

Chapter 2

Conceptual Framework

Lack of strong conceptual underpinnings for thinking about, never mind measuring instructional leadership, had represented a persisting impediment to efforts to assess or develop instructional the instructional leadership of school principals. The PIMRS conceptual framework was the first research-informed framework widely adopted by researchers and practitioners. This chapter describes the PIMRS conceptual framework as a prelude to discussing the development of the PIMRS rating instrument.¹

The quotation from Bridges (1967) included in Chap. 1 highlighted the importance of starting with a sound definition of what is meant by instructional leadership. Bridges had asserted that coherent discussions about the instructional leadership role of the principal were invariably hindered by the lack of a common definition of the construct. This chapter first introduces two of the most salient conceptual models of instructional leadership. Then, these models are placed in a broader perspective of leadership for learning.

2.1 Conceptualizing Instructional Leadership

Two predominant conceptual models of instructional leadership emerged during the 1980s in the USA. These were developed by Bossert et al. (1982) at the Far West Lab for Research and Development in San Francisco, and a complementary model developed by Hallinger and Murphy (1985). We examine each of these in turn.

¹This chapter draws extensively on material published in Hallinger (2005, 2011a) and Hallinger and Murphy (1985).

2.1.1 The Far West Lab Instructional Leadership Model

In their seminal review of the literature, Bossert et al. (1982) sought to more clearly define the construct of ‘instructional management’. Instructional management was conceptualized as actions and strategies employed by principals that are intended to impact the school’s instructional organization and learning climate with the goal of improving learning outcomes for students. They chose the term “instructional management” because they inferred that this role of the principal revolved around managerial functions concerned with the coordination and control of curriculum and instruction (e.g., Cohen and Miller 1980). Their instructional management framework (see Fig. 2.1) became an influential model that, to this day, continues to guide researchers in this field.

Several features of the Bossert framework are worthy of note:

- The model gives priority to a specific domain of the principal’s activities, *instructional management* (Bridges 1967; Cuban 1988; Edmonds 1979; Erickson 1979; Lipham 1981; Robinson et al. 2008).
- Approaches to instructional leadership are shaped by *personal characteristics* of principals (Goldring et al. 2008; Hallinger 2011a, c; Leithwood and Beatty 2008; Leithwood et al. 2008). These characteristics range from demographic factors (e.g., prior professional experience, gender, years of tenure as principal) as well as attitudes or dispositions (e.g., self-efficacy, resilience, optimism, openness to learning).
- Principal leadership is framed within an *organizational context*, thereby recognizing that leadership is influenced by organizational features such as school and district size and complexity, socio-economic status of the community, and socio-cultural features of the education environment (e.g., Belchetz and Leithwood 2007; Bridges 1977; Goldring et al. 2008; Hallinger and Heck 2011c; Hallinger and Murphy 1986; Teddlie et al. 2000; Wiley 2001). Leaders do not operate in a vacuum; their work is *moderated* or shaped by features of the context in which they work.

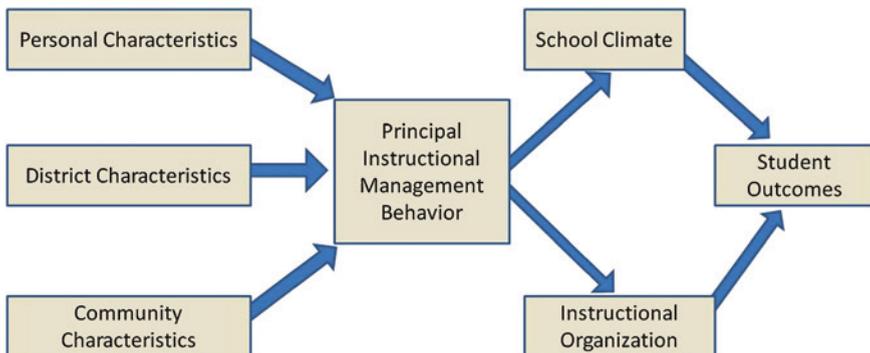


Fig. 2.1 Far West Lab instructional management framework (Bossert et al. 1982, p. 40)

- The principal's effects on student outcomes are also *mediated* by features of the school (i.e., Hallinger and Heck 1996a, b, 1998, 2010, 2011a, b). This is consistent with what Bridges (1977, 1982) termed 'achieving results through people'.
- The ultimate effectiveness of the principal's efforts is based upon the impact achieved on students learning and development (Edmonds 1979; Mulford and Silins 2003, 2009; Purkey and Smith 1983).

Although Bossert and his colleagues initially employed the term instructional management, over time instructional leadership came to be more commonly used by scholars and practitioners in the USA. The formal distinction between these terms lies in the sources of 'power' used to achieve results. Instructional leadership became the preferred term due to recognition that principals who operate from this frame of reference rely more on expertise and influence than on formal authority (i.e., position power) to achieve a positive impact (e.g., Blasé 1987; Hallinger 2003; Hallinger and Heck 1996a; Leithwood and Jantzi 2005; Leithwood et al. 1990, 2008; Knapp et al. 2009).

As noted in the previous chapter, the use of these terms prior to 2000 was a predominantly North American phenomenon. More recently, some scholars have proposed use of the term, 'leadership for learning' rather than instructional leadership (e.g., Knapp et al. 2009; MacBeath and Cheng 2008). Although they assert differences between the terms, in this volume we use them interchangeably.

2.1.2 PIMRS Instructional Leadership Model

Another early attempt to provide a clear definition of instructional leadership was represented in the work of Hallinger and Murphy (Hallinger et al. 1983; Hallinger and Murphy 1985; Murphy et al. 1983). Our conceptual framework incorporated three dimensions: *Defines the School Mission*, *Manages the Instructional Program*, and *Develops a Positive School Learning Climate* (Hallinger 1983; Hallinger et al. 1983; Hallinger and Murphy 1985; see Fig. 2.2). These dimensions were further delineated into 10 instructional leadership functions. We will briefly review the basis of these constructs.

2.1.2.1 Defines the School Mission

A prominent synthesis of the school leadership effects research conducted during the 1990s by Hallinger and Heck (1996a) identified vision and goals as the most significant avenue through which school leaders impact learning. More recently, in a meta-analysis of the school leadership effects literature, Robinson et al. (2008) reaffirmed this conclusion. Indeed, they placed vision and goals as the second most significant path through which principals contribute to improved learning in classrooms. Vision refers to a broad picture of the direction in which the school seeks to move (e.g., educating the whole child). In contrast, goals refer

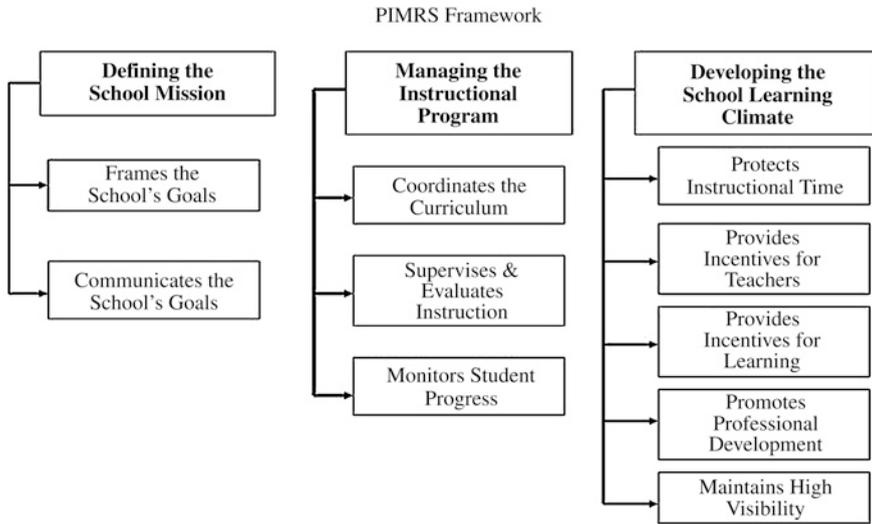


Fig. 2.2 PIMRS conceptual framework (Hallinger 1983; Hallinger and Murphy 1985, p. 221)

to the specific targets that need to be achieved on the journey towards that vision (Hallinger and Heck 2002).

This dimension refers to the principal’s role in determining the areas in which the school will focus its resources during a given school year. A notable finding that has emerged over the years with respect to the use of vision and goals in school improvement concerns the conceptualization of these constructs by scholars studying instructional leadership and transformational leadership (Hallinger and Heck 2002; Ylimaki 2006). The instructional leadership literature asserted that goal-related constructs (e.g., vision, mission, goals) must contain an academic focus (e.g., Hallinger and Heck 1996a; Murphy 1988, 2005; Robinson et al. 2008). In contrast, the application of transformational leadership to education (e.g., Leithwood, 1994; Mulford and Silins 2003), left open the ‘value’ question as to the focus of the vision and goals. Research findings that compare these two different treatments of goals on leadership for learning favor the instructional leadership approach (e.g., Leithwood et al. 2006, 2010; Robinson et al. 2008; Sun and Leithwood 2015). Thus, for the purposes of school improvement, the school vision and goals should be learning focused. This highlights the critical role that principals play in sustaining a school-wide focus on learning in the face of competing priorities (Hallinger 2003; Kurland et al. 2010). We note that this finding is supported by research on successful implementation of school-based management as well as school improvement, and applies even in contexts where there is strong collaborative leadership (Barth 1990; Leithwood and Menzies 1998; Murphy 2005; Sashkin 1988).

Vision and goals achieve their impact through two primary means (Hallinger and Heck 2002; Sun and Leithwood 2015). First they inspire people to contribute, even sacrifice, their effort towards the achievement of a collective goal

(Kantabutra 2005, 2009, 2010; Thompson 1968; Thompson and McEwen 1958; Ylimaki 2006). This motivational power of vision is also highlighted in the theory of transformational leadership (Hallinger 2003; Hallinger and Heck 2002; Leithwood 1994; Leithwood and Jantzi 2005; Sun and Leithwood 2015). Through joining a collective effort to reach a challenging but meaningful goal, people may come to realize new aspirations and achieve higher levels of performance (Sashkin 1988; Seeley 1992). Goals also impact performance by limiting staff attention to a more narrow range of desired ends and scope of activities. Clearly defined goals provide a basis for making decisions on staffing, resource allocation, and program adoption. They help to clarify what we will do and what we will not do (Kantabutra 2005, 2009, 2010; Saphier and King 1985; Sun and Leithwood 2015).

Although early research on effective schools identified a ‘clear academic vision and mission’ as a hallmark of these schools (Edmonds 1979; Purkey and Smith 1983), subsequent studies elaborated on important differences in the use of goals across different school contexts. Hallinger and Murphy found that effective schools in high SES contexts with a history of success appeared to operate with a clear academic vision and mission, but without clearly defined goals (Hallinger and Murphy 1986). In contrast, low SES effective schools that had more recently ‘turned around’ had both a clear academic vision and mission as well as clearly defined goals. The researchers proposed that in schools with a history of success, the vision was strongly embedded in the school’s culture and provided implicit guidance in maintaining the school’s direction. The low SES effective schools had used goals as a means of developing a shared vision and direction for improvement. This finding is supported in recent research conducted on school improvement that we will describe in greater detail below (Day et al. 2010; Duke 2004; Hallinger and Heck 2011a, b; Murphy and Meyers 2008).

Consequently, two functions, Frames the School Goals and Communicates the School Goals, comprise the dimension, *Defines the School Mission*. These functions concern the principal’s role in working with staff to ensure that the school has a clear mission and that the mission is focused on academic progress of its students (Andrews and Soder 1987; Bamberg and Andrews 1990; Hallinger et al. 1996; Heck et al. 1990; Leithwood et al. 2004, 2006, 2008; Purkey and Smith 1983; Robinson et al. 2008). While this dimension does not assume that the principal defines the school’s mission alone, it does propose that the principal is responsible for ensuring that such a mission exists and for communicating it widely to staff. This dimension is the starting point for creating a learner-centered school (Hallinger and Heck 2002; Knapp et al. 2009).

Frames the School Goals

Instructionally effective schools generally have a clearly defined mission or set of goals which student achievement. The emphasis is on fewer goals around which staff energy and other school resources can be mobilized. A few coordinated objectives, each with a manageable scope, appear to work best. The goals should incorporate data on past/current student performance and include staff responsibilities

for achieving the goals. Staff and parent input during the development of the school's goals seem important. Performance goals should be expressed in measurable terms (Bossert et al. 1982; Clark 1980; Davies et al. 2005; Edmonds 1979; Hallinger and Heck 2002; Robinson et al. 2008; Venezky and Winfield 1979).

Within this model, we have asserted that there is no single best approach for a principal to take in setting goals. Goals could be set by the principal or in collaboration with staff. The bottom-line, however, is that the school should have clear, academic goals that staff support and incorporate into their daily practice. This picture of goal-oriented, academically-focused schools contrasted with the typical situation in which schools are portrayed as pursuing a variety of vague, ill-defined, and sometimes conflicting academic and non-academic goals.

Communicates the School Goals

This function is concerned with the ways in which the principal communicates the school's most important goals to teachers, parents, students etc. Principals can ensure that the importance of the school's goals is understood by discussing and reviewing them with staff on a regular basis during the school year, especially in the context of instructional, curricular, and budgetary decisions. Both formal communication channels (e.g., goal statements, staff bulletins, articles in the principal or site council newsletter, the school handbook, assemblies) and informal ones (e.g., parent conferences, teacher conferences, curricular meetings, other discussions with staff, can be used to communicate the school's primary purpose (Brookover et al. 1982; Brookover and Lezotte 1977; Edmonds 1979; Hallinger et al. 1996; Hallinger and Murphy 1986; Heck 1992, 1993, 2000; Kantabutra 2005, 2009, 2010; Leithwood et al. 2006; Leitner 1994; Marks and Printy 2003; Robinson et al. 2008; Sun and Leithwood 2015; Ylimaki 2006).

The instructional leader's role in defining a school mission was captured in a study of effective California primary schools conducted by Hallinger and Murphy (1986). In the course of their study, they observed teachers in their classrooms for several days. One teacher had an affective education activity center entitled "I am..." in the back of the room. However, during the classroom observations the researchers never saw students working at it (p. 339). When queried about this, the teacher observed:

Yes, the affective activity center is something I really like to use with my students. However, this particular class has not made the usual progress in basic subjects, so I've had less time for affective activities. Our focus in the school is on ensuring that every one of our students has mastered basic subjects. We really try to make time for optional subjects as well. However, our principal *expects us to spend as much time on reading, writing, spelling, and math as is necessary to achieve this objective* (emphasis added). So I adjust the time accordingly. (Hallinger and Murphy 1986, p. 339)

Later during one of his interviews, the principal repeated this expectation almost word for word. It was obviously something that had been discussed with and among the staff many times. This comment captures several characteristics of the instructional leader's role in defining a clear mission. First, at this school the mission

was absolutely clear. It was written down and visible around the school. Second, it was focused on academic development appropriate to the needs of this particular school population. Third, the mission set a priority for the work of teachers. Fourth, it was known and accepted as legitimate by teachers throughout the school. Fifth, the mission was articulated, actively supported, and modeled by the principal.

2.1.2.2 Manages the Instructional Program

The second dimension, *Manages the Instructional Program*, focuses on the coordination and control of instruction and curriculum. This dimension incorporates three leadership (or what might be termed management) functions: Supervises and Evaluates Instruction, Coordinates the Curriculum, Monitors Student Progress. This dimension focuses on the role of the principal in “managing the technical core” of the school (Hallinger 2003; Hallinger and Heck 1998; Leithwood et al. 2006; Marks and Printy 2003; Murphy 1988; Robinson et al. 2008; Spillane 2006; Weick 1976, 1982). In larger schools, it is clear that the principal is not the only person involved in monitoring and developing the school’s instructional program. Yet this framework assumes that coordination and control of the academic program of the school is a key leadership responsibility of the principal, even when day-to-day tasks are delegated extensively to others.

This dimension requires the principal and other leaders to be engaged in stimulating, supervising and monitoring teaching and learning in the school. Although time constraints may limit the principal’s own personal efforts in this domain (e.g., Buttram et al. 2006; Marshall 1996), it remains critical to model and organize the whole leadership team to ensure that this gets done (Barth 1990; Hallinger and Heck 2010, 2011a, b; Heck and Hallinger 2014; Hayes et al. 2004; Kleine-Kracht 1993). Obviously, these functions also demand that the principal have expertise in teaching and learning, as well as a commitment to the school’s improvement. It is this dimension that requires the principal to become “hip-deep” in the school’s instructional program (Bossert et al. 1982; Cuban 1984; Dwyer 1986; Dwyer et al. 1983a, b; Edmonds 1979; Hallinger and Murphy 1986; Marshall 1996, 2004).

By way of example, we would again recall the principal in the example cited above. In discussions of how school leaders monitored student progress, several different teachers at this school observed that the principal “knew the reading level and progress of all 650+ students in this primary school” (Hallinger and Murphy 1986). This particular behavior is not a requirement for instructional leadership. However, it reflects the degree of this principal’s involvement in monitoring student progress and in managing the school’s instructional program.

Supervises and Evaluates Instruction

A central task of the principal is to ensure that the goals of the school are being translated into practice at the classroom level. This involves coordinating the classroom objectives of teachers with those of the school and evaluating classroom

instruction. In addition, it includes providing instructional support to teachers and monitoring classroom instruction through formal and informal classroom visits both by the principal and others engaged in instructional support (Attinello et al. 2006; Goldring and Berends 2009; Goldring et al. 2009; Hallinger et al. 1996; Hallinger and Heck 1996a; Heck et al. 1990; Joyce and Showers 2002; Kimball et al. 2004; Levine 1982; Lipham 1981; Liu and Zhao 2013; Loup et al. 1996; Reynolds et al. 2003; Robinson et al. 2008; Showers 1985).

This particular function remains controversial. Over the past decade, the teacher evaluation function of the principal has attracted increased attention (Danielson 2007; Hallinger et al. 2014; Kimball and Milanowski 2009; Kimball et al. 2004). Yet, we note that there remains relatively little empirical support for its impact on teaching and learning quality (Baker et al. 2010; Darling-Hammond 2006; Darling-Hammond et al. 2012; Darling-Hammond and Youngs 2006; Hallinger et al. 2014; Jacob and Lefgren 2008; Murphy et al. 2013). Within the PIMRS framework this function emphasizes the importance of developing the instructional capacity of teachers more than on the formal evaluation of teachers (Attinello et al. 2006; Duke 1990; Fullan 2001; Hallinger et al. 2014; Reynolds et al. 2003; Showers 1985).

Coordinates Curriculum

A characteristic which stands out in instructionally effective schools is the high degree of curricular coordination. School curricular objectives are closely aligned with both the content taught in classes and the achievement tests used by the school. In addition, there appears to be a fairly high degree of continuity in the curricular series used across grade levels. This aspect of curricular coordination is often supported by greater interaction among teachers within and across grade levels on instructional and/or curricular issues (Alexander and Cook 1982; Brookover et al. 1982; Cardno and Collett 2004; Clark 1980; Cohen and Miller 1980; Cooley and Leinhardt 1980; Glatthorn et al. 2009; Ho 2010; Levine 1982; Oakes 1989; Robinson et al. 2008; Spillane 2006; Venezky and Winfield 1979; Wellisch et al. 1978).

Monitors Student Progress

Instructionally effective schools place a strong emphasis on both standardized and criterion referenced testing. The tests are used to diagnose programmatic and student weaknesses, to evaluate the results of changes in the school's instructional program, and to help in making classroom assignment. The principal plays a key role in this area in several ways. He/she can provide teachers with test results in a timely and useful fashion, discuss test results with the staff as a whole, with grade level staff and individual teachers, and provide interpretive analyses for teachers detailing the relevant test data in a concise form (Anderson, Leithwood and Strauss 2010; Brookover et al. 1982; Edmonds 1979; Goldring and Berends 2009; Hallinger et al. 2013; Hattie 2009; Heck 2000, 2006; Knapp et al. 2009; Purkey and Smith 1983; Stallings 1980; Stallings and Mohlman 1981; Venezky and Winfield 1979).

2.1.2.3 Develops a Positive School Learning Climate

Principals also appear to influence learning by ‘enabling’ teachers to do their job more efficiently and effectively. Hallinger and Heck (1998) termed this “shaping academic structures and processes”. Leithwood et al. (2006, 2008, 2010) and Leithwood and Sun (2012) later referred to this as ‘designing the organization’. Both labels convey the notion that leaders play a critical role by attending to the organization of work structures and processes. There is clear evidence that work structures such as the use of grade level and instructional teams shape patterns of teacher interaction and engagement (e.g., Oakes 1989; Rosenholtz 1985). In terms of the school’s culture, these structures can also shape expectations, norms and capacity of the school to change (Barth 1990, 2001; Deal and Peterson 2009; Leithwood et al. 2008; Sashkin 1988; Saphier and King 1985). Due to their formal position in the hierarchy, principals play a key role in determining the nature of these structures.

Thus, the third dimension, *Develops a Positive School Learning Climate* includes several functions: Protects Instructional Time, Develops Professional Development, Maintains High Visibility, Provides Incentives for Teachers, and Provides Incentives for Learning. This dimension is broader in scope and intent than the second dimension and overlaps with dimensions incorporated into transformational leadership frameworks (Hallinger, 2003; Leithwood et al. 2006). It conforms to the notion that successful schools create an “academic press” through the development of high standards and expectations and a culture that fosters and rewards continuous learning and improvement.

Instructionally effective schools develop cultures of continuous improvement in which rewards are aligned with purposes and practices (Barth 1990; Glasman 1984; Hallinger et al. 1996; Hallinger and Heck 2010, 2011a, b; Hallinger and Murphy 1986; Heck and Hallinger 2009, 2010, 2011; Heck et al. 1990; Leithwood and Montgomery 1986; McDill et al. 1969; Mortimore 1993; Purkey and Smith 1983; Walker 2012). Finally, the principal must model values and practices that support the continuous improvement of teaching and learning (Dwyer 1986; Hallinger 2003; Hallinger and Murphy 1985; Leithwood and Jantzi 2005; Leithwood et al. 2008; Leithwood and Sun 2012; Marks and Printy 2003).

Protects Instructional Time

The work of Jane Stallings and others on allocated learning time initially called attention to the importance of providing teachers with blocks of uninterrupted work time. Improved classroom management and instructional skills are not used to the greatest effect if teachers are frequently interrupted by announcements, tardy students, and requests from the office. The principal has influence over this area through the development and enforcement of school-wide policies related to the interruption of classroom learning time (Bossert et al. 1982; Wynne 1980).

Maintains High Visibility

The contexts in which the principal is seen provide one indicator to teachers and students of his/her priorities. Although a significant portion of the principal's time may be out of his/her control, the principal can set priorities on how the remaining time is to be spent. Visibility on the campus and in classrooms increases the interaction between the principal and students as well as with teachers. This can have positive effects on student behavior and classroom instruction (Barth 1980, 1990; Brookover et al. 1982; Casey 1980; Clark 1980; Hallinger and Murphy 2012; Leithwood and Jantzi 2005; Leithwood et al. 2008; Leithwood and Sun 2012; Marks and Printy 2003; Walker 2012; Wolcott 1973; Wynne 1980).

Provides Incentives for Teachers

In a general sense this function seeks to align goals, outcomes and rewards in a more coordinated system of human resource management (e.g., Heneman and Milanowski 2007; Milanowski et al. 2005; Odden and Wallace 2008). Few monetary rewards are available principals to use with teachers. The single salary schedule and tenure system constrain principals with respect to motivating teachers through the use of monetary rewards. However, in schools money may only be slightly more effective than praise and recognition as an incentives. This suggests that the principal should make the best use of both formal and informal ways of motivating teachers and creating a school culture based on trust, mutual respect and success (Anderson 1982; Bryk et al. 2009; Knapp et al. 2009; Leithwood and Jantzi 1999, 2000, 2005; Leithwood and Sun 2012; Levine and Stark 1982; Lezotte et al. n.d.; Lortie 1969, 1975; McDill et al. 1969; Saphier and King 1985).

Promotes Professional Development

Robinson et al.'s (2008) meta-analysis again offers insight into this issue. Their results found that the principal's support for and participation in the professional learning of staff produced the largest effect on the learning outcomes of students. The principal has several ways of supporting teachers in their efforts to improve teaching and learning. He/she can arrange for, provide, or inform teachers of relevant opportunities for staff development. The principal also can encourage staff development that is closely linked to the school's goals (Brookover et al. 1982; Clark 1980; Day et al. 2010; Hallinger and Heck 1996a, 2010, 2011a, b; Heck and Hallinger 2009, 2011; Kruger et al. 2007; Joyce and Showers 2002; Little 1982; Louis et al. 2010; McLaughlin and Marsh 1978; Robinson et al. 2008; Rutter et al. 1979; Showers 1985; Slegers et al. 2002).

Provides Incentives for Learning

The last function of the principal covered under the heading of School Learning Climate is the function Provides Incentives for Learning. It is possible to create a

school learning climate in which academic achievement is highly valued by students. Shaping a climate of success involves providing multiple, visible opportunities for students to be rewarded and recognized for their academic achievement and improvement. The rewards need not be fancy or expensive, but students should have opportunities to be recognized for their achievement both within the classroom and before the school as a whole (Brookover et al. 1982; Duke and Canady 1991; Hallinger et al. 1983; Lasley and Wayson 1982; McDill et al. 1969; Rutter et al. 1979; Wynne 1980).

The above dimensions of instructional leadership describe the scope of responsibilities of the principal and the school's leadership team with respect to leading learning. However, it is also useful to place these responsibilities into the broader context of how leadership achieves its effects in schools.

2.2 Modeling the Relationship Between Leadership and Learning

Phrases such as instructional leadership, leadership for learning, and school improvement leadership all imply the existence of a relationship between the strategies of leaders and growth in student learning. As noted above, however, it is only since the 1960s that scholars began to study school leadership as directed *explicitly* toward improvement in the quality of teaching and learning (e.g., Gross and Herriott 1965). Although progress has been made in defining the nature of these relationships, scholars in the UK (Bell et al. 2003; Southworth 2002, 2003), USA (Bossert et al. 1982; Hallinger and Heck 1996a, 1998), Canada (Leithwood et al. 2004; Leithwood and Sun 2012; York-Barr and Duke 2004), Netherlands (Krüger et al. 2007; Slegers et al. 2002; Thoonen et al. 2012; Witziers et al. 2003), and ANZ (Mulford and Silins 2003, 2009; Robinson et al. 2008) continue to debate the meaning of empirical findings on school leadership effects.²

Moreover, as suggested by the Far West Lab Model presented earlier in this chapter (Bossert et al. 1982), the predominant assumption that leadership impacts school improvement understates the extent to which leaders are also influenced by the organizational environment (Belchetz and Leithwood 2007; Hallinger and Heck 1996a; Krüger et al. 2007; Leithwood et al. 2004; Southworth 2002). Thus, we suggest that research on school leadership effects must take into account features of the organizational context and continue to approach issues of causal inference with caution.

In 1988, Pitner proposed several conceptual models that sought to explain the means by which leadership could impact student learning. The models included direct effects, indirect effects and reciprocal effects models of leadership for

²As is common in the school effectiveness literature, we use the term school effects to indicate statistically significant associations between variables. These associations do not need to be causal in nature.

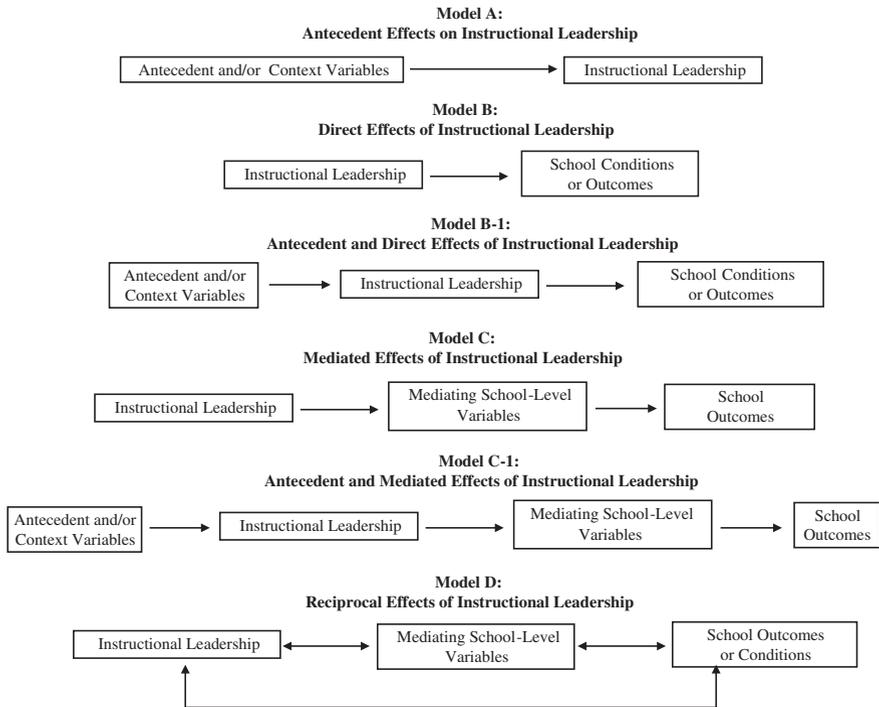


Fig. 2.3 Conceptual models of leadership and learning (adapted from Hallinger and Heck 1996a, p. 16; Pitner 1988, pp. 105–108)

learning (see Fig. 2.3). A decade later, Hallinger and Heck elaborated on these models in a review of empirical research on principal leadership and student learning (Hallinger and Heck 1996a, b, 1998).

- *Direct effects models* proposed that leadership effects could result directly from the actions of principals, and moreover, that these effects could be identified by analyzing the relationship between comparing measures of leadership and measures of student learning in samples of principals and students.
- *Indirect effects models* proposed that leaders obtained effects on students by impacting the structure, culture and people in the school organization (e.g., Bridges 1977). The Bossert model shown in Fig. 2.1 represents one influential indirect (also referred to as mediated effects) model of leadership and learning. In the Bossert (1982) model, principal leadership influences learning through the principal's efforts to shape the school learning climate and instructional organization of the school.
- *Reciprocal effects models* propose that leadership is a process of mutual interaction and influence both between leaders and followers and between the leader and his/her organizational context (e.g., school culture, community). In one sense, reciprocal effects models incorporate indirect interactions. However, they

differ from standard indirect effects models by seeking to measure the dynamic relationship of the leader within his/her school environment (Hallinger and Heck 2011a, b; Heck and Hallinger 2010; Sivasubramaniam et al. 2002; Tate 2008).

As suggested in Fig. 2.3, the comprehensiveness of any of these models can be enhanced through the inclusion of personal antecedent (e.g., personal characteristics of the principal) or context (e.g., school size, school level, student SES) variables. This could be depicted, for example, by incorporating antecedent variables into Models B, C or D in Fig. 2.3.

More recently researchers have tested these models as a means of furthering our understanding of how leadership contributes to school improvement and student learning (Hallinger and Heck 2010, 2011b; Heck and Hallinger 2009, 2011; Leithwood et al. 2010; Mulford and Silins 2009; Robinson et al. 2008; Witziers et al. 2003). The most recent results affirm earlier contentions that indirect and reciprocal effects models hold the greatest potential for understanding how leadership impact learning (e.g., Hallinger and Heck 2011a, b; Heck and Hallinger 2009, 2011, 2014; Leithwood and sun 2012; Marks and Printy 2003; Mulford and Silins 2009; Robinson et al. 2008; Witziers et al. 2003). These studies also affirm the influence of the school environment on the exercise of leadership. That is, as suggested earlier, different styles of leadership appear to be more and less appropriate depending upon the state of organizational conditions (e.g., see Belchetz and Leithwood 2007; Day 2009; Day et al. 2010; Duke 2004; Goldring et al. 2008; Hallinger and Murphy 1986; Leithwood et al. 2008; Hallinger and Heck 2011c; Murphy and Meyers 2008).

We end this discussion of recent conceptual advances in research on instructional leadership with a brief discussion of one additional development. During the 1990s, as research in educational leadership and management expanded into a global enterprise, selected scholars began to assert that the ‘socio-cultural context of leadership also matters’ organizations (Cheng 1995; Hallinger et al. 2005; Hallinger 1995; Hallinger and Leithwood 1996; Walker and Dimmock 2002). They proposed that a sound global knowledge base should attend to both similarities and differences in the practices and effects of school leadership.

While some parts of the ‘global’ (i.e., Western) knowledge base are undoubtedly highly relevant across national and cultural contexts, we know little about which features (i.e., theories and findings) are ‘universally’ applicable and which are context dependent. Researchers have only recently begun to explore empirically how cultural factors impact the utilization of educational leadership practices outside of so-called ‘Western’ cultural contexts. Thus, these scholars proposed the socio-cultural context as an additional context variable moderating school leadership (see Hallinger 2011c; Lee and Hallinger 2012). While the past decade has seen a considerable increase in research output from Asia in this domain, it remains a ripe area for future investigation throughout the world (Hallinger and Bryant 2013a, b). We will return to this point in the concluding chapter.

2.3 Conclusion

As elaborated in these first two chapters, instructional leadership emerged as a practice-based construct in the mid-20th century in the USA. Over time, scholars have made substantial progress in providing greater clarity concerning conceptualizations of this role. Today, there is considerable agreement on the broad nature of this role as well as its impact on key school conditions and student learning (Leithwood et al. 2006; Louis et al. 2010; Robinson et al. 2008). Consequently, we find increasing interest from policymakers, practitioners and scholars around the world in both the dimensions that comprise this construct as well as in ways of strengthening its application in practice.

Implicit in this interest in instructional leadership is a desire to understand how school principals, and other leaders, shape conditions in the school that directly impact learning outcomes for students. This has led scholars to work with more complex mediated and reciprocal effects models as they seek to identify the ‘paths’ through which school leaders achieve results (e.g., Hallinger and Heck 1996a, 2011a; Heck and Hallinger 2014; Leithwood et al. 2010, 2012; Sebastian and Allensworth 2012). Moreover, as noted, greater attention has been paid in the recent past to understanding how the organizational and socio-cultural context of schools moderates the exercise of school leadership (Bajunid 1996; Belchetz and Leithwood 2007; Cheng 1995; Dimmock and Walker 2005; Goldring et al. 2008; Hallinger 1995, 2011b; Hallinger and Leithwood 1996; Lee and Hallinger 2012).

Advancing this research has required the development of more reliable research tools and research methods in studying the enactment and effects of school leadership. This leads to the next chapter in which we describe an effort that was undertaken to develop an instrument for measuring instructional leadership based upon the Hallinger and Murphy (1985) conceptual framework presented above.

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