Low-Low category).

*Ashley Elementary School* is a K-5 school located in the deep South. As a result of a county restructuring plan to achieve better racial balance, one-third of the 652 students were African American and the remainder white. At the time of data collection, restructuring elements included site-based management for budgeting, hiring, and curriculum, teacher teaming for instruction, and an advisory council with administrators, teachers, parents and community members.

Shared transformational leadership originated from the principal, Mrs. Patricia Cooke, the central figure for change, as she encouraged teacher innovation and fostered a professional culture of continual growth and experimentation. For teachers, peer pressure increased involvement in many aspects of the school: membership on hiring committees, advocating for new instructional programs, writing grants, attending workshops and conferences, and participating in the yearly Saturday Showcase, an educators' conference organized by Ashley drawing participants from a four state area.

Teachers articulated the belief that all students can learn and that all teachers are responsible for student achievement. Faculty at Ashley commented on the encouragement and support, recognition, appreciation, and motivation they received from other faculty as well as from the principal. Teachers believed that they could go to any other faculty member for ideas or help with problems. As Mrs. Cooke said, “We like each other, trust each other, support each other.” Shared responsibility was enhanced through a culture of high expectations and support for professional growth.

Teachers acknowledged their principal to have characteristics of a transformational leader. Because of her reputation as a stellar teacher, Mrs. Cooke served as a powerful role model for the staff. Her commitment to restructuring set the tone for an organization where continuous learning, intellectual discussion, and improvement were normative. Of her encouragement for risk-taking, one teacher commented, “If you’re not in change mode, you’re not serving kids.” From another, “They want you to take risks, so if you do and you fail, it’s okay. [The principal] likes to hear the fact that you tried.” Demonstrating her awareness of teachers’ skills, she had an uncanny ability for knowing exactly when teachers were ready to undertake new challenges and motivated them in those directions. She inspired them with her confidence in their ability and pushed them out of their comfort zones. As one of her teachers said of her motivation, “She draws people out and then she turns it over to you. Next thing you know you’re handling this and you don’t want to handle it, but you feel so good about it.”

Perhaps because the Ashley teachers identified so strongly with the principal and her vision for the school, they stepped into leadership roles in specific domains such as professional development, grant writing, scheduling, action planning, or advocating for at

risk students. As one teacher noted, “Every teacher has...her own little story, her own little horn, her own something about her, and she wants to grow even more fully. I think we all have some unique something about us that we can share and give here.” Teachers’ modeling of leadership inspired others to step forward. Thus, teachers recognized and appreciated others, not in a way that promoted competition, but in a way that contributed to an atmosphere of care and willing assistance. Teachers took a school-wide perspective for instructional processes and showed concern for all students, not just those in their own classes. Shared responsibility often evolved from shared decision making. As one teacher said, such participation “makes you feel like a professional.” In these ways, teachers, as transformational leaders, influenced their colleagues.

Shared instructional leadership, perhaps, derived from the strong relationships that were the hallmark of Mrs. Cooke’s transformational leadership. She targeted her efforts and those of her staff to curriculum and instruction, reflecting both her background as a teacher and her focus on student achievement. She hired, with teachers’ consultation, qualified teachers who could meet her high expectations for instruction; at the same time, she provided adequate resources and training for their work. The principal was up to date with student performance because she regularly reviewed student grades, and she did not hesitate to discuss necessary improvement with individual teachers or with the staff at grade level meetings and building level meetings. The kind of monitoring she was known for might be considered intrusive by teachers in other schools exhibiting less transformational leadership. One teacher reported saying to Mrs. Cooke, “I think the reason you get away with that is because ...everybody knows there’s such an overriding love for them and for kids. You get away with things that other people don’t get away

with.” This quote suggests that the principal’s transformational approach eased the way with teachers for her more directive instructional behavior.

Teachers’ instructional leadership reinforced and amplified the leadership intentions of the principal. The Ashley teachers’ community held strong norms that teachers would work hard; this collective influence established standards and normative pressure to change for teachers who didn’t meet them. One teacher described the faculty this way: “They are professionally improving themselves, keeping up to date with literature, willing to try new things, and willing to put in extra effort. They are not comfortable.” Teachers expected their peers to assist all students to learn, to participate in decision making and in Saturday Showcase, and to voluntarily take part in peer observations. Teachers respected the efforts others made to offer intellectually challenging instruction. The occasional teacher who wasn’t as dedicated or hard working quickly grew uncomfortable and left the school. Teachers monitored their own work regularly, via student grades, and planned their collective response to help students who were in jeopardy of failure. An example of teachers’ individual initiative in this regard, a class room teacher and a special education teacher sought a state waiver clearing the way for a creative response to an immediate need. The money saved provided direct social and psychological services to at risk students.

The above discussion highlights mutual leadership influence among school members, whether transformational or instructional in character. Tracing a key school activity of the Saturday Showcase provides another way to understand interdependencies associated with integrated leadership. Principal Cooke was instrumental in the creation of, and continuing support for the educational conference organized by the school that

drew hundreds of teachers from the region in search of new teaching techniques. As principal, she was required to approve the scheduling of the showcase and distributed certain resources to the effort. More, she expected all but new Ashley teachers to present a session and to assist with the administrative and organizational arrangements. The public positioning of teachers as highly competent professionals suggests that the principal understood the power of intellectual challenge. The conference could only be termed successful, however, if teachers agreed to its importance and showed equal devotion by taking care of administrative responsibilities and by preparing compelling presentations to share with peers. For teachers, being in learning mode had to be a “lived” reality if they were to collectively promote the conference and individually make annual presentations. With the benefit of additional resources (around \$20,000 the year of the study), teachers had a very significant opportunity to enter the schoolwide decision realm in determining how to spend the money.

Around this key activity, teachers were dependent on the principal for continued interest and support. They also blossomed when she issued personal invitations to share what they could do with a broad audience. The principal, deeply committed to the showcase, was dependent to the extent that her faculty could deliver high quality lessons and materials. The normative culture of teacher excellence worked among teachers to challenge each individual to demonstrate sound knowledge and skills.

*Red Lake Middle School*, located in the Northwest, served 800 students in grades 6 through 8 at the time of the original SRS study. African American, Hispanic, Native American, and Asian students comprised ten percent of the student body. Restructuring

efforts encompassed six themes. Perhaps the most consequential of these themes for the school was Choice, whereby teachers designed classes around topics for which they had a personal “passion” and students, in consultation with their advisors and parents, designed their own curricular programs. Teachers also teamed with each other on interdisciplinary “Connections” classes, the only required classes. All classes ran for 70 minutes. The school embraced democratic governance; all stakeholders had voting authority on the steering committee. Finally, each teacher and the principal advised 22 students within a house system.

Shared transformational leadership began with the principal, Mr. John Spenser, a facilitator for change, who worked through multiple committees of teachers. He provided direction, but supported the democratic process and deferred decisions to committee votes. Teachers demonstrated a commitment to lifelong learning and organized their classes so that students would learn “how to learn.” Freedom to choose and shared power created a high level of interdependency between teachers and students that contributed to quality instruction and high levels of student achievement.

At Red Lake, the equitable relationships among school members were at the core of their educational approach. Mr. Spenser spoke of the faculty as professionals whom he trusted. One teacher reported that the principal was fully integrated with the staff, “I’ve never seen an administrator spend so much time, not infiltrating, but just being part of the staff. [He] has a House [i.e., advisory group] like the teachers and that seems to make him part of the Red Lake community. When teachers disagree with something [he] has done, they feel free to go talk with him.” Respect was also evident among the staff, predicated on hard work and sincere effort.

Mr. Spenser earned recognition by school personnel, district officials, and parents as a transformational leader, quite often referred to as the “keeper of the change process.” A teacher commented that “he brings the best thought, theory, thinking” to the direction of the school; he was recognized as stimulating the faculty intellectually, though not in the direction of any personal agenda. The teacher continued, “It’s almost like a surprise, that a principal really does have an influence in this building, since the staff is so empowered.” The district superintendent noted his motivational capacity:

He’s real good at what I would call organizational development.... He has some real strong site councils of students, parents, staff members, community members. So much of the change comes through those kinds of decision making bodies. And I think that’s part of the reason that this school has been able to move so rapidly, and, I would say, comprehensively in restructuring.

At Red Lake, teachers had a lot to say about the school and its culture. Individual initiatives by faculty brought closer attention to gender and race inequity, and concerns for students with special needs. The Red Lake Staff, which included both certified and classified personnel, made all curricular decisions. Teachers also held membership on the steering committee and on ad hoc committees formed to address specific issues, with extensive consultation among all groups. Testifying to the truly democratic nature of the process, teachers indicated that the heart and soul of the Red Lake program is that teachers “really run it.” Teachers voted to have larger classes in order to have longer periods and more prep time, as an example.

As one who embraced shared instructional leadership, Mr. Spenser was wholly supportive of Choice as a way to ensure students had opportunities to learn compelling

and demanding material as well as learning how to learn and how to make responsible decisions. Red Lake hired teachers with the potential to thrive in the strong culture of Choice in the school, and the principal made sure that new staff members had “the gospel” so that they understood where the school was going, including working in teams to offer interdisciplinary Connections classes. He summarized his role in the school’s efforts as “making sure we meet, making sure we have agendas, making sure there is staff development, making sure we train teams of teachers how to work together as teams, providing released time, staff contract time.” Perhaps as a result of teachers’ extensive involvement in making decisions for the school, the principal protected them from obligations he regarded as intrusive, such as certain state reports. Commenting on the considerable autonomy from the district and the state in terms of curriculum and staff, Mr. Spenser emphasized that the freedom gave teachers the “opportunity to create.”

The principal did, however, carry out essential oversight of the instructional programs; he, the vice-principal, and a counselor monitored the progress of all students in weekly meetings. When grades showed lack of progress, they looked at the student’s schedule balance, and, if necessary planned an intervention. “We keep it decentralized, assuming everybody’s doing their job. But, we monitor to make sure that kids *are* being successful, and where they *aren’t* that’s when we figure out some sort of system of support to build in.” Monthly, a conversation about intervention for students in need occurred at the meeting of the full staff.

The annual meeting of Staff, at which faculty proposed and promoted the courses they planned to offer the following year, was the centerpiece of the Choice program; tracing the activity around the meeting of Staff yields insight into the interdependencies

among school members characteristic of integrated leadership. Teachers, spurred by the freedom to design creative courses around their true interests, presented the rationale for the courses they planned to offer the following year. The group process, which provided all individuals the opportunity to speak, question, and critique, was particularly critical at this meeting of Staff in terms of refining and aligning courses and in providing sufficient opportunities for students.

The intellectual discussion that took place when teachers presented the rationale and instructional design of proposed courses introduced less than subtle peer pressure for excellence. Choice did not give teachers license to do as they pleased; it gave them the opportunity to shape their work in a personal way that was still consistent with collective understandings. This process worked at Red Lake only because the faculty respected others for the effort they put into teaching and because the culture demanded that every one listen to and consider others' opinions. It fostered a high level of professional accountability to self and to peers. Mr. Spenser, as keeper of the process, maintained the legitimacy of Choice. Also, since the policy permitted students substantial discretion in selecting their courses, he oversaw an administrative system to check that all students had an appropriate distribution of courses.

Summing interdependencies associated with integrated leadership, teachers depended on the principal to support Choice through hiring decisions, sharing in governance processes, providing appropriate professional development and other resources, and following up on decisions made by the staff. The principal depended on teachers to develop quality courses that fostered students' love of learning and, through an open process of negotiation, ensure that the instructional program as a whole

addressed students' educational requirements. Teachers depended on other teachers to develop compelling courses of high quality to ensure a fair distribution of students; in essence, everyone needed to take a fair share of the work. These shared expectations and commitments maintained an educational program that faculty were proud of and which strengthened students' connections to school.

*Flinders High School*, located on the West Coast, served an ethnically diverse student population of 2,700 students during the study year. Demographically, the student population consisted of Hispanic and Asian students with a minority of white students, but the diversity represented 23 different home languages. Central to the restructuring effort was trying to get “kids to accept each other through curriculum.” The goal of giving every student the option to attend college equalized access to high level content. The school attempted to personalize instruction, highlight multiculturalism, require algebra and geometry for all students, and minimize tracking. In this large comprehensive high school, routine functions operated primarily through Divisions, inter-disciplinary structures for instruction and student assignment.

Shared transformational leadership was planned into Flinders High School from the beginning. At its opening, the founding principal and a committee of teachers, with an eye toward diversity, hand-picked many of the best teachers from the surrounding schools and built a highly energized and committed staff. The principal during the study period, Mr. Oscar Dyer, was the second principal for the school, and he focused on maintaining the original vision of success for all students. He was known as a champion of equity, particularly in terms of students' access to advanced courses. In and out of

classes frequently, Mr. Dyer spoke individually with teachers to share information and elicit opinions before making decisions.

As with Ashley and Red Lake, the criteria for hiring new faculty revolved around the candidate expressing buy-in to the school's mission, in this case, agreeing with the philosophy of heterogeneous grouping for instruction. As a result, Flinders had an extremely high percentage of teachers who considered themselves innovators or teachers deeply committed to a cause. The core group of teachers who were present at the start-up of the school (only four years earlier) provided sustained transformational leadership for the school vision of preparing all students for postsecondary education. Several in this group had arranged significant partnerships with educational foundations and other agencies to benefit students and teachers. Some held interdisciplinary divisional leadership positions, from which they motivated teachers to support student needs and offer innovative courses. Others held committee membership and substantial leadership responsibilities for decision making. A teacher commented that the excitement and pride that pervades the school comes from teachers, "I think the main difference here is the energy. Because the curriculum is no more than the people who make it...the excitement that the teachers have here is phenomenal. This is the most dynamic place that I have ever worked." In the fourth year after start-up, with a large and diverse student body, teachers acknowledged that realizing the Flinders vision had proved more difficult than expected, but, by all accounts, the faculty and staff remained committed to their ideals and proud of their accomplishments.

Though the Flinders High School principal was seen as a strong advocate for equity and a person of integrity, the case study did not offer the same degree of evidence

for his transformational leadership as seen in the other IL cases. Most consequential, perhaps, was his lack of intellectual, inspirational, change-oriented activity. Mr. Dyer did push the faculty to help students achieve, however, and he did publicly communicate to his teachers that they had the power to make a difference for students. He also claimed that his major responsibility was to serve the teachers of the school. It is likely that his supportive, servant leadership approach accounts for the transformational leadership scores he received, relative to other schools in the entire data set.

Perhaps more difficult to accomplish in high schools than at other levels, shared instructional leadership did not reach the same levels at Flinders as at Ashley and Red Lake. In terms of instruction, Principal Dyer said that he wanted a school where students could focus on academics. He continued the practice of previous years where teachers held significant responsibility for the instructional program on various committees: the Planning Committee (maintaining the school vision); the Curriculum and Instruction Committee (maintaining a well-articulated scope and sequence of educational objectives); and the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (continuously assessing the academic progress of students). Mr. Dyer demanded accountability for teachers and recognized that assessment, as well as being a state requirement, was critical to achieving the school's goals. The entire faculty shared responsibility for student learning, according to Mr. Dyer, but he granted teachers flexibility in how they would reach the goals, just as travelers could take many roads to "get to New York." He saw his job as removing barriers and securing necessary resources for the journey.

As a large comprehensive high school, Flinders did not often have occasion (and never enough space) for the entire faculty to meet. The activity structure that addressed

the umbrella goal of “success for all kids” was a system of committees with overlapping membership. About 20% of the faculty were active on multiple, schoolwide committees; as such they served as information brokers between various arenas of professional engagement. This loose and flexible structure resulted in the mission being translated differently by teachers, departments, and divisions. One group of teachers, for example, called for more academic education, another wanted a stronger multicultural focus, and a third argued for an increase in vocational education. Nevertheless, through this flexible committee structure, key responsibilities were met and a wide range of leaders emerged. As an example, professional development was coordinated and planned through the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee (which had a broad membership of administrators, teachers, students and parents) and it was implemented for the most part within divisions, where faculty with expertise in particular areas shared their knowledge as mentors and resource teachers, and in classroom exchanges. Similarly, routines for monitoring the instructional program included the Curriculum and Instruction Committee in addition to the two already mentioned. Monitoring student progress also engaged the school administrators through teacher and student follow up activity.

This rather amorphous activity structure was completely dependent on the interdependencies among administrative leaders, teacher leaders, and teachers generally. Principal Dyer kept the attention front and center on academics even though, at the time of the study, he had not shown evidence to teachers of intellectual leadership (by their reports). A critical core group of teachers continued to provide transformational influence to other teachers sufficient to maintain access to challenging academic classes for all students. The parallel and sometimes intersecting contributions of the three major

committees working in the school to influence the instructional program (i.e. Planning Committee, Monitoring and Evaluation Committee, and Curriculum and Instruction Committee) provided input about course offerings and content to the divisions, made decisions about professional development, and arranged for close attention to student progress and failure rates. In sum, the case evidence suggests that integrated leadership at Flinders, while higher relatively to other schools in the data set, was less extensive than seen in Ashley and Red Lake.

*Shining Rock Middle School*, the Limited Leadership contrast school, is located in a North West industrial area. Shining Rock experienced a dramatic change in student population in the years just before participation in the study due to changes in the residential housing patterns and to the increasing drug activity in the area. The ethnically diverse student population of 490 (about one third of the students were African American, Asian, Native American and Hispanic in roughly equal percentages) were characterized as working class or economically disadvantaged. Two restructuring efforts related to the academic program: teaming and curriculum integration. Faculty were organized in three grade level teams: the 6<sup>th</sup> grade teams had operated for twelve years, while the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades had been in existence for five years. Six academic teachers comprised each team, each of which served between 150 and 165 students. Each team had 45 minutes of daily protected time to plan curriculum, address administrative issues, and discuss student progress. The principal, Mr. Lynn Albert, also new to his position after serving as vice-principal for 5 years, maintained the status quo and did not introduce a new agenda for school improvement. Though he had originally been an advocate for the

new assistant principal, their relationship had grown rocky. Indeed, many on the faculty did not trust the A.P. to carry through with plans.

The faculty culture at Shining Rock was collaborative and consensual. Teachers believed that working within the team structure enabled them to respond to the needs of their students in a timely and integrated fashion. A 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher said, “I love the support of the team.... [W]e co-ordinate our work very closely.” An 8<sup>th</sup> grade teacher indicated, “It [teaming] gives you the feeling you are making a difference in that kid’s life beyond your 45 minutes. I wouldn’t go to a situation where this was not provided.” Researchers preparing the case study also noted the high level of care and respect among faculty in the school, the relatively low number of conflicts within teams, and the small number of dissenting voices about school operations.

One significant constraint to shared leadership, however, was that teachers did not communicate or interact outside of their teams. Each team operated independently of the others and teachers were not consistently inclusive of specialist teachers. In fact, teaming introduced competition into school wide decision making. A staff member noted:

Teaming has polarized us as a staff, in a real negative way.... I think that its wonderful and I don’t want to lose that, but I hate it when someone says ‘Team so-and-so does this, and we’re all going to do this’ and it becomes teams pitted against each other. I think that teams go to [the principal] and say ‘Let’s do this, because this is what our team wants’ instead of sitting down as a staff and saying what’s best for everybody.

When viewed in contrast to schools with Integrated Leadership, Shining Rock Middle School provides insight into conditions that enable or activate shared instructional

leadership. Faculty relationships can be described as generally collegial, and the principal was considered to be supportive of teachers, empowering them to make consequential decisions within their teams, and securing continuing financial support for the teaming arrangements. At the heart of Principal Albert's influence on teachers was his genuine concern that the school focus on "what's best for kids." He encouraged an array of programs for at-risk students, which teachers felt they could deliver effectively through collegial efforts. The principal was not an intellectual leader, however; what intellectual leadership was present came through teachers who had taken ownership of the restructuring initiative originally put in place by the former principal. What we see at Shining Rock, then, is a school where some relational and value oriented elements of transformational leadership are present – on the part of principal *and* teachers – but they are not sufficiently deep or compelling to transform the culture or to move individuals beyond what is normal and comfortable, to have any significant impact on teaching and learning, or to spur any improvement to the status quo.

One missing key, it seems to us, is insufficient guidance for or management of the existing instructional program; little instructional leadership is evident. Our analysis pointed out that goals articulated throughout the school rarely targeted teaching and learning. Mr. Albert identified increasing parental involvement, making connections to businesses, and better utilizing block scheduling for teams as areas of concern. The 6<sup>th</sup> grade team of teachers was intent on delivering an effective, integrated curriculum. The 7<sup>th</sup> grade teachers sought to address individual student needs; the 8<sup>th</sup> grade honed in on problem solving. No group specifically identified improving the quality of teaching and levels of student achievement. The lack of academic focus was exacerbated by the lack of

policy documents and procedures encouraging school level interactions; indeed, teachers reported not having much conversation with teachers outside their grade level teams. Guidelines for hiring new staff did not exist. New teachers were absorbed into one of the three highly autonomous and variable team cultures, where instructional improvement strategies remained isolated. From both principal and teacher perspectives, monitoring the progress of students was not a topic of concern. Assessment, whether in the form of teacher assigned grades or state standardized tests, was just part of the life of schools, certainly not a source of information for identifying areas of need or as a help to systematic improvement.

Shining Rock teachers had supports for their work that many teachers, frankly, would envy. As members of empowered teacher teams, collaboration was facilitated by dedicated time, space, and financial support. Unfortunately, the efforts of dedicated teachers in these schools just didn't add up to the kinds of learning opportunities that make a difference for their students, in large part because the formal leader had not established a challenging vision for the school, had not established student achievement as a unitary goal, and had not arranged for integration or coordination of efforts across teams.

## **DISCUSSION**

In our analysis, the schools with integrated leadership are quite distinct in the ways in which transformational leadership and instructional leadership are exerted broadly by a range of school members. At Ashley, Red Lake, and Flinders, principals expressed the “certainty” (Rosenholtz, 1985) that students could learn and that teachers

could make a difference for all children, and this sense of certainty, or efficacy, was equally reflected in the beliefs and actions of teachers. Individually and as members of the faculty, teachers at Ashley and Red Lake seem to extend and reinforce the leadership intentions of the principal as they challenged themselves to improve their practice and worked to motivate and support others in their schools toward that end. At Flinders, these kinds of efforts on the part of teachers were also discernable, though it could be argued that teachers were continuing initiatives put in place before the current principal took over. This situation, however, serves as an example of the power of the teacher community in maintaining improvement efforts – at least for a period of time – without formal leadership. Shining Rock provides a look at a school that has gone without principal leadership for a number of years, to its detriment.

We interpret the findings reported here to align with Gronn's (2002) holistic, rather than aggregate, distribution of leadership. Holistic demonstrations of leadership refer to the joint efforts of principals and teachers that catalyze school improvement efforts; they represent "concertive action" that is greater than a simple sum, or aggregate, of activity or tasks (Gronn, 2002, p. 656). Gronn points to three main patterns of holistic distribution: informal, spontaneous forms of collaboration; emergent interpersonal synergies that develop as colleagues work together closely; and action regularized through institutionalized structures. While informal, spontaneous collaborative efforts of teachers are undeniably present in schools with integrated leadership, we focus our discussion on the other forms to consider how principals work synergistically with teachers and to the transformational or instructional nature of these interactions.

*Interpersonal synergies* in the three IL (High-High) schools appear to be highly correlated with transformational leadership influence of principals and teachers, which embraces the notion of that leadership constructed within a relationship between leaders and followers. Teachers (as followers) are drawn to and begin to identify with principals who are highly regarded professionals, models to follow in particular domains (idealized influence). Teachers at these schools are highly regarded in their own rights, as excellent instructors, advocates for disadvantaged students, and innovators. They, in turn, attract other teachers who want to associate with them. This interactivity deepens the level of trust among school members and increases commitment. Principals elevate the contributions of all members by challenging them to do what's necessary to achieve a preferred future (intellectual stimulation) (Block, 1987). Particularly at Ashley and Red Lake, the principals maintained compelling, intellectual processes for teachers to engage in (e.g. related to Saturday Showcase and Choice) and teachers responded with their best efforts, which in turn, amplified the intellectual challenge among the teacher community. The Flinders principal did not stimulate risk-taking or innovation; many initiatives in the school were due to the individual grant writing activity of teachers before the research team visited the school.

Respectful relationships between principals and teachers were in evidence in each of the three schools (individualized consideration). Ashley teachers were invited by the principal to step into leadership roles; Red Lake teachers were acknowledged by the principal as having powerful ideas worth attending to; Flinders teachers knew that their principal had adopted a posture of servant leader. Teachers extended similar types of respect to their colleagues when they shared responsibility for student learning, ensured

that all teachers had the chance to express opinions, and felt responsible for helping their fellow teachers develop new competencies. Sources of inspirational motivation moved fluidly within relationships. At Ashley, the principal invited teachers to showcase their expertise at the annual conference, but the conference depended on teachers' agreement, planning, and organization. At Red Lake, the principal's commitment to teacher Choice was viable only to the degree that teachers designed compelling classes for students to take. At Flinders, the principal's message that teachers had the power to make a difference in students' lives needed teacher leadership efforts to put innovative and effective instructional programs into practice.

Similar interdependencies are at play within the instructional leadership domains. The certainty of principals that students in the school could learn to high levels contributed to, and, ultimately, depended on an equal measure of certainty on the part of teachers. Teachers and principals took part in hiring practices that brought like minded teachers to all three IL schools. After that, principal evaluation and consultation was no more important than teachers' efforts to learn together and honestly challenge each other. Principals in all three schools took steps to buffer teachers from non-essential decision tasks; for their part, teachers generally accepted decision making responsibility with enthusiasm since they knew it would be consequential to their lives and those of their students. Teachers' participation on school wide, divisional, departmental, grade level, or interdisciplinary teams provided ample opportunities to analyze data, develop programs, or design instructional strategies that complemented any informal, emergent collaborations among teachers in these schools. In all cases, principals and other

administrators monitored student progress, but these efforts were in addition to the front line monitoring efforts of teachers.

While these instructional domains built on interpersonal relationships, institutional policies and structures enabled leadership in important ways. As reviewed in the cases, Ashley's Saturday Showcase, Red Lake's annual faculty meeting to consider prospective courses, and Flinder's overlapping system for improving and monitoring instruction coalesced, or brought into concert, the efforts of principals and teachers. Persons in each role category contributed in ways that sustained the activities over time. The policies and activity structures (or routines, as Spillane, 2006, calls them) strengthened the integration of leadership contributions in three additional ways. First, they established expectations that these learning and decision making interactions would occur. Second, they served as guidance or facilitation for how they would occur and what they would concern. Finally, the committee structures and professional development positions (i.e. mentor, facilitator) provided a training ground for future leaders.

At Shining Rock, the principal was still learning his way into the job and maintained the status quo. Though he extended personal consideration to teachers, he did not take leadership in establishing an intellectual culture of improvement nor did he inspire teachers to extend themselves beyond their teacher teams. While teachers were hard working and congenial, the competitive atmosphere that had developed between teacher teams worked against the development of a schoolwide mission for excellence and an integrated system to support student learning that are evident in schools with IL.

## CONCLUSION

In the mid 1990s, the SRS schools were ahead of the curve in terms of restructuring their schools to support teachers and better serve students. In the IL schools, teaming structures, interdisciplinary approaches for instruction, and personalized approaches (e.g. advisories, houses, families) to working with students were the predominant practices, as shown in the cases of the three representative schools. These are more familiar practices in public schools today. The case of Shining Rock, however, indicates that structures and processes that organize teachers' work differently do not guarantee the kinds of interactions we advocate in holding out promise for shared instructional leadership.

The case study findings reported in this study, coupled with the quantitative results reported in our earlier work (Marks & Printy, 2003), present a strong platform for instructional leadership shared by principals and teachers. Additionally, the case data extend our understanding of the importance of transformational leadership as an intellectual, activating influence – by teachers as well as by principals – in establishing the kinds of relationships that are conducive to improving instructional quality and creating conditions that support the academic progress of all students. Importantly, the data show the interdependencies required by all educational professionals to move the central work of schools forward.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>The SRS study examined 24 schools. Two of these did not have sufficient data to explore leadership influences.

<sup>2</sup> Leithwood and colleagues have written extensively about transformational leadership in school settings (e.g., Leithwood, K. & Jantzi, D.(1999a), Leithwood, K. & Jantzi, D. (1999b), Leithwood, K. & Jantzi, D. (2005), Leithwood, K. & Jantzi, D. (2006), and Leithwood, K., Tomlinson, D. & Genge, M. (1996). They associate transformational leadership by the principal with collaborative cultures, thus they do not explicitly investigate the leadership contributions of teachers. Recent work by Leithwood and Mascall (2008) investigates collective leadership influence but does not sort out transformational influence from other types. For the current study, we apply a shared conceptualization of transformational leadership described by Avolio et al. (2003), based on Bass's (1985) original work.

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