

## Analyses of an Effective Leadership Strategy in Early Childhood Education in Developing Countries: From a Recipient to an Actor



Ewa, Gegbazi Moses<sup>1</sup>, Ewa, Moses Apie PhD<sup>2</sup>, Abutiang, Peter Ukpanukpong<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,3</sup>Department of Primary Education, School of Early Childhood Care and Primary Education, Cross River State College of Education, Akamkpa, P.M.B. 1171, Calabar, Nigeria

<sup>2</sup>Department of Educational Foundations and Childhood Education, Faculty of Education, University of Cross River State, P.M.B. 1123, Calabar, Nigeria

**ABSTRACT:** In the analysis of this paper the authors investigate a leadership model that can facilitate effectiveness in the early childhood education (ECE) in developing regions, including Africa. Leadership components that indicate multilevel collaboration among stakeholders appear to hold huge advantages ensuring the success of the early years education. Distributed leadership emerged in literature as a leadership model that is increasingly becoming popular in the 21<sup>st</sup> century as a means to engage, motivate and empower stakeholders in education to share roles in leadership in concert with the school head to ensure the development of the ECE. The attention drawn to distributed leadership is because it seems to enable a movement from the traditional ways where leadership resides in an individual acting as a lone school leader to a practice that allows teachers, parents and even children to actively participate in decision making and influencing positive changes at school. Such a leadership pattern is also preferable as it seems to be flexible in its application to reflect context.

**KEYWORDS:** distributed leadership, early childhood education, school, participant empowerment, developing countries.

### INTRODUCTION

A distributed leadership (Harris, 2008; Halttunen, 2016) model has effect to stimulate engagement, motivation, participation and empowerment among school administrators, teachers, parents and children in early childhood education (ECE) in developing countries (DCs). ECE is getting an increasing recognition as a basis for primary education for children in parts of Africa (Mwamwenda, 2014). The entry age for children into this form of education varies across countries within the continent. A cross country assessment conducted by Mwamwenda (2014) about the entry qualification particularly in Africa indicates that children within the age range of 2-6 years are eligible to start ECE, prior to primary education. As such, the field of distributed leadership in the 21<sup>st</sup> century draws attention to the efforts in education to ensure the implementation of a leadership pattern that can motivate all stakeholders to commit to a shared vision in ECE. The concept of 'shared vision' appears emphatic within the discourse of DL and suggests the collective efforts of all concerned towards achieving a common goal in school. It is a feature that is connected to a new leadership direction which has clearly appeared in the works of Harris (2008), Goksoy (2015), Halttunen (2016), Dampson, Havor & Laryea (2018) and McGuinness & Taysum (2020) as 'distributed leadership' (DL).

Distributed leadership is gaining more and more popularity as a leadership style within the realm of educational administration and management in different contexts including DCs and it is about effective use of school resources to enhance the school. This leadership style is the focus of this paper and its examination herein is in terms of how effective it is in developing ECE in DCs. Over the years, school leadership has always assumed a top down approach (Harris, 2008) as against an 'all hands on the deck' procedure. Such an approach illustrates a situation in which one person occupies the position of leader as a school administrator or head, initiates, takes major decisions about the school and tries to inspire others – in the kind of a leader and follower relationship - to implement such decision, sometimes unchallenged. It is a leadership practice that is seemingly authoritarian, vesting huge power in an individual in the school. With the development of the ECE, such a boss-like and hierarchical structure in school leadership practices appears to be uninviting not guaranteeing the engagement of the diverse people in school in

## **Analyses of an Effective Leadership Strategy in Early Childhood Education in Developing Countries: From a Recipient to an Actor**

collaborative work to ensure school improvement and positive outcomes in the children. Muijs & Harris (2007) stated that the school head does not have all the knowledge about school leadership.

That is because, in the view of Camburn, Rowan & Taylor (2003), elementary schools are not led by a single school administrator, but by a group of people. Allowing different people to participate in leadership makes the work easy. Also, it creates opportunities for those given the chance to take part in leadership to exchange ideas in ways that might benefit children and the school in general. According to (Dampson, Havor & Laryea (2018), educators in ECE are likely to face issues of absenteeism, exclusion, marginalization, disengagement, dropout, dissatisfaction and teamwork (Dampson, Havor & Laryea (2018) that involves all stakeholders as necessary to surmount these challenges at school. The organizational environment in a school is too complicated for an individual or team to handle independently (O'Connor & Day, 2007). Impliedly, a supportive and interdependent work among school personnel who are participating in leadership are critical to easing workload and pressure that may occur in ECE.

Recent literatures, for example Spillane (2005), Harris (2008) and Heikka, Waniganayake & Hujala (2012) in the field of educational management are concentrating on patterns of leadership that promote shared responsibility and authority among the different people in ECE. However, according to Halttunen (2016), the first significant change in leadership arrangements occurred in the 1980s in the United States of America (USA) at the time school heads were providing educational services for children in day care centres. Later on, in the 1990s small day care centres merged with the large ones to mark the beginning of multi-unit organizations in day care (Vartiainen, Kokko & Hakonen, 2004). The merger in organizational units led to increased effects on leadership. Both head of the school and other staff members co-construct and share responsibilities in a distributed kind of leadership (Shamir, 2007; Halttunen, 2016) perhaps as a means to enhance the experiences children get in early years education (EYE).

Drawing from the US situation, interests in distributed leadership by educators has witnessed some increase and this appears to highlight its importance as a means to demonstrate qualities of a good leader and/or as a new and better alternative to traditional leadership patterns in ECE within DCs (Smith, 2017; cf. McGuinness & Taysum (2020). Shava and Tlou (2018) argued that DL was conceived as a framework for analysing school leadership in different contexts. Such analyses is in terms of the roles members of school play, the relationship they exercise among themselves in the course of executing assigned tasks in leadership and the effect of that on teacher professionalism and children's performances at school.

### **THE NOTION OF DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP IN ECE**

A significant amount of literature on distributed leadership concentrates mostly on school-based leadership (Heikka, Waniganayake & Hujala, 2012). Such analyses about DL from the perspective of what the school leader does are documented in Camburn et al. (2003), MacBeath (2005), Firestone & Martinez (2007), Leithwood, Mascal, Strauss, Sacks, Memon & Yashkina (2007) and Spillane, Camburn & Pareja (2007). Defining distributed leadership within the context of early childhood education tends to be problematic. Literature on distributed leadership assumedly focuses more on how it operates in primary and secondary schools and less in early childhood education. In some sense that might be attributed to the thinking that the ECE, as pre-primary education, is relatively new and perhaps has yet to take firm roots in educational cultures across DCs. Understanding DL in that sense thus becomes somewhat challenging. The understanding of it can be achieved from the point of view of the way it is being applied in school in general. A consensus about the precise meaning of distributed leadership is difficult to achieve. Investigations about the concept are still on-going in the realm of education. Authors, researchers and educators conceptualise the idea based on the outcome of their inquiries and observations.

Different nuances therefore feature in the attempts to find a general definition of the concept. In his article entitled *the new work of educational leaders* Gronn (2002) terms it as distributed leadership. Gastil (1997) and Woods (2004) see it as being a democratic form of leadership. Pearce (2004) makes attempt to simplify the term as shared leadership. According to Wallace (2002), it is an approach of leadership that is collaborative. MacBeath, Oduro & Waterhouse (2014) stated that distributed leadership shares similar meanings with dispersed, shared, collaborative and democratic leadership. On the other hand, Day, Harris, Hadfield, Tolley & Beresford (2000) prefer to use it interchangeably with shared leadership, democratic and the likes. The concept might be defined within the context of the ECE as a collaborative method of leadership that guarantees shared vision among participants towards enhancing the education of preschoolers. Along this line, distributed leadership is used in this paper synonymously with shared vision, participation, collaboration and democracy. While authors make efforts to provide definition of the term in different forms, the following meanings can be deciphered from their viewpoints about DL: interaction, interdependence of individuals and devolution of power at school. As mentioned earlier distributed leadership enables interdependent interactions among the school head, teachers, parents and children in the school.

## **Analyses of an Effective Leadership Strategy in Early Childhood Education in Developing Countries: From a Recipient to an Actor**

Understandably, distributed leadership does not make everybody in school a leader, to lead or to make the team bossless. Writing the topic: *distributed leadership: according to the evidence*, Harris (2008) posit that since leadership to a certain level is distributed, many people within the school would have the opportunity to contribute to facilitate, orchestrate and support the decision to change and improve the school. It means that all forms of leadership might be distributed at some points, but power sharing is the hallmark of a distributed kind of leadership. Within the frame of the DL, a considerable number of the people in school might not stay at the periphery of school effectiveness efforts, but contribute by actively participating at the centre in discussions and sharing ideas and seeing that such ideas make a difference in school improvement and effectiveness. Contributing to the issue, Shava & Tlou (2018) expressed the view that this method implicitly changes, challenges or ignores the traditional leadership strategy which projects an individual as a hero leader in schools in DCs.

Also, it is antithetical to the laissez faire model that permits nonchalance among members performing leadership roles in school. School leadership regarding ECE goes beyond exercising individualistic knowledge, skills (Baloğlu, 2011) authority and power. It is a leveling of hierarchical power where both positional leaders (e.g. school heads, principals, supervisors etc) and teachers can teach together in the same environment.

Distributed leadership is a 'catch-all term' embracing relevant features of other methods of school leadership such as democratic leadership, transactional leadership, instructional leadership (Harris & Chapman, 2002; Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris & Hopkins,

2006a; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006), thus promote engagement and empowerment. It shifts away in practice from each of the other leadership models mentioned above as it emphasizes teamwork among the participants to ensure school effectiveness.

### **DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP AS AN EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP PROCEDURE IN ECE**

DL holds advantages in many ways in ECE. Not only the school head, but all participants in ECE e.g. teachers, support staff and parents, hold some power to enact selfmanagement (Clarkin-Phillips, 2009; Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004) within the distributed leadership practice. Children's outcomes might improve due to positive effects of distributed leadership on staff motivation and performance (Hughes, Berryman & Sheen, 2014) as the leadership procedure offers opportunity for them to contribute to school improvement initiatives. Also, staff members at school have a degree of agency, control and autonomy (Woods et al., 2004) within the distributed leadership structure and they are given the capacity within the institution to take initiatives independently (Woods & Gronn, 2009).

The concept of school effectiveness in relation to ECE connects instructional leadership (IL) (Mayrowetz, 2008) which is about activities in leadership that impact the way pupils learn (Hallinger, 2003). School administrators who work within this structure provide opportunity for innovation among teachers. As such the teacher enjoys certain level of power to transform classroom instruction. By giving a firm application of that in the early childhood setting, it means distributing roles to support and transform pedagogical tasks and processes (Heikka et al., 2012). Distributed leadership implicitly does not only link instructional leadership, it motivates IL. Better instructional leadership occurs as an effect of distributed leadership because the teacher and learner interact in a manner where both of them have the chance to build trustworthy partnerships to co-create knowledge and criticise teaching and learning.

Knowledge and learning in the early childhood education environment thrives through a distribution of roles in the organization (Ebbeck & Waniganayake, 2003). That is because distributed leadership favours organizational position that is based on collaboration and cooperation in a group instead of the one that demonstrates a 'leader' and 'follower' model (Gronn, 2000, 2002a; Timperley, 2005; Mayrowetz, 2008; Woods & Gronn, 2009). Leadership is leveled rather than being vertical and vested in an individual. Such a leadership practice does not imply absence of a lead/principal leader or makes those in central leadership position redundant. It only requires hard work on the person holding the central leader position and cooperation from others to ensure effective supervision and coordination of the activities of other members in a distributed leadership (Harris, 2008).

Operating leadership in this pattern in the early childhood setting is likely to give teachers agency to act, even in emergencies because they could apply personal discretion to address issues. Members do not have to wait for directions as it is the usual practice in a traditional leadership model; they use their discretions justifiably to act to address children's needs. For this to happen it suggests that there is an existence of a strong relationship built on trust, confidence, professionalism and expertise among participants to handle situations. In a related work to distributed leadership, Dinham (2005b, p.343) stated that where exceptional educational outcomes occur, the leadership – school head, other school management staff and teachers, influenced children's outcomes through: A central focus on pupils and their learning; teacher learning, responsibility, trust; external awareness,

## **Analyses of an Effective Leadership Strategy in Early Childhood Education in Developing Countries: From a Recipient to an Actor**

engagement; bias towards innovation, action; pupil support, common purpose and collaboration; personal qualities and relationships; vision, expectations, culture of success.

With such an organizational climate and condition created, both teachers and children take control of what they are learning and how they are learning it. Hulpia, Devos & Rosseel (2009) conducted a study in which they investigated the connection between DL and teacher commitment to the organization. Their research revealed that teachers showed more commitment to work when school leaders were accessible and encouraging them to participate in decision making. In regards to the learners, Sillins &

Mulford (2002) pointed that children's outcomes are likely to improve when leadership is distributed among members of the school community and when teachers feel they are being empowered to address issues they consider to be vital in the school (Shava & Tlou, 2018). Day, Sammons, Hopkins, Harris, Leithwood, Gu., Penlington, Methton & Kingston (2007) share a similar perspective with Sillins & Mulford.

DL helps to change the didactic practices and ensures the teachers take ownership of their teaching and professional learning, children provide feedbacks of their experiences at school and criticize teacher work, parents make contributions and are motivated to partner with teachers to enhance learning for children, and also there are opportunities for mutual support at school. This situation is in some ways akin to democratic practices in school because it signifies respect for the worth of the individuals and his or her opinions, representation in leadership, participation of all in decision making. According to Woods (2004, pp.441), it is the 'additional dynamics which is the product of conjoint activity - where people work together in such a way that they pool their initiatives and expertise' the result is a product, or energy which is greater than the sum of their individual action. Shava & Tlou (2018) shares a similar view on the issue as Woods (2004).

It is implicit that leadership models that support a top down flow of ideas are not workable, or are impotent to produce the desired results in ECE. Rather than just staying at the receiving end, others can also contribute initiatives to enhance leadership to benefit ECE. When distributed leadership is effective in the early years environment, individual teachers in the school become more accountable and responsible for their instructional functions and performances and the school executives structure take responsibility for their leadership roles. In the opinion of Tian, Risku, & Collin (2016) there is also a positive impact on children's experiences at school as they are likely to self-determine to fulfill learning goals. DL members learn from one another and where there are problems, the solutions are easily possible and diverse unlike what occurs in an individualistic leadership practice.

### **BARRIERS OF DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP IN ECE IN DCs**

Distributed leadership as a school leadership strategy is still evolving (Heikka, Waniganayake & Hujala, 2012) in DCs. Discussions and active research regarding this leadership style in early childhood education are only coming to the fore recently in literature (Ebbeck & Waniganayake, 2003; Muijs, Aubrey, Harris & Briggs, 2004; Rodd, 2006; Aubrey, 2007; Fasoli, Scrivens & Woodrow, 2007) to influence leadership practices in ECE in the developing societies. Consequently, there is an assumed misconception among school administrators, teachers, parents and children about the subject in the context. Such misconceptions seem to emanate from a lack of clear approach to define DL (Shava & Tlou, 2018) and its role in ECE within DC. There is a belief among researchers and educators that the concept applies more in theory than in practice (Harris, 2008; Shava & Tlou, 2018). As such, distributing leadership throughout the school community in the early childhood setting tends to be quite challenging. It is likely some educators in DCs are used to traditional leadership structures where authority flows from the top to the bottom and it is problematic to them to adjust to the DL as the top down method of leading is perhaps a reflection of the larger leadership practices in local communities in the context. More so, provisions in national education policies do not seem to support DL. This might reduce the chances of making DL a legitimate leadership practice in ECE in the context.

Many school heads would rather prefer to hold onto power than to distribute it to subordinates so as to preserve their authority (Shava & Tlou, 2018) in the DCs. For instance, buttressing this further from the point of view of the autocratic factors that inhibit DL in the African context, Grant (2006) stated that African school leaders are more likely to apply authoritarian practices linked to ethnicity, gender biases and culture. Such sense of insecurity would create tensions in the school heads and some headmasters/mistresses can become suspicious that sharing leadership responsibilities and roles with teachers is capable of creating situations for teachers to see their inefficiencies, to overthrow them, hold them in contempt or make them become redundant heads (Sund & Lines, 2017). Understandably, it raises concerns about issues of respect, loyalty and patriotism among participants in DL. Also, the solo leader would resist any leadership practice or idea that would change the status quo as that can deskill him or her in favour of the subordinates.

## **Analyses of an Effective Leadership Strategy in Early Childhood Education in Developing Countries: From a Recipient to an Actor**

Also, opponents of distributed leadership express fear that distributing leadership is a risky venture as doing so might result in distributing incompetence (Timperley, 2005). Participants in the distributed leadership structure might lack the skills and knowledge to practice especially when the goals of the school are not properly communicated and coordinated (Mayrowetz, 2008). Members of the distributed leadership including teachers and parents might misunderstand the practice as asking them to take the destinies of the children and the school in their hands. More so, there are seemingly no clear cut policy provisions, particularly within developing societies, either at the national or school level to ensure devolution of leadership in the early years education. This suggests that policymakers are vague about conceptualizing DL in policy and how such a policy provision on distributed leadership can affect ECE in developing countries.

Teachers might feel worried about the expectations placed on them by the headmaster/mistress, and even colleagues, when they are assigned leadership roles (Shava & Tlou, 2018). Others would feel overstressed to be made to perform active roles in leadership as their pedagogical functions in early years already presents a huge task to them (Mayrowetz, 2008). The concern of parents and school heads seems to be more about effective teaching and helping children to produce positive outcomes in learning than on leadership. As a result parents might sometimes exhibit indifference to leadership practices issues at school and how leadership activities impact children's education.

Requiring teachers to engage in shared decision making in addition to their traditional roles of teaching at school saps their energies, consumes their time and disturbs their comfort. Structural and cultural barriers exist within schools, including the early childhood ones, and that could pose a challenge for some teachers to demonstrate leadership (Shava & Tlou, 2018). For instance, some young teachers could find it difficult to express their views especially when such opinions are opposed to those held by the veteran teachers or dominant others within the early years community. Some teachers are likely to be socially withdrawn and averse to team work. So, distributing leadership might disadvantage their inclination to solitary activity and an infringement on their right to privacy. Given these circumstances, the notion of distributing leadership can be a mere rhetoric in ECE. In emergency situations, particularly the current COVID-19 pandemic, social distancing is advised and that is a limitation to the concept of collaboration in DL. Leadership practices, such as the authoritarian type, that encourage solo roles in school leadership might become more dominant in practice than the distributed leadership as means to help curb the spread of the disease.

When DL works as a distributed property (Harris, 2008) bottlenecks are likely to occur in administrative duties. Leadership that allows authority to reside in one person in a top down manner tends to facilitate a quicker administrative functioning among members of the organization. Apart from that, early years education reflects an environment where the concern is more about play, good health and effective learning involving children; not essentially leadership. Discussions about DL are not very important to them except for the adults who work there. Although DL is being advanced as a good leadership model, Harris, Leithwood, Day, Sammon & Hopkins (2007) and Shava & Tlou (2018, p. 284) pointed that 'a lot depends on the quality of distributing leadership as well as on the method and purpose of its distribution' within the ECE setting.

### **DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP: IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE IN THE ECE IN DCs**

Early childhood education reflects a setting where education is provided for children in day cares. Implicitly, leadership has to devolve roles in such a way that empowers teachers and parents to work cooperatively so as to generate positive outcomes in learning among the children in the developing regions (Sammon & Hopkins, 2007; Harris, 2008; Shava & Tlou, 2018). Firstly, the people who perform key roles in the ECE have to critically analyse the research and policy on distributed leadership to be able to understand its implication in practice. Secondly, the educators need to develop a mechanism that encourages mutual support among participants of DL.

As the school as an organization becomes collaborative and participative, it allows for the mobilisation of expertise across the different levels where leadership occurs to change or avoid authoritarian practices (Harris, 2012) – a characteristic of leadership styles that invests authority in one person. Headmasters/mistresses are no longer expected to perform leadership roles and management of the school on their own (Botha & Triegaardt, 2015) but to share roles so that the subordinates can also make inputs to enhance decision-making to improve early child care education in DCs. Also, teachers are no longer expected to concentrate their resources only on teaching, but also to serve as partners with the head masters/mistresses in school leadership. Parents are not to stay aloof and allow the work of educating their children only in the hands of school personnel. Pieces of advice, suggestions and criticisms from parents are necessary to further expand collaboration in distributed leadership to benefit the children. Efforts from different sources serve as a pragmatic tool where leaders distribute the workloads (Tiana et al, 2016) of leadership and instruction that are likely to arise from children's needs at school.

## Analyses of an Effective Leadership Strategy in Early Childhood Education in Developing Countries: From a Recipient to an Actor

Such an 'all hands on deck' practice plays a significant role in predicting teacher devotion to help develop the whole school (Hulpia, Devos & Van Keer, 2010). The school has to provide the rationale based within the institution and insist on the rights, freedom and agency of all connected to the school to take part in decision making (Woods, 2005; Williams, 2011), create a democratic environment for and commit to the situation where all role players can speak truth to power. Furthermore, it proposes a collective harnessing of human and financial resources available to be able to deal with the problems linked to the practice of DL in ECE. The central purpose of the collaborative effort, in the words of Williams (2011) is to provide opportunities for developing leadership in ways that will empower all educators to evolve, enhance and broaden knowledge and skills in a focused and intensive manner required for building teaching and learning communities for a diverse learner population in the early years school.

What that means is that collaboration has to enable the role players to engage in a collective practice of sharing and solving problems. In societies where DL tends to be a novel concept of leadership in ECE, the stakeholders there require certain amount of patience and perseverance allowing the role players substantial time and space to learn from possible errors, make amends to reflect purpose and context.

### CONCLUSION

Distributed leadership appears as a preferred approach for an effective early childhood education. The undertaking of distributed leadership in ECE encourages, engages and empowers those involved in this leadership structure to collaborate in decision making aimed at professional development, school development and production of positive outcomes in the children. In an educational environment that has a diverse population as the ECE, distributed leadership shifts the burden of administering and managing school resources from a solo leader by sharing leadership roles and authority among key stakeholders in a bid to optimise performance in the education of children, growth of the school and career progress of the educators. It is a leadership perspective that motivates the various stakeholders to make huge commitment in and take responsibility to develop the education of children in the early years settings. DL is understandably not a one-fit-all leadership strategy that can apply in all contexts. Since the concept is still evolving, caution is required in its implementation, taking into consideration the socio-cultural context surrounding the ECE and perspective of those theorizing this leadership model for schools. It is advisable to set goals and specify functions of the role players as standard for operating DL as a school leadership method within context.

### REFERENCES

- 1) Baloğlu, N. (2011). Distributed leadership: A leadership approach that needs to be taken into consideration at schools. *Ahi Evran University Faculty of Education Journal*, 12(3), pp. 127-148.
- 2) Botha, R. J. & Triegaardt, P. K. (2015). The role of distributed leadership in functional South African schools. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 43(3), pp. 207-215.
- 3) Camburn, E., Rowan, B. & Taylor, J. E. (2003). Distributed leadership in schools: the case of elementary schools adopting comprehensive school reform models. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 25(4), pp. 347-373.
- 4) Clarkin-Phillips, J. (2009). Distributed leadership utilising everyone's strengths. *Early Childhood Folio*, 13, pp. 22-27.
- 5) Dampson, D. G., Havor, F. M. & Laryea, P. (2018). Distributed leadership an instrument for school improvement: The study of public senior high schools in Ghana. *Journal of Education and e-Learning Research*, 5(2), pp. 79-85.
- 6) Day, C., A. Harris, M. Hadfield, H. Tolley & J. Beresford (2000). *Leading schools in times of change*. Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.
- 7) Day, C., Sammons, P., Hopkins, D., Harris, A., Leithwood, K, Gu., Q., Penlington, C.,
- 8) Methton, P. & Kingston, A. (2007). *The impact of school leadership on pupils' outcome: Interim Report. National college of school leadership*. Nottingham UK.
- 9) Dinham, S. (2005b). Principal Leadership for Outstanding Educational Outcomes. *Journal of Educational Administration*. 43(4), pp. 338-356.
- 10) Ebbeck, M. & Waniganayake, M. (2003). *Early Childhood Professionals. Leading Today and Tomorrow*. Sydney: MacLennanPetty.
- 11) Fasoli, L., Scrivens, C. & Woodrow, C. (2007). Challenges for leadership in Aotearoa/New Zealand and Australian early childhood contexts. In: Keesing-Styles, L. & Hedges, H. (eds) *Theorizing Early Childhood Practice*. Castle Hill, NSW: Pademelon Press, pp. 231-253.
- 12) Firestone, W. A. & Martinez, M. C. (2007). Districts, teacher leaders, and distributed leadership: Changing instructional practice. *Leadership and Policy in Schools* 6(1), pp. 3-35.

## Analyses of an Effective Leadership Strategy in Early Childhood Education in Developing Countries: From a Recipient to an Actor

- 13) Gastil, J. (1997). *A Definition and Illustration of Democratic Leadership*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 155-78.
- 14) Goksoy, S. (2015). Distributed leadership in educational institutions. *Journal of Education and Training Studies*, 3(4), PP. 110-118.
- 15) Grant, C. (2006). Emerging voices on teacher leadership. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership*, 34, pp. 551-532.
- 16) Gronn, P. (2000). Distributing properties: A new architecture for leadership. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership* 28(3), pp. 317–338.
- 17) Gronn, P. (2002). *The new work of educational leaders*. London: Paul Chapman Press.
- 18) Gronn, P. (2002a). Distributed leadership as a unit of analysis. *The Leadership Quarterly* 13(4), pp. 423–451.
- 19) Hallinger, P. (2003). Leading educational change: Reflections on the practice of instructional and transformational leadership. *Cambridge Journal of education*, 33(3), pp. 329-352
- 20) Halttunen, L. (2016). Distributing leadership in a day care setting. *Journal of Early Childhood Education Research*, 5(1), pp. 2–18.
- 21) Hargreaves, A. & Fink, D. (2006). *Sustainable Leadership*. San Francisco: CA JosseyBass.
- 22) Harris, A. (2015). Distributed leadership: implications for the role of the principal. Accessed via <<http://www.emeraldinsight.com/0262-1711.htm>>
- 23) Harris, A. & Chapman, C. (2002), *Effective leadership in schools facing challenging circumstances*, National College for School Leadership (NCSL), Nottingham.
- 24) Harris, A. (2008). Distributed leadership: according to the evidence. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 46(2), pp. 172-188.
- 25) Harris, A., Leithwood, K., Day, C., Sammon, P. & Hopkins, D. (2007). Distributed leadership and organizational change: Reviewing the evidence. *Journal of Educational Change*, 8, pp. 337-347.
- 26) Heikka, J., Waniganayake, M. & Hujala, E. (2012). Contextualizing distributed leadership within early childhood education: current understandings, research evidence and future challenges. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 41(1), pp. 30–44.
- 27) Hughes, T. Berryman, B. & Sheen, J. (2014). Leadership insights from beyond the sector. CFE Research.
- 28) Hulpia H., Devos, G., Van Keer, H. (2010). The influence of distributed leadership on teachers' school commitment: a multilevel approach. *The Journal of Educational Study*, 103(1), pp. 40–52.
- 29) Hulpia, H., Devos, G. & Rosseel, Y. (2009). Development and validation scores on the distributed leadership inventory. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 20, pp. 122.
- 30) Leithwood, K., Day, C., Sammons, P., Harris, A. and Hopkins, D. (2006a), *Seven strong claims about successful leadership*, DfES, London.
- 31) Leithwood, K., Mascall, B., Strauss, T., Sacks, R., Memon, N. & Yashkina, A. (2007). Distributing leadership to make schools smarter: Taking the ego out of the system. *Leadership and Policy in Schools* 6(1), pp. 37–67.
- 32) MacBeath J, Oduro, G. K. T., Waterhouse, J. (2014). *Distributed leadership: an Unpublished study*. Oxford: National College for School Leadership.
- 33) Mayrowetz, D. (2008). Making sense of distributed leadership: Exploring the multiple usages of the concept in the field. *Educational Administration Quarterly* 44(3), pp. 424– 435.
- 34) McGuinness, S. J. & Taysum, A. (2020). Distributed leadership to enhance participation in school processes and practices to improve learning: A Northern Irish Faith Secondary School Case-Study. *Italian Journal of Sociology of Education*, 12(1), pp. 140-163.
- 35) Mwamwenda, T. S. (2014). Early childhood education in Africa. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(20), pp.14-3-1412.
- 36) Muijs, D. & A. Harris (2007). Teacher leadership (in) action: Three case studies of contrasting schools. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership*, 35(1), pp. 111-134.
- 37) Muijs, D., Aubrey, C., Harris, A. & Briggs, M. (2004). How do they manage? A review of the research on leadership in early childhood. *Journal of Early Childhood Research* 2(2), pp. 157–169.
- 38) O'Connor P. M. G. & Day, D. V. (2007). Shifting the emphasis of leadership development. From 'me' to 'all of us'. In J. A. Conger & R. E. Riggio (Eds.) *The practice of leadership. Developing the next generation of leaders*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, pp. 64–86.

## Analyses of an Effective Leadership Strategy in Early Childhood Education in Developing Countries: From a Recipient to an Actor

- 39) Pearce, C. L. (2004). The future of leadership: Combining vertical and shared leadership to transform knowledge work. *Academy of Management Executive*, 18(1), pp. 47–57.
- 40) Shamir, B. (2007). Introduction. From passive recipients to active co-producers:
- 41) followers' roles in the leadership process. In B. Shamir, P. Pillai, M. C. Bligh, & M. Uhl-Bien (Eds.) *Follower-centered perspectives on leadership*. A tribute to the memory of James R Meindl, pp. ix–xxxix. Greenwich: Information Age Publishing.
- 42) Shava, G. N. & Tlou, F. N. (2018). Distributed leadership in education, contemporary issues in educational leadership. *African Educational Research Journal*, 6(4), pp. 279287.
- 43) Sillins, H. & Mulford, W. (2002). *Leadership and school results*. Dordrecht. The Netherlands: Kluwer.
- 44) Smith, L. (2017). Distributed leadership in early years and childcare. Iris esss outline.
- 45) Spillane, J. P. (2005). Distributed leadership. *The Educational Forum* 69(2), pp. 143–150.
- 46) Spillane, J. P., Camburn, E. M., & Pareja, A. S. (2007). Taking distributed perspective to the school principal's workday. *Leadership and Policy in Schools* 6(1), pp. 103–125.
- 47) Spillane, J. P., Halverson, R. & Diamond, J. B. (2004). Towards a theory of leadership practice: A distributed perspective. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 36(1), pp. 3-34.
- 48) Sund, B. & Lines, R. (2017). When leadership leads to loathing: the effect of culturally (in)congruent leadership on employee contempt and voluntary work behaviors. *The Journal of Value-Based Leadership*, 10(2),
- 49) Tian, M., Risku, M. & Collin, K. (2016). A meta-analysis of distributed leadership from 2002 to 2013: Theory development, empirical evidence and further research focus. *Education management and Leadership*, 44(1), pp. 146-164.
- 50) Timperley, H. S. (2005). Distributed leadership: Developing theory from practice. *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 37(4), pp. 395–420.
- 51) Vartiainen, M., Kokko, N. & Hakonen M. (2004). Hallitse hajautettu organisaatio. Paikan, ajan, moninaisuuden ja viestinnän johtaminen. Helsinki: Talentum.
- 52) Wallace, M. (2002). Modelling distributed leadership and management effectiveness: primary school senior management teams in England and Wales. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 13(2), pp. 163-86.
- 53) Williams, C. G. (2011). Distributed leadership in South African schools: possibilities and constraints. *South African Journal of Education*, 31, pp. 190-200.
- 54) Woods, P. A. & Gronn, P. (2009). Nurturing democracy: The contribution of distributed leadership to a democratic organizational landscape. *Educational Management Administration Leadership* 37(4), pp. 430–451.
- 55) Woods, P. A. (2004). Democratic leadership: Drawing distinctions with distributed leadership. *International Journal of Leadership in Education* 7(1), pp. 3–26.
- 56) Woods, P. A. (2005). *Democratic leadership in education*. London: Paul Chapman Publishing.
- 57) Woods, P. A., Bennett, N., Harvey, J. A. & Wise, C. (2004). Variabilities and dualities in distributed leadership: Findings from a systematic literature review. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership* 32(4), pp. 439–457.



There is an Open Access article, distributed under the term of the Creative Commons Attribution – Non Commercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0)

(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits remixing, adapting and building upon the work for non-commercial use, provided the original work is properly cited.