Den föreliggande forskningsöversikten är en av de rapporter inom Vetenskapsrådets rapportserie som tagits fram i samarbete med Skolverket. Skolverket ska stödja skolhuvudmän, rektorer och lärare i deras utbildningsverksamhet och bidra till att förbättra deras förutsättningar att arbeta med utveckling av verksamheterna för ökad måluppfyllelse. I detta arbete sprider Skolverket kunskap om forsknings-resultat som är av särskilt intresse för utbildning och undervisning. Skolverket har finansierat fram-tagandet av denna rapport. Det övergripande målet för översikten är att presentera och diskutera aktuell svensk och europeisk forskning om rektors ledarskap.
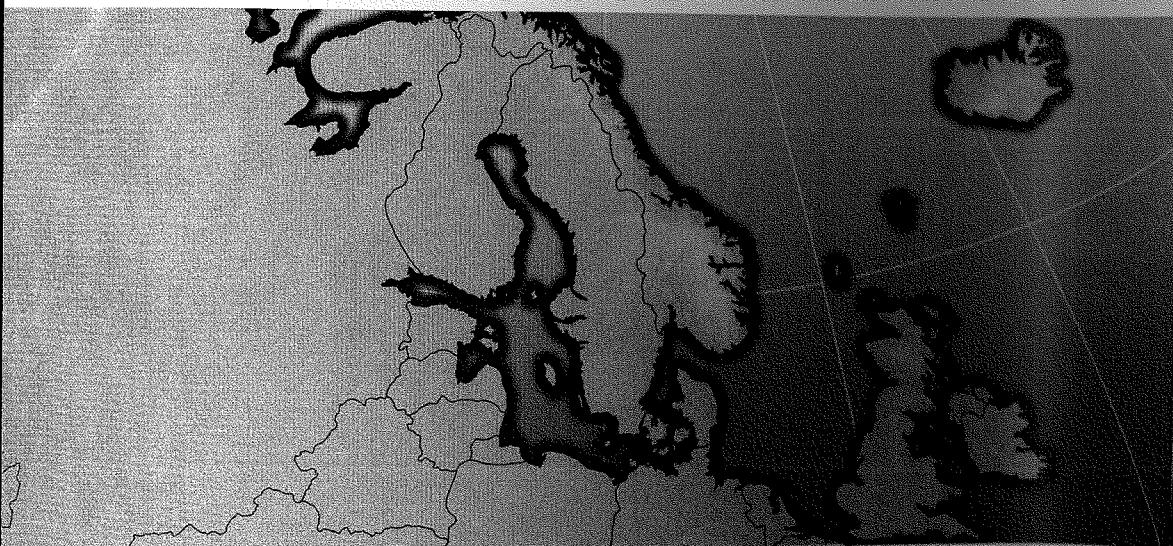
De slutsatser och reflektioner som presenteras är för fattarnas egna. Översikten har tagits fram av ett flertal internationella forskare. Projektet har letts av professor Olof Johansson vid Umeå universitet.

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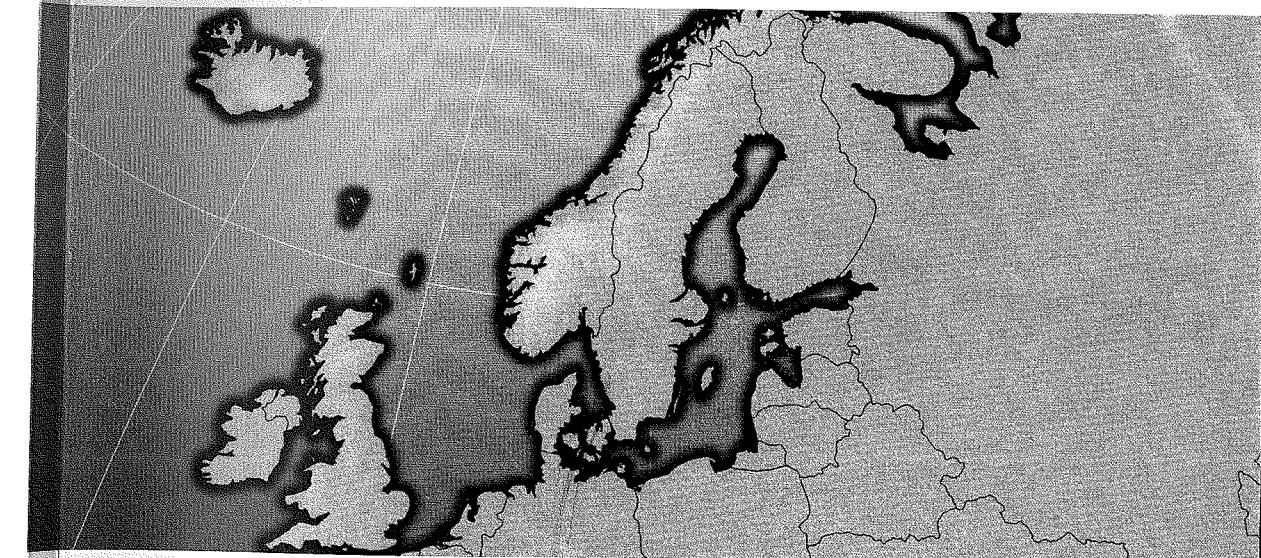
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CHAPTER 11 RESEARCH ON PRINCIPALS IN THE GERMAN SPEAKING COUNTRIES

Stephan Gerhard Huber

Introduction

Over the years, education and school research had rarely focused on themes such as school leadership and leadership practices in German speaking countries such as Germany, Austria, Liechtenstein, and Switzerland. Research that explicitly focuses on school leadership and school leadership practices has just started over the last two decades.

Studies have been done on the macro level (the school system level) and on the micro level (the teaching and learning level), which include references to the meso level (the organisational level of an individual school). Nonetheless, there exists a deficiency of research based knowledge about educational leadership action, about leadership competences, about development measures that are needed to improve school leadership, and about the working conditions of school leaders. Despite the existence of a few studies before the 1990s, empirical research on school leadership has only recently increased in number. Since around 2000, the state of research on school leadership has been improving.

Review methods

In order to evaluate the state of research in the German speaking countries, numerous sources have been used. The literature survey by Huber (2003) served thereby as a basic starting point. To gain an overview of studies from 2003 onwards, various relevant German databases such as GESIS and FORS were consulted. Additionally, various internet search engines as well as associated tools such as "scholar" and "books" were searched.

The results provided by „books" were examined in the online catalogue of the research library in Erfurt/Gotha (Germany). Additional sources referenced by relevant journals have been added to the research findings as well. Additionally, programs of conferences in the German speaking countries over the last decade were researched, and findings (projects with explicit reference to school leadership) have been included in the research overview.

Furthermore, relevant seminars and lectures of master's courses in the German speaking countries regarding leadership development possibilities within the field of education management were taken into account. Relevant studies presented during the school leadership symposia of the past few years, organized by Huber in the years 2004, 2005, 2006, 2009 (see www. Edulead.com and www. Schulleitungssymposium.net) have also been included. Finally, around 40 colleagues working in the fields of school effectiveness, school improvement, and school management were contacted in order to identify relevant studies in the German speaking context.

In the German speaking countries, there may be further (theoretical and empirical) studies and also further evaluation studies, however, if they are not listed below, it had not been possible to identify them by the research methods described above.

Nevertheless, there are numerous studies in the field of education research that include, along with other topics, school leadership (implicitly or explicitly). Usually, in empirical research about comprehensive schools or about specific school development projects, e.g. all-day schools, variables directly or indirectly linked to school leadership are collected but they have not often been analyzed with regard to a specific research question about school leadership (e.g. Holtappels 2004;2007 et al., 2008). Such studies have not been included in this survey.

Numerous smaller research projects about school leadership have been conducted in the context of master's courses for school leaders. Moreover, during other study courses at universities several research-based papers (Lizenziat theses, diploma theses, bachelor theses) have been written. These papers have not been included either, even though they may serve as a basis for PhD theses.

In this review, the studies are not presented in terms of a systematic juxtaposition. Such a strictly systematic presentation following the criteria a) aim/ research question, b) methodological approach/design, c) selected results, can be found on: www.bildungsmanagement.net/SL-Research

Role, functions, tasks, self-concept, attributes, attitudes, and the workload of school leadership

Among the few German research papers about school leadership from the 1980s and 1990s, the study by Nevermann (1982) is fundamental. It focused on the historical and legal aspects of school leadership.

Several studies around 1990 and 2000 focused on the role, tasks and the self-concept of school leaders. The job profiles of school leaders as well as the weighting of their different tasks according to the time spent on them are usually the subject matter of older studies such as the non-representative study by Schmitz (1980), the representative inquiry of school leaders and teachers in Hessen by Haase and Rolff (1980), the qualitative inquiry by Krüger (1983), and the analysis of school-internal administrative tasks of grammar school leaders in North Rhine-Westphalia by Wolfmeyer (1981).

Jarisch (1992) investigated the role-perception of school leaders of Lower Austrian secondary schools from the teachers' point of view. Wissinger (1994) investigated the tasks of school leaders in Bavaria. Rosenbusch's formulation of a structurally disturbed relationship between school leaders and education authorities referred to the results of a study in Bavaria about the relationship between teachers – school leaders – education authorities. There were investigations by Baumert (1984) and Baumert and Leschinsky (1986) about the role-definition of school leaders and a survey of newly appointed school leaders of secondary schools in Bavaria by Storath about how they define their roles (1994).

Rosenbusch, Braun-Bau and Warwas (2006) investigated the tasks of school leaders at Bavarian elementary schools and different types of secondary schools (Hauptschule and Realschule). In Lower Saxony, a job analysis was conducted (Vogel & Partner, 2005).

Rosenbusch and Schlemmer (1997) worked on the role of educational leadership in the context of new requirements for the individual school and its extended self-governance. Dalin and Rolff (1990) emphasized a dynamically and systemically oriented understanding of the school as an organization with enhanced roles and tasks for school leaders. In the study by Neulinger (1990) the school leader was seen in a mediator and intermediator function. Thereby, the school leader was regarded as a system stabilizer rather than a system developer. Riedel (1998), however, in a comprehensive survey of school leaders of all of Berlin's public schools, detected an overall agreement among the school leaders about the positive impact of decentralization of responsibilities.

Schratz (2004) investigated leadership behavior of the participants in the context of an Austrian leadership development program. He used an action learning approach, from and through the perspective of the school leader herself/himself. Dal Gobbo and Peyer-Siegrist (2000) looked at the school leadership reality of public schools (elementary and secondary level) in the German speaking Swiss cantons.

The dissertation by Issak (2001) focused on the interpersonal relationships between teachers and school leadership (areas of analysis were: communication, motivation, and conflict management) in Austrian public schools. Dätwyler (2005) analyzed the leadership structures in the interactions between selected school leaderships and school boards for the Swiss cantons of Berne, Aargau and Luzern.

The results of another inquiry about the relationship between school leaders and teachers by Schmitz and Voreck (2006) showed that there often was a discrepancy between the expectations of school leaders and the fulfillment of those expectations by the teachers; especially in cases where the school leaders were predominantly committed to school administration and school rules. Maurizia, Hostettler and Hellmüssler (2006) analyzed the data from the Swiss study: "Data collection of relevant leadership issues in the context of the school as an organization."

Schratz (2009) conducted the country study about Austria in the context of the international study "Cross Border Improvement of national LLL-Strategies – focus on Leadership" (with contributions by Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Austria). The study focused on the elaboration of a knowledge base for leadership actions during a decentralization process of the educational system.

In his theoretical paper, Szewcyk (2005) connected several explanation approaches in order to identify areas of change and management processes of vocational schools. In an analysis about school laws of the federal states of Germany, as well as regulations, enactments and requirements for school leaders, Schratz, Pisek and Wopfner (2002) investigated normative requirements as well as operative measurements in order to re-determine the legislation for the (new) functions of school leaders, in times of increasing self-governing of schools in the school system in Austria.

In her theoretically-oriented study, Spraul (2003) focused on school management, which requires navigating a tense relationship between educational tasks and economic requirements. The author concluded that school leaders will increasingly have to take over management tasks. Thereby, school management will hold a key position in the future regarding the strengthening and self-monitoring of the individual school. Furthermore, Spraul states that an integration of business practice methods is indispensable for the educational system.

Huber and Schneider (2007) provided a comparative overview of the changed descriptions of job requirements and job profiles of school leadership in all federal states of Germany. The results show that the central role of school leadership is becoming more and more focused on quality assurance and

quality development. The recently established task profiles reflect the complexity of school leadership actions.

A study including all 16 German state ministries (2008), published by the association "Schule Wirtschaft" (School and Economy) and the Cologne Institute of Economic Research, also identified the school leader as a manager, comparing his/her role with the one in the business sector.

Harazd, Gieske and Rolff (2009) identified teacher health care as a new task of school leaders. They illustrated how teacher stress can be reduced by health-oriented leadership action, which in turn increases school quality.

The study done by Bessoth (1982) focused on the school leader herself/himself, her/his attitudes, interests and opinions as well as motives relevant to leadership. It was a standardized non-representative inquiry about the professional interests of school leadership personnel. Kischel (1989) investigated work related attitudes of school leaders and teachers holding leadership positions compared to those of teachers having no leadership or administrative tasks.

The self-concept of school leaders of all types of schools in Bavaria was the object of inquiry of a study by Wissinger (1996). Bonson (2003) collected data about the conceptions of organization and leadership of school leaders in North Rhine-Westphalia. Weidinger (2003) analysed hierarchies within the school organization in a qualitative inquiry about the subconscious processes of school inspectors and school leaders of compulsory schools in Vienna.

Languth (2006) studied the professional ethics of school leaders and classified five types of leaders: professional, resigning, programmatic, skeptical, pragmatical. Warwas (2009) worked in a similar way by classifying school leaders in terms of performance types: generalist, teacher with administration tasks, educational leader, team leader and superior with educational responsibilities.

In an explorative study, Hildebrandt (2008) examined the attitudes, actions, and action sets of school leaders with regard to the learning processes of teachers over the course of their professional careers.

Stemmer (2011) collected data about the professional self-concept and perception of leadership of school leaders in the canton of Aargau.

The self-concept of women in leadership roles was studied by Lutzau and Metz-Göckel (1996). Hoff (2005) compared the institutional backgrounds of individuals in school leader careers in the 1960s and the 1990s. Using case studies he was able to compare people in leadership roles by generation and by gender. In a theoretical paper, Stroot (2004) analyzed the debate on women in leadership positions concretizing this debate in regards to the school con-

text. Kansteiner-Schänzlin (2004) also researched gender issues regarding school leadership. Miller (2002) investigated the career of female school leaders in primary schools in North Rhine-Westphalia. One of the central findings was that school leaders create networks in order to support each other. A few papers about the stress and pressure on school leaders have emerged recently: At the Institute of Education of the University of Berne, the pressure on school leaders has been under analysis since 1998. Zaugg and Blum (2002) presented a model for the evaluation of work and for the gathering of resources to assist school leaders. Furthermore, they presented a strategy for the practical implementation of this model. Behr, Valentin and Ramos-Weisser (2003) interviewed school leaders of elementary and secondary schools about their workload and concluded that a high number of social conflicts, big schools and a high percentage of students with a foreign background intensify stress on school leaders. Binder, Trachsler and Feller (2003) evaluated the temporary implementation of recommendations for school leaders' workloads and compensation in the canton of St Gallen. Nido, Ackermann, Ulich, Trachsler and Brüggen (2008) investigated working conditions, stress and resources of teachers and school leaders in the canton of Aargau (BKS).

In many Swiss cantons, schools had no principals but a governing body. This has been changed over the last 10 years nearly in every canton, and principals have been put in place (one canton still has schools without principals). Wehner, Vollmer, Manser and Burtscher (2008) examined in their study of schools with a school leadership (in Swiss German: "Geleitete Schule") the correlations between the tasks and work load of leaders with possible stress factors including the size of the school, team conflicts etc.

The education directorate of the canton of Berne (2010) authorized a pre-analysis of the strengthening of the school leadership. Bucher (2010) reported on the project "stress and relief in the educational context". In his school leadership study in the German speaking countries, Huber (2011) and Huber and Reinhardt (2011) are currently analyzing the work situation of school leaders in Germany (in three states: Baden-Württemberg, Saxony-Anhalt and North Rhine-Westphalia) as well as in the German speaking part of Switzerland; the inquiry is also being carried out in Austria (Huber & Zois , 2011). This German speaking school study in particular analyzes person-related professional biographical as well as job context information, general aspects of stress as well as what school leaders like and what they experience as a burden. With a subsample, data about daily activities are gathered using an experience sampling approach with an End-of-Day-Log.

School leadership and the effectiveness and improvement of schools

Since the turn of the century, research interests have turned towards the impact of school leadership on school effectiveness and improvement. Under the overall supervision of Rolff, Bonsen, von der Gathen, Iglhaut and Pfeiffer (2002) analyzed the causal relationship between school leadership and school quality, identifying goal-oriented leadership, innovativeness and perceived organization skills as important features for successful school leadership. They presented, among other components, feedback as a central steering element of school leadership. In his investigation about the importance of school leadership in the design of school innovation processes, Capaul (2002) distinguished several innovation profiles of school leaders.

Bucher, Bucher and Wininger (2003) developed an overall report for regional collaboration in quality evaluation. Schäfer (2004) analyzed survey data of the public schools of the canton of Berne with respect to the effectiveness of the leadership behavior for organizational learning. The results supported the connection between transformational leadership and innovative arrangements of the school.

In their theoretical contribution, Seitz and Capul (2005) maintained that the dimensions of curriculum development, development vision, and the elaboration and evaluation of action plans are interconnected. They suggested that the school has to be regarded as a social system with its own identity. Here, management processes, core processes and support processes merge, for which the school leadership provides strategic guidance.

In the context of the PISA study, Rolff (2003) used the data collected in 2003 to further investigate the elements connected with school leadership. Wissinger (2002) compared the school leadership data of the results of the TIMS study and the PISA study.

Huber and Niederhuber (2004) questioned teachers about their views on and experiences with school leadership impact following a succession in the school leadership.

Donzallaz (2002) evaluated, in the context of the project "School leadership as quality development of kindergarten and primary schools of the canton of Fribourg", institutions which are on their way to becoming a "Geleitete Schule" (school with a school leadership). Kerle (2002) studied schools with a school leadership in the canton of Grisons. Wehner, Vollmer, Manser and Burtscher (2008) investigated this transformation and its internal coherence in the canton of Zurich. In the evaluation of the project „Schulen mit

Profil" ("Schools with a Profile"). Büeler, Buholzer and Roos (2005) concluded that self-managed schools demonstrate improved effectiveness.

Huber (2003) conducted a needs analysis for school leaders at schools in Berlin, as preparation for the model project of self-governed schools. The results of this program evaluation were presented by Huber (2006) (recommendations were formulated by Huber, Ahlgrimm and Gördel, 2007).

Pekruhl, Schreier, Smelling and Zölch (2006) analyzed the employee evaluation and performance bonus system in cantonal schools in the Swiss canton of Solothurn. They stated that the development and usage of different instruments for employee evaluation and quality assurance showed positive effects in all schools.

Janke (2006) dealt, by means of a multi-level analysis, with the social climate in schools from the perspective of teachers, school leaders and students. In the context of the Berlin project "systematic classroom development by means of integrative quality management" a triangulative study "leadership and educational quality development" has been conducted at vocational schools since 2008 (Wagner, 2011, in preparation). The study includes questionnaires about the perceived leadership action from the teachers' point of view as well as group discussions with leaders from individual schools about their understanding of leadership. Currently, in his effectiveness study about school leadership action in project schools of the region of Emsland, Lower Saxony, Lohmann is researching the issue of quality of instruction by leadership.

The international project „Leadership for Learning" (for the Austrian part see Schratz 2004) combined basic research approaches and applied research with educational research of one's own practice and the practices of others in an action research network, for the purposes of improving practice as well as generating theory.

The introduction of a changed steering procedure (New Public Management) was investigated between 2003 and 2006 by the joint project "Governing of schools for adults in Hessen (see www.rub.de/sfe-hessen). The implementation of this procedure was a particular challenge for school leaders, who were to a large extent responsible for its practical realization – especially, in mediating with the teachers' body. The effect on school management, therefore, was one of the central guiding questions of the project. Koch (forthcoming) investigates in a quantitative analysis the structure of interweaving conditions that impact on the effectiveness of school leadership.

In the context of the evaluation of the project, Self-Governing School", Rolff (2008) analyzed school leadership and internal school organization in

North Rhine-Westphalia, Feldhoff and Rolff studied (2008) the effects of school leadership and steering group action, and (2009) school leadership in self-governing schools.

Lämmerhirt (2011) analyzed in his doctoral thesis the role and function of school leadership during the implementation (and institutionalization) of innovation taking the work on developing planning as an example.

Huber and Muijs (2010) analysed school leader effectiveness within the context of international studies. Looking at the German context, Huber, Lussi, Schneider, Lehmann and Heeb (2011) took into account steering processes and change processes and focused on the role of school leadership and steering groups.

Huber. Hiltmann, Reinhardt and Schneider (2011) compare studies in a meta-analysis, in which instruments that measure professional school leadership success are analyzed. Their goal is to be able to present and compare different ways of operationalizing "school leadership success".

Tulowitzki (forthcoming) presently reconstructing in his doctoral thesis ongoing and recently finished school development projects in French schools, with a particular focus on the interactions between school leaders and their immediate professional environment.

Professionalisation of school leadership: leadership development and selection

There has been no specific research on the development and training of school leaders for a long time. Without current and concrete research about school leadership development, it is hardly possible to formulate well grounded statements that can be used as a basis for creating programs that meet current school leadership development needs, let alone provide the basis for necessary modifications. For the 16 German federal states, Huber (1999d) created a synopsis (juxtaposition), which makes possible the analysis of the leadership development practice in Germany (see Rosenbusch & Huber, 2001; Huber 2002a).

Aside from the school leadership development landscape in Germany, Huber (2003, 2004) also focused, in a comparative study, on the development of school leaders in 15 other countries in Europe, Asia, Australia and North America and he identified changes across nations, tendencies of development and trends. From the results of the data, Huber generated a set of basic requirements for a development program and provided recommendations for the design of future programs.

Influenced by this prior research, conceptions of an ongoing professionalization of educational leaders in schools, amongst others in Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, Thuringia, and Bremen as well as in the master's course school management at the University of Teacher Education Central Switzerland (PHZ) have been created. These conceptions include measurements for the short, medium and long term recruiting of new personnel as well as measurements of development and support for both newly appointed and experienced school leaders. As part of the development of the conception of the qualification of educational leaders for schools in Thuringia (2006), a needs analysis of the development and support for school leaders was conducted. The analysis and discussion of approaches to theories and considerations of the professionalization of educational leaders in general (Huber & Schneider, 2006) was the focus of two exploratory studies of the research group led by Huber.

Stückler (2005) investigated in her evaluation study the compulsory school management education for school leaders in the Austrian federal state of Kärnten's compulsory schools.

On behalf of the Swiss Federal Office for Professional Education and Technology, Schratz (2003) analyzed school management qualification courses, their philosophy and the training-relevant functions in all Swiss cantons and (2010) conducted a project about the development of school leaders in Austria funded by EU-LLL/BMUKK. The Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture was the initiator of the study "Innovation in schools by Professionalization of Leadership Personnel in the Leadership Academy" (Schratz, Hartmann & Schley, 2010). This study presented the first part of a longitudinal study, in which the effects and after-effects of a system intervention by the introduction of the Leadership Academy on the work of leadership personnel in schools is observed.

Because studies show that school leadership is important for a decentralized development of the individual schools, the professionalization of school leaders has become a key issue of educational politics. The OECD study Improving School Leadership took this aspect into account and organized national studies for the member states. Based on these reports, two extensive publications by the OECD in the form of a meta-analysis emerged. Austria took part in this study, Germany and Switzerland did not participate at that time. Huber functioned as an international expert for the study as a whole (Improving School Leadership, Volume 1: Policy and Practice) and worked on the case study about England (Huber et al., 2008: Improving School Leadership, Volume 2: Case Studies on System Leadership).

Witjes and Zimmermann (2009) carried out an evaluation of the project: "school leadership coaching by senior experts in North Rhine-Westphalia",

in which school leaders were taught about management knowledge by former or active leaders from the business world.

The criteria for the selection of school leadership personnel have barely been analyzed at all in Germany up to this point. Hopes (1983) analyzed the criteria for selection of school leaders, however, only for Hesse.

Rosenbusch, Huber and Knorr (2002) created a synopsis about the practice of personnel selection of school leaders in the German federal states. Huber and Gniechwitz (2006) actualized the synopsis. Huber and Pashiardis (2008) as well as Huber and Hiltmann (2010) investigated the international procedures and methods for the selection and recruitment of school leaders.

Huber and Hiltmann (2007; 2010) developed an online self-assessment tool for educational leaders (Competence Profile School Management, CPSM) based on psychological tests. The aim of CPSM is to offer a potential analysis for school leadership which serves as an orientation for teachers who are interested in school leadership tasks or as a basis for clarifying personal strengths and weaknesses for newly appointed and experienced members of school leadership teams. In close connection to the competence profile stands the interest-focused questionnaire by Huber and Zois (2011), Huber, Zois, and Mayr (2011) for future school leaders.

Hancock and Müller (2010; 2011) compare the influence of possible motivators and inhibitors that impact teachers' decisions to become principals in the USA and in Germany.

The perception of school leaders of the professional development of teachers was examined by Huber, Sangmeister, Skedsmo, Sassenscheidt and Reinhardt (2011) in a study of all continuous professional development means in Saxony-Anhalt.

Gibitz and Roediger (2005) also used a potential analysis as an instrument for the recruitment of educational leaders in Hesse. They did so, by highlighting a number of core competences for future school leaders and developing exercises to train them.

An evaluation study about the qualifications of school leaders of the association for Swiss school leaders (AEB-LCH) was published by Abächerli and Kopp (1997). Abächerli (1997, 1999) also published further evaluation studies. Kramis-Aebischer (1998) analyzed the management training for school leadership, school organization, and school development. Maag Merki (2003) concluded in the evaluation of the development of school leaders in the canton of Zurich that there is a need for further development and support in the fields of personnel development and team bulding as well as communication.

Rhyner (2004) evaluated a development program for future school leaders in the canton of Zurich in a large group design. In conclusion, the partici-

pants rated above all the small group work within the group design as positive for achieving their learning objectives. Landert (2004) evaluated the basic and further development of school leaders (AFS) in Bern and concluded that school leaders effectively work in the fields of public relations, structure formation, personnel introduction, organizational administration and school culture.

Rindlisbacher, Herren and Quesel (2008) evaluated school leadership development in Basle city and Basle Land (SLBB). Huber (2008a, 2009a) evaluated, in cooperation with the academy for adult education, the master's course school management of the University of Teacher Education Central Switzerland (PHZ) from the participants' perspective.

For the German context, Huber (2010a, 2010b)and Huber, Schneider, Skedsmo and Reinhardt (2011) evaluated leadership development programs in Bremen, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, and Thuringia. For this, a theoretical frame model for theory-based empiric research was developed (Huber 2009b, Huber & Radisch, 2010). This model forms the basis for several qualitative and quantitative evaluations, which besides the participants' point of view also include the opinions of the trainers (organizers, training staff) and the people responsible. The quality of teaching and learning arrangements are thus evaluated, as are individual learning processes and the transfer into practice.

Pfister (forthcoming) is currently investigating leadership approaches and theories with regard to their applicability to the structures of vocational schools, in order to collect in a standardized inquiry precise data about the wish of teachers in vocational schools to apply for leadership positions. Hartmann (forthcoming) is presently researching school leadership qualifications outside the German speaking countries, and specifically the professionalization of school leaders in the Canadian province of Ontario.

Conclusion

Research in the field of school leadership has a relatively young tradition in the German speaking countries (as it does in many other countries, too). Since 2000 the research base has improved. In particular, the research teams of Rosenbusch, Rolff, Schratz, Wissinger, Huber, and Bonsen have published several studies on school leadership. Aside from the research by these researchers, most of the studies have been undertaken by researchers who only did one study as a qualification study. Unfortunately, groups who could use an interdisciplinary approach, such as research consortia, for example, do not seem to exist in the German speaking countries.

However, a certain degree of internationality can be assumed, and the international literature is increasingly being used to inform the research into school leadership in the German speaking countries.

It is also noticeable that funding for research programs with a focus on school leadership/school management are extremely scarce or not existing at all.

This article is based on studies by researchers from the German speaking countries. Apart from these studies, there are further studies with different research questions, which along with their primary focus either implicitly or explicitly include school leadership. As stated before, such studies have not been included in this article.

The research desiderata that exist internationally (see below) also hold true for the German speaking countries. Moreover, results from international research (particularly from the Anglo-American context) certainly cannot be simply adopted and applied, but they could be used for conducting replicative studies. This would be a rewarding and challenging task, as when it comes to adapting the research instruments, for example, simply translating them into German would of course be insufficient. Such replicative studies could provide interesting comparative perspectives.

Based on this brief research review, further research desiderata become apparent, which will be outlined briefly:

There is still some need of further basic research into tasks of and demands on school leadership in German speaking countries. Among these should be surveys of school leadership recognized as 'good' and 'bad' according to various outcome criteria on the organization level as well as the individual level by teachers and pupils, for example. Of particularly interest is the impact of school leadership on improving teaching and learning. Teaching and learning, or education and instruction, are the core activities of schools. In terms of an organisational-educational approach, it is from this that the core purpose of school leadership must be derived: what should school leadership activities be like in order to have the best possible effect on classroom instruction in a twofold sense, providing the best possible organisational conditions on the one hand, and having an (immediate) effect on classroom instruction and classroom development on the other hand?

Moreover, research on stress, burn-out, and on coping strategies of school leaders is needed. In addition, research about school leaders' values, interests, the tasks they like and how all this is linked to various other factors such as personal aspects or elements of the organizational context could be illuminating and also how this is changing over time as school leadership is professionalized (moving away from 'primus inter pares' to professional leadership and management with high decision-making power).

It is necessary to conduct analyses regarding the training and development needs of school leaders at different career steps and in different school contexts. Specific research has to be carried out to determine the ways school leaders develop competences which lead to successful leadership with a high impact on key variables. How do they generate knowledge? How do they develop expertise? How can the transition of the knowledge acquired in the development program into practice be improved? How does this change across the various career stages? What is considered supportive? International comparative studies particularly concerning the effectiveness of programs should be conducted. This will provide insights in the quality, and sustainability of development programs. A standardised research design, and not only one for a meta-study would be desirable here. There should also be educational-economic studies on the efficiency of training and development programs. These could provide information for educational-policy decisions concerning the overall efforts taken. Moreover, it would be interesting to investigate how the development of individual school leaders could be linked effectively to the development of individual schools in terms of qualifying school leadership teams and other change agents in the individual schools (including studies of schools that have realised alternative leadership possiblities such as shared leadership, etc.).

The importance of researching the election and recruitment of school leaders and its connection with school leader development should be emphasised.

Obviously, much more can be researched in, it is about specific issues of research within the different academic disciplines which can be applied in the specific field. Psychology emphasises social aspects, motivation, decision-making processes, contingency issues, etc. But other disciplines such as sociology or political sciences or economics or others will have fruitful research questions and additional fields and approaches.

That the research base is not as strong as one might expect reflects not just a dearth of research compared to prescription, but also deficiencies in research designs. Moreover, as to the data we have so far, there is a strong overreliance of self-report in leadership studies in the German speaking countries, where the most common form of research design is either a survey or interviews, usually of a limited number of school leaders. Studies are almost always post hoc, trying to work backwards with a retrospective view on the research object. This practice is clearly limited. Both survey- and interview-based methodologies, while highly useful, have some severe limitations, when used as the sole means of data collection. Post hoc interviews

are heavily prone to attributional bias (the tendency to attribute to ourselves positive outcomes, while negative outcomes are externally attributed, Weiner, 1980), as well as to self-presentation bias and interviewer expectancy effects (the tendency to give those answers that might be expected by the interviewer).

Survey questionnaires are likewise limited, especially where they are cross-sectional, as only correlational data can be collected. The issues of expectancy effects and bias exist here as well, as does attributional bias, for example. These limitations mean it is often hard to make strong statements either about impact or about processes.

The quantitative methodologies used need to be longitudinal more often and to take advantage of quasi-experimental designs, and even of field trials of new leadership methods. Moreover, there is a need to gather data not only from the school leaders but also from teachers and others (to add additional views from an external perception to the self-reports from a self-perception).

Additionally, observations, although cost intensive and not easy to implement as they most often intervene with the day-to-day practice which should be observed, might help the research move towards multi-perspectivity and triangulation.

Qualitative approaches likewise need to be more multi-perspective and longitudinal. They need to employ methods and instruments that allow more in-depth interrogation of processes such as ethnographic studies and genuine long-term case studies as well as the methods currently being used.

Researchers have recently begun developing mixed methods designs. Combining different approaches can in many ways be fruitful either in an explanative or in an explanatory way. Firstly, it is clear that researchers and scholars within the field of educational leadership need to be more explicit about the theories applied, the constructs used, and to have a conceptual awareness, , meaning that the underlying assumptions guiding the research are identified. What is obvious is that the complexity of leadership processes and their impact requires the use of research designs which take this complexity into account. The research needs to be conducted in a coherent way, integrating research questions, conceptual framework, methods, analysis, and conclusions and critically engaging in a discussion of the research results, including the limitations of the study conducted and the implications for leadership practice (see Yanchar & Williams, 2006).

It is also interesting to see how alternative data gathering methods might illuminate the complexity of organisation and leadership context, as, e.g.

Huber (2008b, 2009c) uses Social Network Analysis, Life Curve Analysis, such as pictures and metaphors.

In addition to more complex data gathering methods, there is also a need for more refined methods of data analysis such as multi-level, growth models, structure equation modelling.

Moreover, research that takes the context and the contingency into account needs to be undertaken. However, these expected pieces of research imply high demands. There are obvious contextual differences in terms of leadership such as the extent of autonomy school leaders have within the educational system, their appointment and selection criteria, and many other less easily accessible cultural differences. It is about the culture of organisations and systems and the more general professional and general culture of a field and of countries. Carefully designed comparisons with other fields and other countries between the German speaking countries as well as between other European and non-European countries would be very illuminating.

This means that the tendency to move straight to prescription becomes potentially even more harmful where the research base is from an entirely different (cultural) context, where school leadership will operate under different circumstances and conditions.

To sum this article up, while leadership research has made important contributions to the field of education, which have had practical benefits, if we are genuinely to move both research and practice forward we need to perform more rigorous quantitative and qualitative research, aimed at both measuring impact and exploring processes, taking into account the complexity of schools as organisations, and refraining from an overly prescriptive approach that, on the basis of very limited research, posits absolute truths about good practice. Last but not least we need to create better 'fits' of theories, empirical research and experienced practice. Hence, besides all methodological and methodical questions and desired modified research practice, there is also a need to refine theoretical models and theories (whether with a very focused or with a broader approach). Empirical research should lead to further developed theories and theoretical assumptions should guide further empirical work.

Obviously, feasibility is also restricting the research (our own and that and of our colleagues) and therefore the research designs should have the appropriate funding to make new kinds of research possible. Proper funding for research is an important aspect There is a need to have research grants which are large enough to allow cooperative research arrangements to develop more sophisticated multi-perspective and longitudinal research designs.

National and international experiences should be considered and integrated, and international research co-operations should be promoted. As a basis for this, national and international networks should be futher developed. In these networks, educationalists and practitioners should have a forum for the exchange of ideas and for cooperation.

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CHAPTER 12 RESEARCH ON PRINCIPALS IN POLAND

Joanna M. Michalak

Introduction

In the last decade a rise of interest in issues of leadership could have been observed both among scientists and practitioners in Poland. Nowadays no one in Poland must be persuaded that leaders are needed. It entails seeking out and supporting the best individuals who are able and wish to change our reality, possess skills enabling them to introduce change, engage others and search for new ways for their communities, which is especially important in education.

The purpose of this paper is to present a research review of the PhD research and regular studies on principals and school leaders in Poland. The presented research overview covers the period from 2000 to 2010, and it is preceded by a description of the school reforms in Poland.

School Reform in Poland: Distribution of Responsibilities and the Scope of Role of the School Head

In Poland schools reforms are influenced both by debate with the profession (for example the concerns about accountability, standardised testing and accreditation that have come to the fore in recent years) and by wider social, political and economic context. By the early 1990s, Poland had one of the lowest participation rates in full secondary education and in higher education of any industrial country. After the demise of communism, this system seized up. The industry sectors that previously ran the vocational schools backed away from funding them and from guaranteeing employment to their graduates. The most important, immediate reasons which were underlying the necessity to carry out a comprehensive reform of the whole education system were connected with the lack of capacity within the education system to adapt to the pace and scope of economic, social and cultural change. And in particular these reasons were, as follow (Michalak, 2005):