Petros Pashiardis *Editor*

Modeling School Leadership across Europe

in Search of New Frontiers

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*To my wife Georgia for all the adventures
we have been through
(and those to come)
To my sons Constantinos and Alexis for
being adventurous, and
To the best handmade Latte Macchiato ever
I love you all.*

Preface

This is a book in the area of Educational Leadership and Systems Thinking dealing with developments in both theory and practice of this field. The idea for this book evolved from a European-funded piece of research on "School Leadership and its Impact on Student Achievement" (LISA), as well as from another project exploring the relationship between the leadership style(s) school principals adopt, their epistemological worldviews, and their beliefs about the contextual and governance structures in which they operate (exact title of the project, "Uncovering the Complex Relation Between Principals' Leadership Style and Epistemological Beliefs and its Implications for School Leadership Training," Pro-LEAD), funded by the Cyprus Research Promotion Foundation.

As the key intermediary between the classroom, the school and its community, and the educational system as a whole, effective school leadership is essential to improve the efficiency and equity of schooling. However, school leadership does not operate in a vacuum. Many countries have made schools more autonomous while centralizing standards and accountability requirements and (at the same time) demanding that schools adopt new research-based approaches to teaching and learning. In line with these changes, the roles and responsibilities of school leaders have expanded. Given the increased autonomy and accountability demanded of schools, leadership at the school level is more important than ever.

The organizational arrangements for schools have changed significantly over time due to profound changes within the societies they serve. The Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework which is explored in this book takes into consideration not only the context and system levels but also (and primarily) the school level. This framework can also serve to signal the essential character of school leadership as the focal point around which teaching and learning take place. More specifically, this book, through the framework:

- Provides guidance on the main characteristics, tasks, and responsibilities of effective school leaders
- Produces data-based descriptions of school leaders' modes of institutionalized decision making (i.e., provides them with guidance as to their degrees of freedom)

- Creates definitions of school leaders' networks of responsibility
- Indicates the benefits for school leaders in becoming familiar with system roles and not only school issues (interrelation of system, context, and day-to-day school management)
- Stresses the situational and ambiguous relationship of the education system and the school when it comes to building up stimulating and inspiring collaborations in order to strive for excellence and equity
- Attempts to fill the identified gaps in research by exploring the relationship between the leadership style(s) school principals adopt, their epistemological worldviews, and their beliefs about the contextual and governance structures in which they operate

As can be inferred from the above, this book aims at providing school leaders with a pair of lenses in order to assist them to examine the big picture and by doing so, increasing their level of awareness with regard to systemic as well as to local leadership. We increasingly recognize that the complexity of educational problems cannot be resolved by one "super" principal alone but through coordinated activities of educational leaders at different levels inside and outside the school system. However, it was decided that this book will focus on principals, as they (still) remain in the very heart of a school. Based on the processes and learnings described, readers can begin their own journey; in essence, they can use our research instruments, as they try to recontextualize them to school and system level criteria in their own countries. Basically they can develop and carry out their own similar study at the microlevel.

Thus, in Chap. 1, we provide a description about the origins of the LISA and Pro-LEAD projects, and we explore how the two projects were conceptually conceived. For the LISA project, the main goal was to promote cooperation and collaborative research activities between school leaders and researchers in a learning environment at a European level. The effort was to find out how lower secondary school (gymnasium) principals perceive their role, preferred leadership style, and their effectiveness in enhancing the overall quality of education. For the Pro-LEAD project, the main goal of the research was to explore the relationship between the leadership style or styles (as presented in the *Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework*) school principals adopt, their epistemological worldviews (i.e., holistic beliefs about the nature and acquisition of knowledge), and their beliefs about the contextual and governance structures in which they operate (i.e., situational governance).

Then, in Chap. 2, we explore the conceptualization and development of the *Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework*. This chapter offers a thorough review of the current leadership literature about what we know and about what matters with regard to the effect of school leadership on student achievement. A description of the three "Ss" is provided as well: Situational and dynamic governance, Situational leadership, School variables. Then, we continue with a presentation of the state of the art with regard to what we know about what works and what doesn't for enhanced student achievement, and we further explore the modeling of

the *Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework*, in an effort to provide an integrated leadership perspective.

Chapter 3 offers a thorough description of the methodological approach for both the LISA and Pro-LEAD projects. Here we explain why we used a mixed-method approach for both projects. We offer a step-by-step description of how we proceeded providing some insights from the cooperation between researchers and practitioners. Then, for the Pro-LEAD project we present, in particular, the combination of questionnaire and think-aloud data which can provide converging evidence for the different beliefs individuals possess. We make the argument that validating questionnaire quantitative data with the think-aloud qualitative data strengthens any conclusions that might be drawn from either data set alone. Furthermore, we describe the use of advanced data analysis techniques which enabled us in the testing of different theoretical models in order to identify the complex and dynamic relationships among leadership styles, epistemological worldviews, and beliefs about contextual and educational governance structures again, utilizing the *Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework*.

In Chap. 4, we describe the procedures for the validation of the Leadership Styles of the *Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework*. The leadership radius was validated in the eight countries (Cyprus, England, Norway, Germany,[1] Slovenia, Hungary, Italy, and the Netherlands) participating in the research for both projects, as a second-order factor indicated by five first-order factors that corresponded to each one of the leadership styles extracted from the Exploratory Factor Analysis. These include (1) Instructional Style, (2) Participative Style, (3) Personnel Development Style, (4) Entrepreneurial Style, and (5) Structuring Style. Then, some comparisons and analyses between and within countries are attempted. This analysis aims at comparing the relative level of each leadership style across all countries and explores possible similarities and differences.

Chapter 5 examines a mediated effects model incorporating intervening (climate) variables at the school level in order to explore school principals' influence on student achievement through the *Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework*. In this way, we are aiming at identifying the mechanisms through which leadership influence seeps through to student learning. For the purposes of our project, a number of school climate variables were used as mediating variables between the principal's leadership styles and student achievement. Both the exploratory and the confirmatory factor analyses pointed towards a model comprising seven such mediating factors. The seven factors extracted were labeled as follows: *Professional Development Opportunities*, *Evaluation and Feedback*, *Teacher Commitment*, *Parental Involvement*, *Teaching and Learning Practices*, *Student-Teacher Interactions*, and *Student Expectations*.

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[1] Please note that Germany comprises 16 states which are collectively referred to as *Länder*. Each state has its own state constitution and is largely autonomous in regard to its internal organization. Whenever reference to Germany is made in this book, the reference implies only the state of North Rhine-Westphalia, which participated in the LISA project.

The next two chapters, Chaps. 6 and 7, were written by school leaders who participated in the LISA project. Thus, the view of practitioners is presented in these two chapters in order to examine some of the results of the study from their perspective. Chapter 6 offers an Italian Perspective about what specifically we found out within the Italian context as regards the LISA project and how sensemaking was contextualized and decontextualized. In parallel, Chap. 7 offers an English Perspective with regard to the same project. These two countries were selected in order to have a perspective from a centralized educational system (Italy), and the other country was selected in order to provide a perspective from a decentralized country (England). Some very interesting insights are provided by the authors of both of these chapters.

Then, Chap. 8 explores a new "cocktail leadership mix" among school principals' epistemological beliefs, context, and leadership practices. The use of the term "cocktail" will be further explained in the relevant chapter; however, it is used to signify the main components/ingredients that constitute the term "leadership." The main objective of this chapter is to explore the relationship between the leadership styles school principals adopt, their epistemological worldviews, and the contextual and governance structures in which they operate. To achieve this goal, three structured questionnaires were developed and validated to assess principals' leadership styles, epistemological beliefs, and beliefs about the contextual and educational governance structures. Again, the *Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework* was used as the guiding point of reference. The need for this chapter and the Pro-LEAD piece of research (partially) arose in the aftermath of the discussions with school leaders in the LISA project. During the interviews with school principals, it became evident that almost all of them made reference to the "way people learn." In essence, what school leaders told us is that the way they approach their teachers depended on the school leaders' beliefs about how people (and thus their teachers) learn and accept advice.

Finally, Chap. 9 attempts to answer the question about where do we go from here in search of the right "leadership cocktail mix." We talk about the interplay between situational governance and situational leadership and we make the argument that what is becoming increasingly more evident is that there is no best "cocktail of leadership styles mix" for all school leaders and within the various spaces in which they operate. School leadership is highly contextualized not only at the system level but also (and particularly) at the school level. A school leader would be wise to look at just what the situation of his/her particular school context calls for and then act on it.

The audience for the book consists of five primary constituencies: (1) academics who will use the book in their teaching, research, program development, and improvement; (2) professional development providers who will use the book in their professional development activities; (3) practitioners who serve in primary and secondary education settings who would use the book to inform their practice; (4) policy makers who participate in the accreditation, program approval, licensure/certification, and development of preparation systems as well as other administrators in different organizational settings, such as state agencies, Ministries of Education, international organizations, and other agencies; and, finally, (5) graduate students will find this book extremely useful.

It should be stressed that international or comparative perspectives in educational leadership are very much in demand nowadays as the world is becoming more globalized. This book shows how extremely contextualized systems and schools (between and even within) education systems are and, therefore, call for careful retranslation and adaption when it comes to the so-called universal cures/recipes from rather "advanced" countries. Problems nowadays have become too complex and numerous in order to be resolved by the school alone. Therefore, this book makes school leaders familiar with other types of educational leaders in order to build up together with them a community of shared responsibility.

Moreover, this book clearly shows the sometimes symmetrical and sometimes asymmetrical relationships of challenges with regard to school leaders' new functions and roles on the one hand and the support systems provided by the administration on the other hand. This contrast shows clearly what can be done in order to prepare school leaders for their new job profile and (at the same time) points out the areas of development where more actions need to be taken.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge with thanks the great assistance provided by my two research associates, Vassos Savvides and Antonis Kafa. Their willingness to assist in so many different ways was indeed valuable for the development of this book. Special thanks are accorded to Yoka Janssen, Senior Publishing Editor Education at Springer Publications and Astrid Noordermeer, Publishing Editor for their guidance and trust throughout the various development phases of this book. Last but not least, I would also like to thank the hundreds of anonymous teachers and school leaders who participated in both pieces of research in the various European countries. I do hope that they will see some value in the time they have devoted to us in order to produce some of the results and insights presented.

Open University of Cyprus   Petros Pashiardis
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Chapter 1
The Origins of Two Research Projects: LISA and Pro-LEAD

Petros Pashiardis

1.1 Introduction

Although the twenty-first century is still in its first decade, many countries have already seen dramatic shifts in the way schools and education systems are managed compared with education systems at the end of the last century. The precursors for these changes, from a global perspective, are (1) a combination of demographic shifts in societies all over the world (including greater migration and ever-increasing divides in the north-south and east-west dialogues), (2) changes in social and family structures (including greater poverty, single-parent families, and larger numbers of children with no access to primary education), and (3) the use (abuse and misuse) of information and communications technologies, including the increasing use and influence of social networks, mobile phones, and the Internet at large (Murphy, 2012; National Center on Education and the Economy, 2006; Pashiardis, 2004; UNESCO, 2012a, 2012b, 2012c, 2012d). Usually people concentrate on the assessment and evaluation of education systems since this is (most often) the primary objective of education policies. Therefore, one needs to agree on a definition of the concept "education system," if one is to accept that there is an analogy between education policy and education system assessment, evaluation, and accountability. Education systems can be differentiated based on their scope, dimensions, configuration, distribution of decision-making centers, responsibility allocated to each level of decision-making and decision-making procedures, resources, and their professed and espoused goals and objectives (Ritzer, 2000). Moreover, education systems and practices have been the subject of international investigations in a comparative process and have been

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looking to the foreign example for a number of years now (Ritzer). The cross-national transfer of educational practices was sparked by cross-cultural curiosity, political motives, altruistic interests, economic competition, and worldwide standardized examinations such as the *Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study* (TIMSS) and the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA[1]).

Within these turbulent times in the education arena, school leadership has been identified by a number of researchers as a key element in the effectiveness of school organizations (Brauckmann & Pashiardis, 2011; Gronn & Ribbins, 2003; Heck & Moriyama, 2010; Kythreotis, Pashiardis, & Kyriakides, 2010; Lashway, 2003; Marzano, Waters & McNulty, 2005; Pashiardis & Brauckmann, 2008; Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008). For instance, some of the abovementioned pieces of research indicate that school principals have a small, but statistically significant, effect on student achievement. Some other studies indicate that this effect is mostly mediated and indirect, whereas some others have even found direct effects between school leadership and student achievement. As a result, various stakeholders have enhanced their expectations from school principals demanding higher academic results and performance standards (Weindling & Dimmock, 2006). In this context it is crucial to attempt to determine the leadership styles that school principals adopt. However, of equal importance is the need to identify the intertwining factors which potentially influence the choice to adopt particular leadership styles by school principals. Therefore, based on these needs two research projects were born: the LISA (Leadership Improvement for Student Achievement) and the Pro-LEAD (Uncovering the Complex Relation Between Principals' Leadership Style and Epistemological Beliefs and its Implications for School Leadership Training). Both had the school leader[2] at the epicenter of the investigations and both projects used the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework as the guiding model through which the research was conducted (Fig. 1.1). In Fig. 1.1, we present the main components of the guiding framework. It will be further explored and analyzed later in the book.

The LISA project lasted for 3 years during the period January 2007–December 2009 and was funded by the European Union (EU). The Pro-LEAD project also lasted for 3 years during the period January 2009–December 2011 and was funded by the Cyprus Research Promotion Foundation. An initial description of the two research projects which formulate the focus of this book follows, as more in-depth description of the projects and their goals will be described in the following chapters. At this point, it is important to stress that the Pro-LEAD project was (in a sense partially)

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[1] PISA is a triennial survey of the knowledge and skills of 15-year-olds. It is the product of collaboration between participating countries and economies through the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and draws on leading international expertise to develop valid comparisons across countries and cultures. About 470,000 students from 65 countries making up close to 90 % of the world economy took part in PISA 2009. The focus was on reading but the assessment also included science and mathematics and collected data on student, family, and institutional factors that could help explaining differences in performance.

[2] Throughout this book we use the term school leader as a synonym and substitute for the terms "school principal" and "head teacher" which are both used interchangeably.
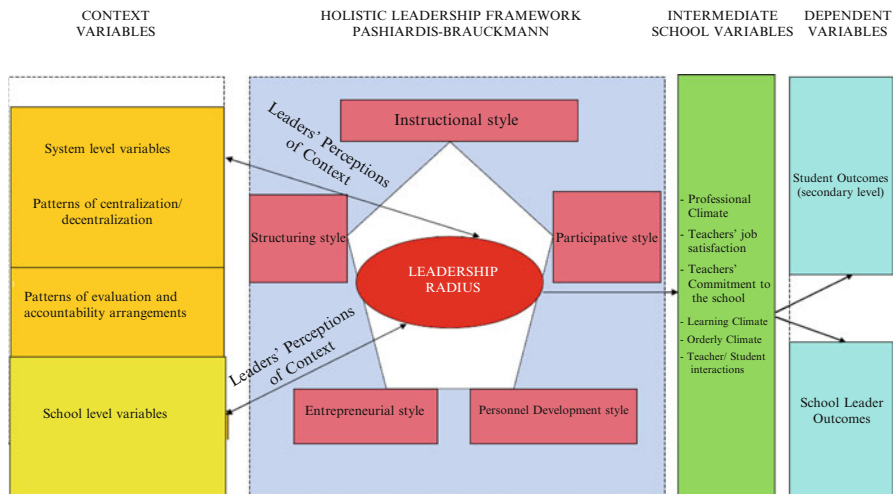
Fig. 1.1 The Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework (initial conceptualization)

"born" out of the LISA project, since our discussions with the participating school principals in the LISA project usually ended by the school leaders emphasizing that many of their actions depended on their beliefs about how teachers and students learn. In sum, school leaders make use of different leadership styles oftentimes based on their own epistemological beliefs about how knowledge is constructed. Therefore, we wanted to examine this aspect as well.

1.2 The LISA Project

With the Leadership Improvement for Student Achievement (LISA) project, we wanted to explore how contextual variables and school leadership, directly or indirectly, affect student achievement at the secondary level of education; in other words, we wanted to know more about how system leaders[3] and school leaders can build up successful forms of cohabitation for the benefit of the individual student and how they can create institutional arrangements which represent an offer that can be optimally used by the pedagogical actors (teachers) in order to improve the overall quality of their educational institutions, as well as their educational offerings.

Therefore, the core question of the LISA project is concerned with the role that principals' leadership styles, behaviors, and practices can play in contributing to

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[3] With the term "system leaders" we mean leaders at the systemic level, such as Ministries of Education, Local Education Authorities, and district level officials.

the improvement and effectiveness of the school, especially educational outcomes such as the basic skills of students examined under the PISA program, against the background of their national school system. The guiding research questions for the project as a whole were:

- How is the role of secondary school principals positioned in the educational system of a particular country?
- How do secondary school principals perceive their role, preferred leadership style, and their effectiveness in enhancing the overall quality of education? (In connection to this question, we also wanted to find out about the teachers' perceptions of their school principal's leadership style and preferred ways of managing the school in order to avoid self-reference bias by the principals.)
- Which intermediary factors and mechanisms operate so that school principals can have an impact on the improvement of academic achievement of their students?

In short, through this project, we wanted to further illuminate the discussion around the *impact that school leaders can have on student achievement because of the many and conflicting results in this particular research area in school leadership*. In the past few years, there is an ever-increasing interest on leadership and its effects on student achievement. However, the results of this kind of research worldwide have been mixed with regard to the importance of school leadership. As previously mentioned, some research shows small, indirect effects of school leaders on student achievement, whereas some other research indicates that there is no such effect.

Specifically, we wanted to provide some answers about the reasons that lead to the production of these conflicting findings in the research literature. It seems that some important conceptual and methodological factors and limitations differentiate the results among the various studies around the world. For instance, there is no unique definition of the concept of a principal's leadership, which is broadly accepted (Hallinger, & Heck, 1996, 1998; Witziers, Bosker, & Krüger, 2003). Second, there is no universal paradigm or theory for examining organizational behavior that is valid in all social or organizational contexts (Hallinger & Heck, 1996, 1998; Pashiardis, Thody, Papanaoum, & Johansson, 2003). Third, methodological issues and research design affect the findings of the various studies. For example, the use of longitudinal data permits the examination of the progress of student achievement (Teddlie & Reynolds, 2000). In addition, the presence or absence of either construct validity or generalizability or explicit measures of school performance as a dependent variable may lead to different findings (Hallinger & Heck, 1996, 1998). Moreover, the presence of a third variable between a principal's leadership could lead to different results than the absence of this variable (Hallinger & Heck, 1996, 1998; Witziers et al., 2003). Finally, the use of statistical techniques such as structural equation modeling and multilevel analysis permits the examination of the complex relationships between a principal's leadership and student achievement at various levels in the education arena, such as the system level, the school level, and the classroom level (Teddlie & Reynolds, 2000; Witziers et al., 2003).

Based on the existing literature and the aforementioned limitations and questions, we[4] embarked into this project on school leadership in order to find out whether it is possible to discern a number of leadership practices and behaviors which are deemed critical for raising student outcomes, either directly or indirectly, in specific governance contexts. These leadership practices and behaviors were used in order to formulate the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework (Pashiardis & Brauckmann, 2008) which both the LISA project and the Pro-LEAD project employed as their main point of reference. The reason for the creation of our own theoretical framework stems from the assumption that the lack of consistency in findings on school leadership is largely due to the use of varying frameworks and models and the misalignments of such frameworks with measurement of key constructs. Thus, it was decided to devise a common framework which would act as a reference base for the comparative aspect of our project and it would guide the development of valid and reliable instruments. In summary, within this project, leadership is treated as a multilevel construct which may affect school and student variables but is also likely to be influenced by contextual variables, as exhibited in the seven European countries participating in this project, namely, England, Germany (North Rhine-Westphalia), Hungary, Italy, Norway, Slovenia, and the Netherlands.

During the course of the implementation of the LISA project, we realized that school leaders' epistemological beliefs also had an effect on their preferred leadership style. More explicitly, during the interviews with the school leaders in the seven EU countries, we realized that their beliefs of how we learn and how school leaders can help their teachers learn more and grow professionally influenced their leadership style in use. Thus, when the LISA project was almost nearing the end, we decided to seek money from the Cyprus Research Promotion Foundation in order to further examine these epistemological beliefs in a smaller scale including only Cyprus and in order to find out more about these connections using the same theoretical framework and (almost) the same leadership instruments, thus taking the research one step further. In fact, we wanted to find out more about the relationship between leadership styles and our belief systems on how people learn (teachers and students). Our "hypothesis" was that the leadership "style-in-use" is influenced by the leaders' espoused theory on acquisition of knowledge.

1.3 The Pro-LEAD Project

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, we realized that, despite the extensive research attention paid to school leadership and its relationship to context and student achievement, the relationship between school leadership styles and epistemological beliefs has not been explored up to now as most pieces of research focus on the

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[4] With the term "we" the whole research team is included, meaning primarily the researchers who guided the project as well as the school principals in the seven EU countries which took part as our coresearchers alongside with the teachers in their schools.

epistemological beliefs of students and teachers. This research has shown that beliefs are related to a wide variety of instructional practices such as problem-solving approaches, teaching methods, use of textbooks, class management, and learning focus (e.g., Chan & Elliot, 2000; Hashweh, 1996; Martens, 1992; Pintrich, 1990). These findings raise the possibility that principals' epistemological worldviews, namely, beliefs about the nature and acquisition of knowledge (Hofer & Pintrich, 1997; Schommer, 1990), have important implications for the leadership styles school leaders adopt. However, and even though a number of studies have proposed direct links between epistemological beliefs and instructional practices, not all studies have provided empirical support for such a link, which further emphasizes the need for more research in the field.

Moreover, despite the repeatedly emphasized crucial role that school principals play in the effectiveness of school organizations in numerous aspects, research up to now has not systematically studied how school principals' views about knowledge and learning (epistemological beliefs) might affect their leadership within the school context. Therefore, the question arises about the evidence that we actually have to support a link between the epistemological beliefs of school leaders and their leadership within the school. This question formulated the main objective of the Pro-LEAD project which was to explore the relation between the leadership styles school principals adopt when leading their schools, their epistemological worldviews (i.e., holistic beliefs about the nature and acquisition of knowledge), and their beliefs about the contextual and governance structures in which they operate (i.e., situational governance). We felt that through the undertaking of this piece of research, we would directly respond to enhancing the competences of our society in managing complex situations and challenges substantiated in various forms. In this context, our aim was to improve the leadership potential and offer capacity building to school principals. Narrowing it down to the specific action under which the proposal was submitted and funded (through the Cyprus Research Promotion Foundation), we proposed to use the results of the study in order to (a) understand the training needs of school principals as well as the ways they learn and (b) inform the design of innovative training programs for school principals in primary and secondary education. The rationale guiding our approach was that the in-depth investigation and knowledge of the principals' beliefs and perceptions would provide a significant input into their own learning within the context of professional growth schemes and, in turn, these school leaders would be in a better position to enhance theirs and their teachers' professional growth needs. More specifically, through the Pro-LEAD project we wanted to:

- Identify the leadership styles adopted by school principals in primary and secondary education in Cyprus; in other words, we wanted to validate the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework in the context of Cyprus, bearing in mind that the framework was already validated in the seven EU countries participating in the LISA project.
- Identify and define the epistemological worldviews of school principals in primary and secondary education.

- Investigate the beliefs of school principals about the contextual and educational governance structures in which they operate in primary and secondary education.
- Explore the possible relations between leadership styles, epistemological worldviews, and beliefs about contextual and educational governance structures of school principals in primary and secondary education.

In sum, through this Pro-LEAD project, we wanted to extend the research already completed through the LISA project, in an effort to systematically examine leadership styles, context, epistemological beliefs, and student achievement by using the same framework (the *Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework*) as the common foundation on which to position these relationships (if any). Evidence in support for this hypothesized link between school leaders' leadership styles and epistemological beliefs is mainly based on the existing recent research on teachers' epistemological beliefs. In the same way it has been demonstrated by recent research that epistemological beliefs influence the practices and behaviors of teachers within the classroom, it can be postulated that it is also likely that epistemological beliefs influence the practices of school leaders in their respective way of "teaching" the teachers of their schools, i.e., how they exercise instructional leadership for instance. This assumption is based on the fact that, in most education systems, school leaders "evolve" from their previous teaching positions within the school system, and therefore, some of these beliefs are already "infused" into their professional practices.

Arredondo and Rucinski (1996), presenting some findings from a study of 126 Chilean educators, attempted to compare, among others, the epistemological beliefs of teachers and school principals. The researchers found no significant differences between the epistemological beliefs of teachers and school principals in their sample. These results provide some of the first empirical evidence indicating that school principals' epistemological beliefs do not differ from teachers' beliefs, thus permitting possible parallels to be drawn from the relevant research on teachers to inform future research attempts on school principals. Furthermore, it can be suggested that the behavioral characteristics that differentiate one school leader's leadership style from another may be in part influenced by the school leader's epistemological beliefs in the same way a teacher's practices may be influenced by his/her beliefs. As Tickle, Brownlee, and Nailon (2005) aptly explain: "In the same way a teacher with more mature epistemological beliefs will behave differently to a teacher with less mature epistemological beliefs, the behavior of leaders will vary depending on the maturity of their epistemological beliefs" (p. 9).

Moreover, of equal interest is the exploration of the relation between school principals' leadership styles and epistemological worldviews in conjunction with their beliefs about the contextual and governance structures in which school principals operate. Even though a great deal of attention has been given to school principals' leadership styles and even though there is evidence that epistemological beliefs are affected by the context in which teachers and students operate, little attention has been given to the effects of contextual and educational governance structures on school leaders' perceptions, beliefs, and practices. It is likely that contextual and educational governance structures as interpreted by school leaders and the

epistemological beliefs held by school leaders influence the leadership styles adopted in their work. Patterns of centralization or decentralization as well as evaluation and accountability arrangements set the backdrop for each school leader to lead. Ignoring the existence of contextual and governance issues is in effect to examine school leadership and the epistemological beliefs of school leaders in a vacuum instead of in the particular conditions in which they are expressed.

In order to achieve the research aims for both projects, a mixed methods approach was used whereby quantitative questionnaire data were combined with qualitative data collection. The methodology for both projects is described in detail in Chap. 3 of this book. As mentioned previously, both projects had the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework as their guiding theoretical framework. Thus, an initial short description of the framework is warranted, even though the conceptualization and development of the framework will be explored and discussed (in detail) in Chap. 2 of this book.

1.4 Initial Presentation of the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework

The large number of models and theories proposed concerning school leadership indicates the deep and constant academic and public interest in the subject. However, these various models and theories lack in consistency. To counter this inconsistency, Pashiardis and Brauckmann (Brauckmann & Pashiardis, 2011; Pashiardis & Brauckmann, 2008) devised a common framework in which leadership is treated as a multilevel construct which may affect school and student variables but is also likely to be influenced by contextual variables. Based on the existing literature on school leadership, Pashiardis and Brauckmann discerned a number of leadership practices and behaviors deemed critical for raising student outcomes, either directly or indirectly. These practices, actions, and behaviors were clustered around five domains or leadership styles (Instructional, Structuring, Participative, Entrepreneurial, and Personnel Development). Thus, instead of adopting a single measure for leadership, Pashiardis and Brauckmann proposed a multidimensional construct to examine the effects of each separate style on school processes and outcomes.

Furthermore, the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework (Pashiardis & Brauckmann, 2008) depicts the education system as a unity where levels of governance and levels of responsibilities at the system, school, and classroom level are (not only loosely) coupled in a systematic way, and therefore, the different levels are interacting with each other (without assuming natural causalities). More specifically, the framework includes the institutions that are part of the educational decision-making and delivery systems, the constituencies that interact with these institutions, and the ways the parts of the system relate to one another. "Policies, laws, regulations, and informal practices are part of this framework and are reflected, one way or another, in the behaviors of all involved" (Brewer & Smith, 2007, p. 1).

The interpretations of rules, which are meant to guide individual actions, have to be adjusted and adapted to other and different environments. Therefore, this constant interplay between context and a leader's perception of it provides a major thrust for these projects in order to create the right "leadership cocktail mix" (as we refer to it later), through which to operate.

The context, as we define it, is divided into two main levels: (1) system-level variables which include *patterns of centralization and decentralization* as well as *patterns of evaluation and accountability arrangements* in each individual country and (2) school-level variables which consist of variables pertaining to the characteristics of the school as well as demographic information about the students and teachers. With regard to system-level variables, the *patterns of centralization and decentralization* encompass sub-variables such as the devolution of decision-making authority, organizational capacity and support systems, network-type cooperation, and privatization-parental choice. The *patterns of evaluation and accountability arrangements* entail the sub-variables of accountability type, evaluative capacity/support systems, evaluation culture, alternative regulatory mechanisms, and the role of school leadership in the evaluation process.

The *school-level variables* include items relating to the school type, size and location, the composition of the student body, the school resources, the student-teacher ratio, as well as characteristics of school leaders. Contrary to the system variables, those school-level variables represent the more stable contextual factors and, in any case, they are "givens," meaning that the school leader cannot really change them or act on them, except (probably) in the long term.

With regard to *school leadership*, the framework entails five styles that school principals are likely to employ in their work: (1) Instructional Style, (2) Structuring Style, (3) Participative Style, (4) Entrepreneurial Style, and (5) Personnel Development Style (Brauckmann & Pashiardis, 2011; Pashiardis, 2012; Pashiardis & Brauckmann, 2008). Each leadership style consists of specific behaviors or practices which are likely to be exhibited by school principals.

The *Instructional Style* has a strong focus on the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning. Specifically, it entails the practices of defining and enabling the achievement of the instructional objectives, setting high expectations, monitoring and evaluating students and teachers, and stimulating instructional innovation. The *Structuring Style* concerns the aspects of providing direction and coordination to the school unit and includes clarifying the vision and mission of the school, establishing and following clear rules, dividing tasks-responsibilities among staff, enabling restructuring and taking risks, as well as managing facilities in an effective manner. Furthermore, the *Participative Style* is conceptualized as adopting an inclusive and more distributed approach to formal and informal decision-making, fostering staff cooperation, brokering and mediating conflicting situations, and promoting staff commitment. Next, the *Entrepreneurial Style* comprises the practices of involving the parents and other external actors in the school processes, acquiring resources for the school's smooth operation, building coalitions with external agents, as well as engaging in a marketing approach to leadership. Finally, according to Pashiardis and Brauckmann (2008) effective school leaders are likely to employ

a *Personnel Development Style* in their leadership practices and behaviors. This style involves the effective teacher recruitment, the assessment of their personal and professional needs, the provision of training opportunities to them, the enhancement of their self-efficacy, as well as the provision of recognition and rewards for their exemplary performance.

Further, school leaders are suggested to affect final school outcomes through a set of intermediate school variables. These variables, which operate at the school level, are hypothesized to be influenced by the foregoing leadership styles and in turn to affect school outcomes. They are proposed to mediate the impact of leadership styles on student as well as leader outcomes. The intermediate school variables consist of the professional, learning and orderly climate, personal achievement orientations, evaluation and feedback practices, teachers' job satisfaction and commitment to the school, teacher-student interactions, students' opportunity to learn, explicit teaching strategies, and parental involvement. Finally, the framework presents in detail dependent variables which entail both student and school leader outcomes.

With regard to student outcomes, the intended focus within the framework is on *achievement in basic competences* as well as *attitudes towards lifelong learning and citizenship* (i.e., achievement towards EU goals and student citizenship characteristics). Then, as a by-product of the LISA research project, we were interested in the participating school leaders' impact which is deemed to emanate from their involvement in the project as action researchers. In particular, the focus lies on the enhancement of the leaders' self-concept, the enhancement of their research capability, as well as their gain in knowledge and awareness of various leadership models and action research.

Thus, the formulated Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework consists of leadership as well as context, intermediate, and (dependent) outcome variables. Our aim was that an educational system could be depicted in such a holistic way in order to clearly indicate the interconnectedness of all governance actors within the educational system(s) which could be subsumed under institutionalized teaching and learning opportunities and processes.

In conclusion, it is worth stressing the fact that, even though the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework is depicted linearly, the relationships among the various components are certainly not linear. On the contrary, the Framework represents a complex and dynamic web of relationships which are highly interconnected and interrelated forward and backwards as well as upwards and downwards and should, therefore, be explored in multilevel ways. Thus, it should be stressed that in a book dealing with educational systems and aspects of school leadership, it is not easy to examine all possible relationships. Therefore, even though the scope of both research projects (the LISA and the Pro-LEAD) was much broader, the focus of this book is narrower in that it primarily explores aspects of school leadership in conjunction to other related variables such as school climate and epistemological beliefs variables. Thus, this book revolves mainly around the school leaders' radius, as it relates to the intervening variables of school climate, as well as the school leaders' beliefs about knowledge acquisition. The next chapter will explain in more detail the (already mentioned) major components of the heuristic theoretical framework.

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Chapter 2
The Conceptualization and Development of the Pashiardis–Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework

Petros Pashiardis

This chapter is intended to provide a review of the literature on the concept and evolution of leadership as well as present the main leadership dimensions and school climate variables which seem to influence student outcomes. The literature review is based on the acknowledgment that the investigation of the relationship between leadership and student learning is multilevel and complex in nature and, at the same time, that it is enacted primarily through mediating variables. This extensive review contributed finally to the development of the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework. For the development of this framework, it was assumed that a worldwide search of the current literature on leadership needs to take place, but at the same time, some of the main ideas need to be re-situated within the context of the European countries participating in the project.

2.1   Policy Expectations with Regard to Leadership

In this novel school environment of accountability, where various pressures and external challenges are identified, there is an increasing recognition of the importance of school leadership in supporting change and providing for educational quality. Voices and evidence pointing towards increased accountability are being heard in every corner of the planet. Stakeholders are increasingly becoming more aware and demanding with regard to the quality of education their children are receiving and demand for more explanations, especially when there is evidence of poor

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educational results. Of course, it is an indisputable fact that the teacher who enters a child's classroom is the most important factor which is conducive to learning. At the same time, school leadership has been identified by a number of researchers as a key element in the effectiveness of school organizations (Brauckmann & Pashiardis, 2009; Gronn & Ribbins, 2003; Jacobson, 2011; Kythreotis & Pashiardis, 2006; Kythreotis, Pashiardis, & Kyriakides, 2010; Lashway, 2003; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005; Muijs, 2011; Mulford & Silins, 2011; Sammons, Day, & Ko, 2011; Seashore Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010). As a result, the various stakeholders have widened their expectations from school principals demanding higher academic results and performance standards (Weindling & Dimmock, 2006). However, leading the process towards increased effectiveness is not an easy task for any principal. According to Stevenson (2006), tensions arise where it is hard to respond effectively to societal expectations. In this context, it is important to reorient the role of the school leader and identify which forms or sets of leadership perceptions, behaviors, actions, and practices influence the core purpose of a school's mission, which is student learning. These widening expectations from school leaders, coupled with the fact of more recent research which shows the importance of effective school leadership, have placed school leadership right in the epicenter of educational reforms worldwide.

2.2 Shapes of Leadership

The concept of "leadership" holds a central position in the various theories of management science as well in the daily operation of contemporary organizations. Many researchers have attempted to define the concept so that the phenomenon of leadership can be better understood. Although providing rich insights into the concept, there is no unique definition of leadership, which is broadly accepted (Hallinger & Heck, 1996, 1998; Hoy & Miskel, 2013; Witziers, Bosker, & Krüger, 2003).

Acknowledging the critical importance of leadership, a number of theorists and researchers analyzed and elaborated the meaning of leadership. For instance, Chemers (1997) maintains that leadership is a social influence process during which an individual manages to secure the assistance of others in order to accomplish a common goal. Moreover, Pashiardis (2004, p. 209) defines leadership as

the nexus of those behaviors used with others when trying to influence their own behaviors.

That is, a leader is the person, who influences through his/her behavior the behavior of the people in his/her group. In this way, he/she activates the organization members towards the accomplishment of a common vision. According to Hoy and Miskel (2008), what is common in most definitions is the enactment of

intentional influence over others to structure activities and relationships in a group or organization. (p. 419)

Debate however remains as to whether leadership is position based or diffused throughout the organization. One view supports the distinction between the

responsibilities and functions of leaders and their followers (Yukl, 2002). An alternative view is that leadership is a property of the organization rather than the individual which can be shared among other members as well (Harris, 2006; Seashore Louis et al., 2010; Spillane, 2005). In any case, both approaches can benefit the efforts made to shed light on the complex concept of leadership.

Another fuzzy issue found in the literature concerns the relationship between the concepts of leadership, management, and administration. Indeed, the issue of distinguishing between the terms management and leadership and even administration has attracted the attention of many researchers of management science. As mentioned by Mullins (1994, p. 247),

> formerly, these concepts were synonymous… nowadays though, some differences have been identified with respect to the behavior of the leader or manager towards the other parts of the organization.

According to Hoy and Miskel (2013), some view leadership as being fundamentally different from administration. On the one hand, administrators focus on stability and efficiency, while, on the other hand, leaders stress adaptive change and influence. In addition, Cuban (1988) views management as a function of maintenance of current organizational arrangements and leadership as a function of change. In both cases, administration and management are treated as identical constructs. Another position held by Mullins (1994) is that management can be taught, while leadership is a charisma and is mainly based on the individual's personality. These two concepts remind us strongly of McGregor's (1960) theory of X and Y. A manager is mainly possessed by the characteristics of theory X, while a leader is mainly possessed by the characteristics of theory Y. Concurrently, the two types of managers remind us of Gouldner's (1957) theory of professional bureaucracy with locals and cosmopolitans. Managers possess the basic characteristics of the locals, while leaders possess the basic characteristics of the cosmopolitans. Furthermore, according to Gardner (2007), managers are more tightly attached to the organization than leaders, while the latter seem to have no organization attachment or commitment at all.

Pashiardis (2004) has also made a distinction between administration, management, and leadership (see Fig. 2.1). In his opinion, the term administration has to do with the daily, administrative execution of the everyday tasks to assist the bureaucratic functioning of the organization. That is why, he has coined the term *administrivia* (Pashiardis, 2001), which reflects the daily routine and mostly executive tasks performed by managerial officers without significant importance to the organization. The term *administrivia* combines *administration* with *trivial*. The term management has to do with the daily administration of the organization, but at the same time the leader provides direction to the organization within a time limit of a few months. There is also a political dimension to this concept, albeit small. The concept of *leadership* is like an umbrella term under which the previous two terms, both management and administration, fall. The term *leadership* encompasses the vision and long-term direction of the organization, within the next 3–5 years or even 10 years, thus providing strategic orientation to the organization. Through this reflection, Pashiardis considers the term "leadership" as being inclusive to the other two, and

Fig. 2.1 The relationships
between the terms leadership,
management, and
administration
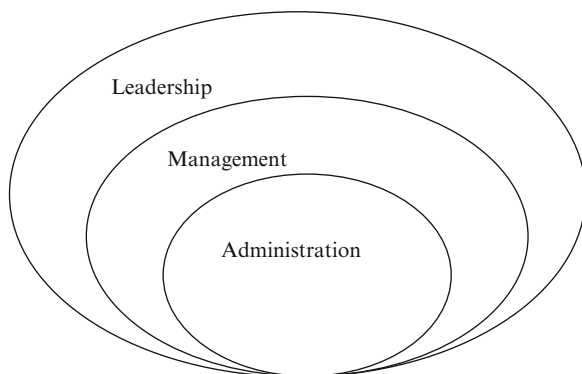
at the same time, he deems that a good leader has to be a good administrator and a
good manager as well. The terms are complementary to each other, but none can
reflect by itself what a contemporary leader ought to be doing. Moreover, the
concept of leadership encompasses highly politicized actions and behaviors that
are beyond the realm of administration and management, which demand much less
"doses" of political astuteness. In essence, under the term leadership we imply the
legacy after a leader is gone. Leaders ought to ask themselves "how do I want this
organization to look like after I am gone?"

It must be acknowledged that early research on leadership focused on the personal
characteristics and traits of leaders. Trait theory is rooted in Aristotle, who believed
that leadership is a gift that a person is born with. In this sense, the dimension of
inheritance is attached to the concept of leadership. According to the theory, leaders
are superior people with special traits which distinguish them from the rest of the
population. Stogdill (1948) was one of the first to embark on research about trait and
personality characteristics of leaders and even clustered these special characteristics
into categories such as leaders' intelligence, originality, judgment, achievement, sense
of responsibility, persistence, aggressiveness, self-confidence, adaptability, humor,
and socioeconomic status of the leader.

Generally, Stogdill's research was inconclusive since no group of such character-
istics was found to determine *who* can become a leader. That is, he did not find the
"right" bodily size or the "right" intelligence quotient, so as to conclude with
certainty that the person who was born with these traits could become a leader or
that he/she holds greater potential to take over the leadership of an organization.

Then, the period of Contingency Models of Leadership followed, such as
Fiedler's Contingency Theory. Fiedler (1967) tried to find associations in leadership
behavior especially between the leadership style and the situation in which the
leader found him/herself. He defined *leadership style* as a motivation system which
drives the leader to specific behaviors. Then, he acknowledged that the leader ought
to have *control of the situation*, and as he mentioned, control over a situation is

achieved by the atmosphere within the group and the power of the leader due to his/her position. What was needed in the end was *effectiveness of the leader*. According to Fiedler, effectiveness refers to the ability of the group to achieve its goals. Group effectiveness depends on the leadership style and the control the leader maintains over the situation.

Following, there were a number of theories which were called *situational theories*, that is, the leader's effectiveness is dependent on the situation he/she is faced with. In essence, situational theories support that there is no "perfect" style of leadership, which anyone can employ at any time or anywhere, but that there are various leadership styles from which a leader can select according to the situation he/she is faced with. An ordinary model of situational leadership entails two axes (X and Y). On the X axis, the leader's inclination for producing work is located (task orientation), while on the Y axis we can trace the leader's inclination for human, interpersonal relations (human relations orientation).

The degree of the leader's inclination towards tasks or interpersonal relations has to be examined in conjunction with the readiness (maturity) of the follower. The term readiness (maturity) does not imply the emotional, physical, or psychological maturity but the readiness and capacity of the follower to carry out a specific task. The main idea behind this concept is that the greater the level of maturity (readiness) of the follower, the less "instructional" and the less "emotional" or "appraising" an effective leader will have to be in the way he/she handles a follower. In essence, as the follower becomes more "professional" and more aware of the task that needs to be accomplished, he/she needs less guidance, while at the same time he does not need much praise in order to be able to work efficiently. These are the employees who (in fact) can work alone and only a fair amount of coordination is needed.

One of the most widely known situational theories (as described above), is the "Life Cycle" theory by Hersey and Blanchard (1988). On the basis of their theory, Hersey and Blanchard support that there is no best "leadership style" under any conditions. A good leader changes his/her approach (his/her style) according to the specific situation he/she is faced with as well as the readiness of the follower. For example, if the followers possess "low" readiness (e.g., new employees, principals, teachers, students), leaders need to be more directional in order to assist their followers to move to the next stage of readiness. That is, good leaders have to manage their followers according to the degree of the professional maturity and readiness that they possess. Thus, the newly appointed teachers who have just finished the university or their initial education need, based on this model, more guidance at the beginning, and therefore the leader has to be more directive and feeling—and slowly becoming more appraising, more "humane"—and decreasing his/her inclination towards the tasks to be performed because the teacher is getting more "mature" and is already at a higher stage of readiness. This is the stage when leaders act as the professional development resource person for their employees. The risk for this type of leadership is for the leader to be able to correctly diagnose the level of professional maturity of the employee and, at the same time, diagnose what the situation calls for and then act accordingly.

Much has also been written about the theories of transactional and transformational leadership. On the whole, transactional leaders motivate the members of the organization by exchanging rewards for work (Burns, 1978). These leaders identify the needs of the members of the organization and try to satisfy them in return for services rendered by their followers. According to Bass (1985), this is a form of a cost-benefit, economic approach to meet the followers' needs in return for their services. On the contrary, transformational leadership promotes a strong emotional attachment of the followers to the leader (Bass). Transformational leaders talk about change and build a vision; they focus on the accomplishment of long-term goals and they reengineer the organization in order to keep up with their vision instead of fighting within the same organization. Within the framework of transformational leadership theory, the four Is which should be exhibited by contemporary leaders are provided, that is, *idealized influence*, *inspirational motivation*, *intellectual stimulation*, *and individualized consideration* (Atwater & Bass, 1994; Avolio, 1994; Hoy & Miskel, 2013). Following the debate about what school leaders do in order to have schools where students learn, the literature turns into school effects as its focal point about leadership. The main question became "what do leaders do and how do they act and behave in order to create schools with high student academic achievement?"

2.3   Effects of School Leadership on Student Achievement

Researchers in the area of educational leadership have attempted to identify links between educational leadership and educational effectiveness research. This phenomenon is mainly due to the perception that educational leaders, especially school principals, affect school effectiveness. However, the empirical literature shows that both the nature and the degree of principal impact continue to be a subject of debate (Pitner, 1988). Previous research on the effects of school leadership on students' academic achievement has produced contradictory findings. On the one hand a number of studies found some effects (Cheng, 1994; Edmonds, 1979; Fuller, 1987; Kythreotis et al., 2010; Leithwood, Patten, & Jantzi, 2010; Levine & Lezotte, 1990; Mortimore, Sammons, Ecob, & Stoll, 1988; Mulford & Silins, 2011; Pashiardis, 1995, 1998, 2004; Reynolds & Cuttance, 1992; Rutter, Maugham, Mortimore, Ousten, & Smith, 1979; Sammons et al., 2011).

On the other hand, other studies found no statistically significant effects. For example, Hallinger and Heck (1996, 1998) reviewed more than 40 studies published about the principal's role in school between 1980 and 1995. In 21 original studies they explored the relationship between educational leadership and student achievement. In nine studies no relationship was found. Six studies found mixed effects. In the remaining six studies a positive relationship was found. The general pattern of results drawn from these two reviews supports the belief that principals exercise a measurable, though indirect effect on school effectiveness and student achievement. On the contrary, the direct effects of principals' leadership on student achievement seem to be very rare.

What is important to understand is that whatever the research method or context in which leadership research has been carried out, leadership is only second to teaching in order to have effective schools (Seashore Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010). Thus, school systems and schools need to understand that in order to have schools which teach and students who learn, we need to provide them with leaders who can lead and guide these processes.

Based on the main research trends of leadership effects, Hallinger and Heck (1998) as well as a number of other researchers (e.g., Clifford, Behrstock-Sherratt, & Fetters, 2012; Darling-Hammond, 2012; Kearney, 2010; Levacic, 2005; Pitner, 1988) discern three main causal models of leadership effects on student outcomes: the direct effects, the indirect effects, and the reciprocal effects models. A description of each of the three models is provided in conjunction with supporting evidence for their potential validation.

2.3.1 Model A: Direct Effects

The first model supports that leadership has a direct impact on student outcomes, adjusting for prior attainment. An extended model A includes antecedent variables, i.e., school context variables, which may affect student outcomes directly or affect leadership as well.

There is not much evidence supporting the validation of the direct effects model. According to Hallinger and Heck's (1998) review already mentioned, direct effect studies mainly reported insignificant effects of leadership on student outcomes. Moreover, Witziers et al. (2003) conducted a quantitative meta-analysis of studies between 1986 and 1996 in order to estimate the direct effect size of educational leadership on student achievement. According to their results, school leadership on the whole has a positive and significant impact on student achievement. However, the effect sizes were very small. Furthermore, the direct effect of leadership on student achievement in secondary schools is absent, while the effect size in the context of the Netherlands is about zero. Also, when considering studies adopting a unidimensional concept of educational leadership, there was no positive nor significant effects related to student outcomes. When treated as a multidimensional construct, effect sizes were small but significant. Krüger, Witziers, and Sleegers (2007) also conducted another secondary analysis using the data from a study investigating differences between male and female secondary school principals in the Netherlands. The path analysis showed that instructional leadership and strategic educational leadership have no direct effect on student commitment. Finally, a meta-analysis of 70 studies since 1970 showed that a balanced framework of concrete leadership practices affects student achievement (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003; Marzano et al., 2005). In fact, the results revealed 21 responsibilities which the leader must perform in order to raise student achievement.

Individual studies also inquire about the direct effects of leadership on student achievement. For example, Marks and Printy (2003) examined the impact of an integrated model of leadership on school performance. The underlying assumption

for this research is that transformational and shared instructional leadership tasks are complementary. For this study, 24 USA restructured schools were selected (8 elementary, 8 middle, 8 high schools) for the analysis of data. The results showed that in schools with integrated leadership, authentic student achievement is higher. These results reflect the shared engagement of the administrator and teachers around matters of pedagogy, curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Another piece of research providing support to the direct effects model was performed by Kythreotis et al. (2010). The researchers conducted a multilevel analysis of data obtained from a sample of 22 primary schools in Cyprus. The analysis showed an effect of the principal's human resource leadership frame (as described by Bolman & Deal, 1991) on student achievement both in Greek language and mathematics tests.

2.3.2   Model B: Mediated Effects

The mediated effects model asserts that leadership affects student outcomes through intervening variables such as school culture, organization, teacher norms, and practices in the classroom. Antecedent variables may also be included. Research has shown that school principals influence student achievement mostly in an indirect manner, that is, through their influence on a number of school variables (Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Seashore Louis et al., 2010). These variables mainly concern the school functioning and the organizational conditions through which improved teaching and learning occurs. Research based on the indirect effects model reveals more effects on students and thus constitutes a more promising approach to shed light on leadership effects. Towards this direction, we need to

> improve our understanding of the chain of variables, which are located between the principal and the organization and student outcomes. (Kruger et al., 2007, p. 2)

According to Mascall, Leithwood, Strauss, and Sacks (2008), the challenge is to identify the variables mediating leaders' influence on students. At the moment, there is strong evidence that transformational leadership indirectly affects student results. For example, Ross and Gray (2006) found an indirect effect of transformational leadership on student achievement. Principal effects on achievement were mediated by collective teacher efficacy and teacher commitment to professional values. The researchers used path analysis from 205 elementary schools in Ontario. The strongest impact on achievement occurred through teacher commitment to school-community partnerships; this means that, by adopting a transformational leadership style, it is likely to have a positive effect on commitment to school-community partnerships through collective teacher efficacy. The indirect effect of transformational leadership on achievement was small but significant. It is also important to note that no statistically significant direct effect of leadership on achievement was found.

In addition, in a review of 32 empirical studies (both quantitative and qualitative) published between 1996 and 2005, Leithwood and Jantzi (2005) concluded that

transformational leadership has a significant positive effect, primarily indirect, on both student achievement and engagement. The school climate variables comprise teacher commitment and job satisfaction at the individual level, while at the organizational level school culture, organizational learning, planning, and strategies for change were identified.

Similarly, the Leadership for Organizational Learning and Student Outcomes (LOLSO) study shows that transformational leadership, both positioned based (principal) and distributive (administrative team and teachers), is indirectly related to student outcomes (Mulford, 2003; Mulford & Silins, 2011). Organizational learning is the mediating variable between leadership and teacher work and then student outcomes.

Leadership practice also needs to be focused on improving learning and teaching practices. That is why much research addressed the indirect impact of instructional leadership on achievement. Hallinger and Heck (1996, 1998) studies found mixed or consistently positive effects of instructional leadership on student outcomes. Reviewing the research conducted since 1980, Hallinger (2005) concludes that instructional leadership in practice places the greatest focus on the dimensions of defining the school's mission and improving the learning climate. O'Donnell and White (2005) investigated the relationship between instructional leadership and student achievement in public middle schools of Pennsylvania. Data were obtained from 325 middle level educators using Hallinger's Principals Instructional Management Rating Scale. Achievement data from the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment was also included. The analysis showed that the teachers' perceptions of their principal's behavior in promoting the school learning climate had the largest explanatory power for predicting mathematics and reading scores. In addition, the multivariate regression analysis showed that the principals of schools with high SES who believe that they exhibit the behavior of defining the school mission influence reading achievement in a positive way. This finding further suggests that the school context plays an important role in the relationship between instructional leadership and student achievement.

That context is important goes without saying. This is exactly the reason why we should be knowledgeable about what research tells us in different settings, but we should not attempt to copy-paste policies and practices from one context right into another. Culture and indeed local values are an essential prerequisite to have in mind when creating new policies with regard to school leadership.

2.3.3   Model C: Reciprocal Effects

This is a dynamic model in which leadership affects school climate variables and student outcomes, but it is in turn affected by them. It can only be investigated by observing the long-term interactions between leadership, school climate variables, and student outcomes. The reciprocal effects model suggests that leaders adapt their thinking and behavior to the organization they work (Witziers et al., 2003).

The reciprocal effects model is rarer to find in leadership effect studies. In fact, Hallinger and Heck (1998) found no studies modeling reciprocal effects. However, it is interesting to note that Krüger et al. (2007) explored such a possibility in their study reaching the result that strategic leadership is influenced by student commitment, something that points to the usefulness of the reciprocal effects model. To sum up, in a recent article, Hallinger (2011) suggests that significant progress has been made towards the identification of the ways and means by which leadership impacts on learning (Hallinger).

2.4 The Factors that Lead to Conflicting Findings Among the Various Studies

What are the reasons that lead to the production of these conflicting findings? It seems that some important conceptual and methodological factors differentiate the results among the various studies and oftentimes, the results of leadership effect studies are contradictory and sometimes even conflicting with each other. First, there is no unique definition of the concept of a principal's leadership, which is broadly accepted (Hallinger & Heck, 1996, 1998; Witziers et al., 2003). This, by itself, leads to results that do not make sense if the conceptualizations of the main factors involved are not similar. Second, there is no universal paradigm or theory for examining organizational behavior that is valid and accepted in all social or organizational contexts (Hallinger & Heck, 1996, 1998; Pashiardis, Thody, Papanaoum, & Johansson, 2003). Third, methodological issues and research design affect the findings of the various studies. For example, the use of longitudinal data permits the examination of the progress of student achievement (Teddlie & Reynolds, 2000). In addition, the presence or absence of either construct validity or generalizability or explicit measures of school performance as a dependent variable may lead to different findings (Hallinger & Heck, 1996, 1998). More specifically, the context from one country to the other plays an important role and may render some of the results as contradictory or noncomparable. Moreover, not everybody uses the same dependent variables as proof of effectiveness. Some studies use students' academic achievement, whereas some other studies may use job satisfaction as a measure of effectiveness or students' citizenship achievements. Finally, the use of statistical techniques such as structural equation modeling and multilevel analysis permits the examination of the complex relationships between a principal's leadership and student achievement (Teddlie & Reynolds, 2000; Witziers et al., 2003); however, not everybody is well versed in these techniques and their results are not easily accessible and interpretable to all.

Based on the limitations of a number of previous studies and the recommendations pointed by the aforementioned reviews, the design and execution of future studies about school leadership and student achievement should adopt a number of important conditions. Firstly, it is important to use the appropriate conceptual framework

that ties the variables together (Hallinger, 2011; Hallinger & Heck, 1996, 1998). Secondly, it is also important to investigate the validity of various models of principals' effects such as the direct effects model and the indirect effects model (Pitner, 1988). Thirdly, it is important to adopt the most appropriate methodology (Hallinger & Heck, 1996, 1998; Kythreotis & Pashiardis, 2006; Witziers et al., 2003). In view of the aforementioned, we constructed the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework (Pashiardis & Brauckmann, 2008) which was presented in Chap. 1 in order to have a common point of departure for the design of both studies described in this book. Thus, the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework became the point of departure for both the LISA as well as the Pro-LEAD studies. In order to make it easier for the reader to follow through the analyses of leadership styles and intermediate school-level variables, the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework is presented in this chapter as well but in greater detail with regard to its various components.

As was mentioned in Chap. 1, the research team decided to validate the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework in all eight countries in order to create this common foundation on which to further expand in current thinking in school leadership. In this way, we were able to make some comparisons across borders (albeit with great caution, due to our small sample), and at the same time, build on the results of the LISA study in order to extend it with the Pro-LEAD study, using the framework as the common denominator (Fig. 2.2).

As was already mentioned, the framework entails five leadership styles that school principals are likely to employ in their work. In our case, as was previously mentioned, a leadership style is defined as

> the nexus of all those behaviors and practices that school principals use in order to influence the behavior of others. (Pashiardis, 2004, p. 209)

Therefore, across the leadership radius five styles may be distinguished which are as follows: (1) instructional style, (2) structuring style, (3) participative style, (4) entrepreneurial style, and (5) personnel development style. Each leadership style consists of specific behaviors, actions, or practices which are likely to be exhibited by school principals. A more in-depth and detailed examination of these leadership styles as well as the school level intermediate variables is presented in the following pages of this chapter. It should be stressed on the outset that the *Leadership Radius* (middle column in red on the figure depicting the framework) is the epicenter of the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework. By Leadership Radius we mean all that a school leader does in order to create a well-functioning school which is able to accomplish its mission. This Leadership Radius consists of the five main styles through which the leader exercises his/her influence within the school boundaries. However, it should be noted that the sum of the five styles does not equal the Leadership Radius; this concept is more than the sum of its parts and it really revolves around the leader's personality and moral purpose in order to make this complex concept operational. Moreover, the five styles partially overlap and are congenial to each other when in full motion and operation. This Leadership Radius is what we came to call the "Leadership Cocktail Mix."
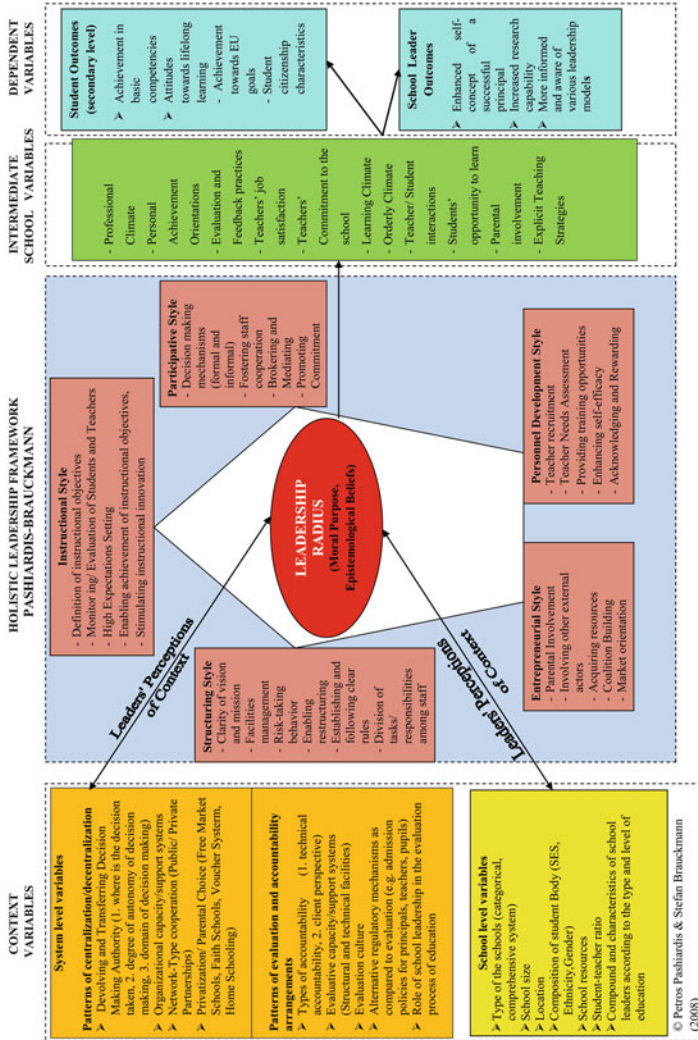
Fig. 2.2 The Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework

In the framework, however, it is also acknowledged that school leaders do not operate in a vacuum. On the contrary, their actions greatly depend on their perceptions of the particular context in which they work, that is, how they (the school leaders) interpret the external environment and legal framework which relate to their practices. The context, as we define it, is divided into two main levels, the system-level variables and the school-level variables. It should be noted, however, that school leaders are both influenced and they themselves also influence the context in which they operate. This is why the two arrows on the diagram connecting the Leadership Radius with the Context point in both directions.

Furthermore, we were interested in investigating Intermediate School Climate Variables through which school leaders affect the final student outcomes. Some of the most prominent school climate variables found in the literature include a learning and orderly climate, personal achievement orientation, evaluation and feedback practices, teachers' job satisfaction and commitment to the school, teacher-student interactions, students' opportunity to learn, explicit teaching strategies, and parental involvement.

These variables which operate at the school level are hypothesized to be influenced by the foregoing leadership styles and in turn to affect school outcomes. Therefore, what follows is an in-depth description of the five leadership styles as well as an analysis of how these styles have an impact on the Intermediate School Climate Variables (or school climate variables) in order to enhance student achievement and other desirable school outcomes.

2.5 The Leadership Radius and School Climate Variables Development

2.5.1 Instructional Style and Its Relationship to Teaching and Learning Practices

Instructional leadership is a term that has been derived from the effective schools research, primarily in the USA. This leadership style has a strong focus on the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning. Within the framework of this generic notion, different conceptualizations with regard to the construct have been developed (Hallinger, 2000, 2011). Our conceptualization of instructional leadership entails the following actions and behaviors that a school leader ought to exhibit: defining instructional objectives, setting high expectations, monitoring and evaluating students and teachers, enabling achievement of instructional objectives, and stimulating instructional innovation.

There is a vast amount of evidence with regard to the effectiveness of the foregoing instructional leadership dimensions and indicators (Seashore Louis et al., 2010). Firstly, Dinham (2005) investigated the principal's role in producing outstanding educational outcomes in years 7–10 in 38 secondary, government schools

in New South Wales, Australia. One of the findings of the case studies was that effective principals clarify the core purpose of schooling, that is, teaching and learning. This is also supported by Hallinger and Heck's (1998) review which showed that the "definition of the school mission" (and consequently the definition of the instructional objectives) is one of the main components of instructional leadership. This initial review has been corroborated by findings from another more recent review, where Hallinger (2005) concludes that instructional leadership (in practice) places the greatest focus on the dimensions of shaping the school's mission and creating a positive learning environment. Findings revealed that effective school principals lead through building a learning mission and aligning teaching and learning activities with the defined purposes.

In addition, effective school leaders seem to hold high expectations from teachers and students. In the aforementioned review of instructional leadership, Hallinger (2005) highlights that instructional leaders develop a climate of high expectations for teaching and learning. Similarly, in another review of the direct effects of leadership on student achievement, Nettles and Herrington (2007) identify high expectations for student performance as a primary constituent of effective schools. Mulford and Silins (2003, 2011) also conclude that high expectations from students and staff (under the notion of transformational leadership) affect student outcomes through organizational learning and the teachers' work. The specific result has emerged from a longitudinal project in Australia named LOLSO, (Leadership for Organizational Learning and Student Outcomes) which combined both quantitative and qualitative research methods.

A number of researchers also maintain that monitoring and evaluation are primary constituents of an effective instructional leader. Evaluation is an important element affecting the complex life of schools (Daley & Kim, 2010; Danielson, 2011; Marshall, 2012; Papay, 2012; Peterson, 2004). It is important to realize that from the day we are born till the end of our lives, we go through a series of evaluations and judgments both at the personal and at the professional levels. It is also a fact that these evaluations sometimes aim at improving us and at other times aim at ranking and providing us with professional rewards. Therefore, evaluation can be defined as the process through which information and data are collected in order to reach decisions concerning purposes of improvement or accountability. With regard to the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework, *evaluation and feedback practices* are used to denote the two aforementioned purposes of evaluation. This variable entails items such as whether concrete feedback is given to staff with regard to teaching and learning or whether evaluations of teaching are used for improvement and change, or in order to meet external requirements or both functions of evaluation.

Moreover, it is accepted by a variety of stakeholders that the principal holds a key role in evaluation. Southworth (2002), in a qualitative study of successful leadership in small primary schools in England, found that monitoring teacher and student performance was one of the primary strategies utilized by the heads in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning. In addition, in a qualitative study of 49 Cypriot primary school principals nominated as effective by school inspectors,

it was revealed that effective principals seem to be knowledgeable about learning and instructional problems around the school and well informed about the students' progress (Pashiardis, 1998). They all exhibited a personal feeling of responsibility for school results and were aware of the impact the school could have on their students. In addition, in a meta-analysis of 19 studies, it was shown that planning, coordinating, and evaluating teaching and the curriculum make a strong impact on student outcomes (Robinson, 2007). This leadership dimension involves the support and evaluation of teaching through regular classroom observations and the provision of relevant feedback to teachers as well as the direct coordination and review of the curriculum so that it is aligned to school goals. Witziers et al. (2003) also found that the leadership behaviors of supervision, evaluation, and monitoring have a small but significant effect on student outcomes. This has been one of their findings in a quantitative meta-analysis of studies between 1986 and 1996 which attempted to estimate the direct effect size of educational leadership on student achievement.

Furthermore, the principal's role in enabling the achievement of instructional objectives is also of great importance. One of the practices adopted by instructional school leaders entails the dialogue with teachers in order to promote reflection on teaching and learning. In an exploratory study, conducted by Blase and Blase (2002), an open questionnaire was sent to 890 teachers in order to investigate their perception of the characteristics and effects of instructional school leadership. The inductive analysis of the data identified that talking to teachers in order to promote reflection constitutes a major area of instructional leadership. To this effect, five primary strategies were adopted:

1. Making suggestions
2. Giving feedback
3. Modeling
4. Using inquiry and soliciting advice and opinions about instructional matters
5. Giving praise

The effects of these behaviors were to enhance teacher self-reflection, innovation and creativity, risk taking, motivation, satisfaction, self-esteem, efficacy, and sense of security. Research further shows that school leaders can have an effect on the *Teaching and Learning Practices* that take place in their schools. Teachers have always held a central role in successful schools. In fact, research shows that effective teaching constitutes the strongest indicator of student learning when controlling for student background characteristics. Much research has shown that the instructional behaviors and practices of teachers result in higher student learning gains (e.g., Creemers & Kyriakides, 2008; de Jong, Westerhof, & Kruiter, 2004; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006; Muijs & Reynolds, 2000; Stronge, Ward, Tucker, & Hindman, 2007). For the purposes of the LISA Project, the variable of *Teaching and Learning Practices* mainly concerns items representing efforts to improve teaching practices and student outcomes, a close alignment between content taught and content tested, the provision of explanations and precise answers to students' questions, the prompt return of the graded tests and explanation of the expected answers, and a step-by-step procedure in teaching. The variable of Teaching and

Learning Practices is basically defined at the school level rather than at the classroom level for the purposes of the LISA Project. This is because individual practices are aggregated at the school level, thus providing an indication of the general school practices with regard to teaching and learning approaches.

Additionally, effective leaders are constant stimulators of instructional innovation. According to Waters et al. (2003), the "optimizer role" adopted by school leaders contributes to an increase in student achievement. This dimension refers to the principal inspiring and leading new and challenging innovations in the teaching strategies they employ. Other researchers also point to the effectiveness of this leadership practice (e.g., Barnett & McCormick, 2004; Blase & Blase, 2002; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). Instructional innovation is tightly coupled with teachers' and school leaders' high expectations from their students. *Student expectations* represent practices that promote student personal achievement orientation. For the LISA Project purposes, student expectations are interpreted as teacher expectations about their students since it is the teachers' perceptions that are utilized in order to mobilize students towards the enhancement of their performance. Specifically, the items of this variable include teachers' expectations about their students' interest in improving their academic performance, their participation in various educational programs and competitions, and the conduct of a noble competition which enhances their performance.

Thus, in effective schools, there are high expectations about learning, irrespective of the social, cultural, or other individual differences among students. Teacher expectations about students concern "a positive attitude in which teachers try to get the best out of all students, also the less capable ones" (Scheerens, 2008, p. 22). According to Muijs and Reynolds (2000), teachers emphasize the positive in each child and transmit these positive expectations to the children. Such expectations are operationalized in terms of the learning opportunities provided to students and the affective and learning climate created in the classroom (Pashiardi, 2000; Rubie-Davies, Hatties, & Hamilton, 2006). Teachers believe that all students can learn and try to respond to their individual needs by working towards the fulfillment of the school goals. More emphasis is also given to higher-order learning goals (analysis, critical thinking, problem solving), thus creating a challenging environment for children to learn. If negative expectations are formed by teachers, then it is likely that they will give their students less attention and expose them to less-than-challenging tasks.

2.5.2   Structuring Style and Its Relationship to Student–Teacher Interactions

The structuring style of leadership concerns the aspects of providing direction and coordination to the school unit. A first component of this domain concerns the creation and communication of a clear vision and mission for the school.

Kouzes and Posner (2007, p. 65) posit that exemplary leaders have a clear picture of the future which pulls them forward. In a sense, they

> "live their lives backwards" seeing pictures of the outcomes before even starting their project.

Research has shown that the principal's vision affects the processes and outcomes of effective schools. In a secondary analysis using path modeling, Kruger et al. (2007) found that the principals' vision has an impact on their instructional and strategic behavior. Moreover, Barnett and McCormick (2004), in a combined multilevel and structural modeling analysis, concluded that the principals' vision has a direct effect on being better focused on the tasks and goals at hand, as well as excellence in teaching. This vision provided direction and purpose to the school and instigated teachers to adopt innovative and professional teaching practices. With regard to student learning, Witziers et al. (2003) concluded that the leadership behavior of defining and communicating mission is positively related to student outcomes. Nevertheless, the effect size was found to be small. Mulford and Silins (2003, 2011) also found that the communication of a vision and relevant goals to students and staff (within the framework of transformational leadership) affects student outcomes through organizational learning and the teachers' work. Furthermore, Dinham's (2005) findings showed that effective school leaders build a long-term agenda and vision rather than short-term goals. These principals see the "big picture" and communicate this to the staff through high and clear expectations.

The establishment of an orderly and friendly environment is considered another important constituent of the structuring style of school leadership. More specifically, Dinham (2005) found that effective principals place high emphasis on the creation of a pleasant physical environment in the school. The creation of such pleasant environment also has to do with relationships between students and teachers and the quality of the interactions that take place at the school level. *Student-Teacher Interactions* constitute an important dimension of the social climate of the school. This variable is defined as the communication patterns and the relationship in general between teachers and students regarding their progress or other personal issues. The items comprising this variable include the monitoring of the student progress, the effective communication between students and staff, students feeling comfortable to express their feelings, problems or concerns to their teachers, and teachers discussing on one-to-one basis with their students about issues concerning their progress. Of course, school leaders can have a large impact on the creation and sustainability of such interactions (Pashiardi, 2000).

Additionally, over the last 20 years much research has been conducted on the importance of teacher-student relationships in determining the quality of students' motivation and learning experiences (Davies, 2003). In a meta-analysis synthesizing 119 studies from 1984 to 2004, it was shown that positive teacher-student relationships had a strong positive correlation with student outcomes (Cornelius-White, 2007). Moreover, in a review of research dealing with this topic, Davies (p. 209) concludes that

> through their nurturing and responsiveness to students' needs teachers serve to provide a foundation from which children can learn about their academic and social surroundings.

The quality of teacher-student relationships influences children's motivation to explore and regulate their social, emotional, and cognitive skills. Students appreciate the support that their relationships with teachers can provide to them but also the ability of the latter to build their academic efficacy. According to Glover and Law (2004, p. 331),

there is a need for a teacher-student ethos marked by caring, mutual loyalty, and the recognition of the needs of the individual.

Associations between teacher-student interactions and affective outcomes are more consistent than studies investigating the relationship with cognitive outcomes (den Brok, Brekelmans, & Wubbels, 2004). In their study (den Brok et al.) investigating the influence of the interpersonal behavior of secondary education teachers on student outcomes, it was shown that the dimensions of influence and proximity were positively related to both cognitive (Physics and English as a Foreign Language) and affective (subject-specific motivation) outcomes. However, the findings showed that effect sizes were larger for the affective outcomes. In Korea, students from 12 secondary schools were asked to assess the interpersonal behavior of their science teachers (Kim, Fisher, & Fraser, 2000). Multiple regression analyses showed that the scales of Friendly/Helping and Student Responsibility/Freedom were positively and independently associated with attitude towards science, whereas the scales of Uncertain and Strict Behavior were negatively and independently associated with attitude. This means that a more positive attitude towards science was exhibited where students perceived their teachers as being more helping and friendly and providing them more responsibility and freedom.

Furthermore, Pashiardis' (1995) findings indicate that one of the most important areas of leadership effectiveness related to ensuring that school rules are uniformly observed and that consequences of misconduct are applied equitably to all students. The study of Waters et al. (2003) also indicates that the leadership responsibility of establishing standard procedures and routines, in order to secure order and discipline, is positively associated with an increase in student achievement. Similarly, Dinham's findings (2005) suggest that effective principals apply policy and guidelines in a consistent manner. Moreover, they initiate clear structures and well-defined responsibilities.

Finally, effective leaders utilize the rules and boundaries of the system in a creative manner and use their available organizational discretion to manage efficiently administrative constraints. They often act as "ground breakers," support new approaches, and encourage staff to leave their "comfort zones." In this context, they welcome new ideas, experiment and risk time, money, and failure in order to give a try to the proposed initiatives (Dinham, 2005). Similarly, in a study by Pashiardis (1998), all effective principals indicated that they were willing to take risks if they felt that it was for the improvement of their school, the teachers, and the students. They all had ideas which differed from those of the Ministry and went ahead and implemented some of them, which is a great risk, especially in a highly centralized system such as the one in Cyprus.

2.5.3 Participative Style and Its Relationship to Teacher Commitment

The participative style of school leadership is also considered to have an impact on school processes and outcomes. This term recognizes that leaders can organize their management activities through others in many different ways according to their own preferences, the types of people with whom they are working, and the culture of the organizations in which they work. The term "mediated" used by Pashiardis et al. (2003) includes concepts which can be found in other Education Management texts described as distributed leadership, team leadership, delegation, followership, and servant leadership. In our book the term participative leadership is being used, implying that more participatory approaches to leadership and governance will lead to more informed decisions and more willingness in implementation.

If leaders are to adopt a participative approach to leadership, they need to extend their power to involve all members of the staff (Bezzina, 2001). According to Pashiardis (1994), teachers need to feel they have more to offer to the school than just teaching autonomously within their classroom. Principals should be ready to open up spaces for more initiatives and invite staff to participate in the formulation of educational policy (Georgiou, Papayianni, Savvides, & Pashiardis, 2001). They should be flexible enough to encourage teachers to participate in problem solving and be responsible for widely shared decision-making. Similarly, Riley and MacBeath (1998) claim that the effective leaders are those who share their leadership and turn to the advantages of their staff's specialization and leading skills. In this way, they develop a professional community where all stakeholders take an active part in school life. Moreover, "principals who share leadership responsibilities with others would be less subject to burnout than principal

'heroes' who attempt the challenges and complexities of leadership alone. (Hallinger, 2003, p. 345)

Finally, Seashore Louis et al. (2010) found that high-performing schools have "fatter" or "thicker" decision-making structures, not simply "flatter" ones, and leadership in these schools is more "intense." Moreover, they found that school personnel rarely attributed leadership behaviors and influences to a single person.

Much empirical evidence points to the importance of participative decision-making. To this effect, Pashiardis (1995) found that elementary school principals in Cyprus consider their active involvement in decision-making and team building as the most important component of leadership effectiveness. Furthermore, Bogler's (2001) study revealed that the participative style of decision-making adopted by school leaders has a positive, indirect effect on teachers' satisfaction. This has been the result of a quantitative piece of research conducted in Israeli schools with a number of 745 teachers as respondents. Furthermore, Mulford and Silins (2003, 2011), within the LOLSO project, reached the conclusion that effective school principals promote administrative team leadership and teacher leadership which in turn affect

student outcomes through the mediating effects of organizational learning and the teachers' work. According to them, "success is more likely where people act rather than always reacting, are empowered, involved in decision making through a transparent, facilitative and supportive structure, and are trusted, respected and encouraged" (p. 186). As a result, the members of the school develop greater commitment to accomplish organizational goals (Leithwood, Jantzi, Earl, Watson, Levin, & Fullan, 2004).

Fostering staff cooperation is also considered as an important aspect of participative leadership behavior. According to elementary school principals in Cyprus, the most important area of leadership effectiveness is fostering collegiality and team building among staff and encouraging their active involvement in decision-making (Pashiardis, 1995). Indeed, in a qualitative study of 49 primary school principals nominated as effective by school inspectors, Pashiardis (1998) found that the principals build collaboration with teachers in planning school activities. Finally, according to the study of Southworth (2002), principals who were in the lead of school success orchestrated teacher and staff collaboration. The improvement of performance heavily relied on the teamwork of teachers who shared common goals and functioned in a climate of professional openness.

Furthermore, in a piece of research utilizing multilevel modeling, in a sample of 22 primary schools in Cyprus, teacher commitment was found to affect academic emphasis in the classroom, while both variables were found to be positively associated with student achievement in mathematics and Greek language (Kythreotis & Pashiardis, 2006; Kythreotis et al., 2010). With regard to this aspect of participative leadership, Yu, Leithwood, and Jantzi (2002) inquired about the effects of transformational leadership on *teachers' commitment* to change using a sample of 107 primary schools in Hong Kong. Linear regression analyses indicated that transformational leadership explains about 11 % of the variance in teachers' commitment, with the greatest effect being on teachers' context beliefs. Most of the variation in teacher commitment was explained by the dimensions of developing a widely shared vision for the school, and building consensus about school goals and priorities.

Teacher commitment constitutes an important aspect of the performance and quality of school personnel. Teachers face a great deal of complexity and tension in schools, and therefore, it is important to keep them engaged and enthusiastic about what they do. Commitment as used in the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework is defined as the loyalty and dedication of the teachers in fulfilling the aims and goals of their school. The items of this variable comprise of the teachers' clear understanding of what is expected of them in their work, a clear perception of the school's direction, their commitment to achieving the school goals and maintaining high standards of discipline, and teachers feeling responsible for the quality of their work and trying to perform to the maximum extent possible as well as placing a strong emphasis on student learning.

In a comparative study in Australia and the USA, members of the school community (teachers, parents, students, principals) were asked to identify the most critical factors that make schools to be effective (Townsend, 1997). In both countries, the most supported element was "dedicated and qualified staff."

Kythreotis and Pashiardis (2006), in a multilevel study of leadership effects on student achievement, found that *commitment* to the school had a positive effect on academic emphasis in the classroom. Teacher commitment was also positively associated with increased student achievement in the Greek language (Kythreotis et al., 2010).

Moreover, a significant body of research shows that teacher commitment is associated with transformational leadership practices. In such a study, Ross and Gray (2006) examined the effects of transformational leadership on teacher commitment to organizational values. Data from 218 elementary schools in Ontario, Canada, were used. The structural equation modeling analysis provided evidence to a model in which transformational leadership had direct effects on teacher commitment and indirect effects through collective teacher efficacy. The greatest direct and combined effects of transformational leadership were on the teachers' commitment to the school mission, while the greatest indirect effect concerned the commitment to community partnerships.

Leithwood, Jantzi, and Fernandez (1994) found a stronger effect of transformational leadership on teacher commitment in Canada. In a similar study, Geijsel, Sleegers, Leithwood, and Jantzi (2003) examined the effects of transformational leadership on teacher commitment and extra effort towards school reform using two approximately comparable datasets from samples of Canadian and Dutch teachers. In both countries, the results showed moderate effects of transformational leadership on teachers' commitment to change with the effects being greater for context beliefs. Context beliefs were mostly influenced by the leadership dimensions of vision building and intellectual stimulation. The findings arising from the aforementioned studies show that while the same relationships may remain stable across different cultural contexts, the magnitude of leadership effects may vary.

Teacher commitment is a key element in securing teacher retention, especially among newly appointed teachers. To this effect, Weiss (1999) investigated whether there is a relationship between perceived workplace conditions and career choice commitment of first-year teachers in the USA. Hierarchical regression showed that supportive school leadership was among the strongest variables associated with first-year teachers' feeling of commitment to teaching and their field. When school leaders

> communicate their expectations clearly, enforce student rules of conduct and support teachers in doing so, provide instructional or management guidance and necessary materials, and when teachers are evaluated fairly and recognized for a job well done, first year teachers are more inclined to have high morale, to be committed to their career choice and to fully anticipate that they will stay in teaching. (p. 865)

Moreover, findings showed that school principals who incorporated teacher participation in decision-making were more likely to influence novice teachers' enthusiasm about their work. In conclusion, all these findings suggest that we need to adopt a new content for school leadership, one that will be able to replace hierarchical structures (Camburn, Rowan, & Taylor, 2003) and involve more lateral forms of leadership, where teachers and other stakeholders will possess a central part in school management issues (Harris, 2006). Promoting teacher commitment is certainly a core leadership practice to this endeavor (Seashore Louis et al., 2010).

2.5.4 Entrepreneurial Style and Its Relationship to Parental Involvement

External changes such as greater competition between schools, privatization, and accountability for academic results have widened the expectations of the role of the school leader (Weindling & Dimmock, 2006). Governments and local stakeholders exert greater pressures upon school leaders. Communities are questioning school programs, policies, and procedures. Parents are demanding greater participation in school programs and even in school administration and the day-to-day running of the schools. Legislators are demanding more widespread results and higher student achievement and performance standards. Within this context, it is important that principals incorporate an entrepreneurial dimension to the set of their adopted practices. As Leithwood (2001) points out,

> school leaders implementing market solutions in truly competitive environments need marketing and entrepreneurial skills. (p. 222)

A first element of the entrepreneurial style of leadership concerns the involvement of the community and especially the parents in school affairs. Taking into account the complex nature of a school's mission, it is imperative that schools activate the parents to get their support. Schools are social systems where various stakeholders communicate with each other and are generally closely interdependent. The parents constitute one group of stakeholders that contribute to such kind of interaction. Strengthening parent-school partnerships is an especially important area for policy makers since research has shown that family factors are critical in improving student achievement (Seashore Louis et al., 2010). According to Sanders (2001), when schools, families, and communities work collaboratively as partners, the students reap most of the benefits. These partnerships may create a safe school environment, enhance parenting skills, encourage the provision of welfare services, improve academic achievement, as well as contribute to the accomplishment of a number of other school goals (Sanders, 1996, 2001).

With regard to the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework, *parental involvement* mostly concerns aspects entailed in the involvement of parents in school decision-making processes, encouraging constructive and frequent two-way communication between the family and school regarding school programs and their children's progress and orchestrating volunteerism in programs, events, and activities organized by the school. Specifically, the items in the questionnaire for school climate variables included aspects of how frequent the communication and cooperation with parents was and the parents' active involvement in schools' affairs, including the governance and the day-to-day operations of the school.

Furthermore, Epstein (1995) maintains that students from all educational levels do better at school and have more positive attitudes towards education as well as higher academic expectations, when their parents are informed about the school life of their children. Parental involvement effects are long term and relate not only to student achievement (Jeynes, 2007) but also to other indicators of children's

adjustment (Fan & Chen, 2001; Hong & Ho, 2005). A study by Sanders and Simon (1999) indicated that most schools participating in the National Network of Partnership Schools improved through parental participation, student achievement, attendance, and behavior. In an action research project in a specific primary school of Cyprus, parents worked with their children in class (Kyriakides, 2005). At the end of the implementation of this policy, as well as 6 months later, students of the experimental school had higher achievement in language, mathematics, and the social sciences. The findings indicate that the parents could support their children even in subjects in which parents were not confident about, such as maths. Additionally, parents reported that their visits in the classroom have improved their communication with the teacher as well as the behavior of their children at home. Both students and parents developed positive attitudes towards partnership policies and in fact expressed their desire to continue working in this way during the next school year as well.

2.5.5 Personnel Development Style and Its Relationship to Professional Development Opportunities

Developing school personnel constitutes another major area through which school leaders can influence school performance outcomes. Indeed, according to Harris, Day, and Hadfield (2003), effective head teachers develop the school through developing others. Youngs and King (2002) assert that one of the ways

> principals shape school conditions and teaching practices through their beliefs and actions regarding teacher professional development. (p. 644)

In this effort, they provide intellectual stimulation and individual support to the staff as well as appropriate models of best practice (Leithwood, 1994; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). Thus, organizational members' capacities are influenced by their direct experiences with those in leadership posts.

A number of researchers point to the above direction based on empirical evidence that their studies have yielded. For example, Printy (2008) conducted a study on the influence of high school principals on the learning of science and mathematics teachers. The results showed that principals shape opportunities for teachers to learn in communities of practice. In addition, in a qualitative research in two suburban Flemish elementary schools, one group of teachers maintained that the school leader creates a culture of professional development

> by passing through relevant information, by allowing teachers to participate in in-service training, by buying relevant professional journals, by discussing interesting innovations at meetings. (Clement & Vandenberghe, 2001, p. 47)

The interaction between the school leader and teachers is dominated by the creation of learning opportunities and learning space for teachers which foster a collegial climate for the development of learning experiences. Similarly, Youngs and King (2002),

in a qualitative study of urban elementary schools, reached the conclusion that effective principals can build school capacity through the creation of structures that promote the professional development of teachers, either by connecting them to external expertise or helping them drive internal reforms. Harris et al. (2003) also conducted a qualitative research investigating the teachers' perspectives on effective school leadership in 12 cases. The results showed that the teachers appreciated the head teachers' commitment to staff development. According to them, the head teachers provided them with leadership opportunities within the school and supported their external training. In the study of Blase and Blase (2002), the promotion of professional growth was identified as a major area of effective principals albeit under the concept of instructional leadership. The strategies used by principals in order to promote teachers' professional growth were as follows:

1. Emphasizing the study of teaching and learning
2. Supporting collaboration among educators
3. Developing coaching relationships among educators
4. Encouraging and supporting redesign of programs
5. Applying the principles of adult learning, growth, and development to staff development
6. Implementing action research to inform instructional decision-making

The effects of these leadership behaviors were an increase in teacher reflective behavior, planning, motivation, self-esteem, efficacy, innovation and creativity, and risk taking. With regard to the LISA Project and the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework, the variable of *Professional Development Opportunities* represents practices that promote a climate for teacher professional development as defined by Duke (1990) and Fishman, Marx, Best, and Tal (2003). The items included in this variable concern the provision of sufficient opportunities for professional training, the provision of necessary information and useful feedback to teachers in order to perform their duties, and free discussion of issues regarding teacher continuous improvement, finding their job at the school motivating, undertaking initiatives and responsibilities, and participating in decision-making processes. Overall, this variable concerns the intellectual stimulation and empowerment of teachers as reflective practitioners.

Moreover, Bredeson and Johansson (2000) provide a comprehensive framework of how principals affect teachers' learning and development. Their research was based on documentary analysis regarding school principals and teacher professional development, two focus group interviews with principals, as well as 48 structured interviews with teachers, principals, and other school leaders. Findings indicated that there are four areas of principals' influence on teacher professional development. Firstly, school principals influence professional development by taking on the role of an instructional leader and learner. They are committed to learning themselves and comprehend the association between teacher development and student learning. They have expert knowledge and skills in learning and instruction and provide training opportunities to address the diverse needs of teachers.

Secondly, school principals create a supportive learning environment for teachers to improve their professional practice. They articulate and communicate high expectations for teacher learning and foster constructive and reflective dialogue around their professional development. Furthermore, they provide financial support and empower their teachers to take risks and experiment with new ideas and practices. Moreover, they handle all the managerial and organizational tasks needed to create and maintain a successful learning community.

Thirdly, they are directly involved with teachers in the design, delivery, and planning of the content of professional development. To this effect, they align professional needs with school goals and student needs in collaboration with teachers. Fourthly, principals assess the professional development outcomes of teachers. They support teachers in setting professional development goals and provide feedback on their learning outcomes. To this end, they initiate processes for the systematic collection and analysis of data on teacher professional development outcomes. Finally, Bredeson and Johansson (2000, p. 390) clarify that "teachers are autonomous professionals responsible for and in control of their own learning… the role of the school principal is to encourage, nurture and support teacher learning, not to be the gatekeepers or governors of teacher professional development."

Staff development also entails practices of acknowledging and rewarding exemplary performance. According to Kouzes and Posner (2007), recognition of performance builds "a strong sense of collective identity and community spirit that can carry a group through extraordinarily tough times" (p. 69). In the study of Harris et al. (2003), the teachers viewed staff development as "a means of rewarding staff, re-motivating others and at times keeping busy those who need to be occupied" (p. 74). Moreover, according to Pashiardis' findings (1998), effective leaders find innovative ways to reward teachers because they believe that rewards are an important motivator for people to act. This has also been a result of the meta-analysis of Waters et al. (2003). According to their piece of research, the leadership responsibility which relates to the acknowledgment and rewarding of individual accomplishments is positively correlated to an increase in student achievement.

In addition, school leaders should always take into account the importance of the beliefs of the teachers in any attempt for improvement. According to Bandura (1977, 1986) such systems of beliefs are likely to have an impact on the regulation of their thinking, emotions, and behavior. Central to this form of self-regulation is the sense of self-efficacy of teachers. Self-efficacy is defined as "an individual's overall judgment of his or her perceived capacity for performing a task" (Hoy & Miskel, 2008, p. 157). Teacher efficacy or self-efficacy is positively related to their instructional practice (Hartnett, 1995), the use of democratic processes in classroom management (Hoy, Tarter, & Bliss, 1990), student achievement in literacy and maths (Schunk, 1991), as well as student efficacy and motivation (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Midgley, Feldlaufer, & Eccles, 1989; Savvides & Pashiardis, 2008).

In a number of studies, the school principal's behavior was deemed important in enhancing the self-efficacy of teachers. For example, Hipp (1996) investigated the relationship between the leading behavior of principals and teachers' efficacy,

in ten middle schools, utilizing a mixed-methods approach. The conclusion of the first quantitative phase was that school principals influence teacher efficacy by employing some forms of transformational leadership behaviors (i.e., modeling behavior, providing contingent rewards, inspiring group purpose). The qualitative phase which followed identified eight additional leadership behaviors which influence teacher efficacy: providing personal and professional support, promoting teacher empowerment and decision-making, managing student behavior, promoting a positive climate for success, fostering teamwork and collaboration, encouraging innovation and continuous growth, believing in staff and students, and inspiring caring and respectful relationships. Also, Coladarci and Breton (1991) found that special education teachers who appreciated supervision more highly stated higher levels of self-efficacy. On the other hand, Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2007), in a survey of 225 teachers, found no empirical support of leadership influences on their self-efficacy beliefs.

2.5.6   Creating a Usable "Leadership Cocktail Mix"

After the completion of the research on the various components of the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework, we began putting it together so as to begin telling our story of the puzzle which is called *school leadership*. As mentioned previously, the framework emanated from a thorough review of the literature on school leadership, educational governance, and school effectiveness over the last few decades. Firstly it should be reminded that in this project, *leadership* is treated as a multilevel and multidimensional construct which may affect school and student variables but it is also likely to be influenced by contextual variables. In any case, the center of the framework, as previously mentioned, became what we called the *Leadership Radius* (middle red color). This is the action area of the school leader, as the central figure within the school. Based on the extensive review of the literature, we hypothesized that school leaders perform their high duties through five main styles of leadership as follows: (1) instructional style, (2) structuring style, (3) participative style, (4) entrepreneurial style, and (5) personnel development style. Each leadership style consists of specific behaviors and practices which are likely to be exhibited by school principals. However, it is implied that the specific behaviors and actions exist not just as they are perceived to be exercised by school leaders but also as they are perceived by teachers and other kinds of personnel working at the school, as well as students and parents and other stakeholders (both internal and external to the school).

Therefore, in this framework it is acknowledged that school leaders do not operate in a vacuum. On the contrary, their actions greatly depend on their perceptions of the particular context in which they work. In essence, what we are assuming is that the way in which school leaders interpret their external environment and legal framework and how it relates to their practices is an important concept encapsulated within the framework. Thus, the exercised styles or the "styles-in-use" are both as perceived by the school leaders and how they are perceived by other employees

at the school. Through these styles, school leaders try to administer, manage, and lead their schools both in the short term and in the long term and further down, bearing in mind the strategic goals and orientations of the school. These styles constitute the main vehicle through which school leaders act and exhibit their public behavior. The five leadership styles are not discrete, but rather there is a degree of overlap among them, and thus, "hybrid" styles begin to emerge as well.

Now, going backwards, to the left column (orange and yellow), one can see the context variables. Those variables are hypothesized to have an impact on how school leaders act, and at the same time, they are impacted (to some extent) by the school leaders. Therefore, there are two double-sided arrows which point in both directions, implying that school leaders affect the context in which they operate and they are also affected by this context themselves. It is a reciprocal relationship which seems to operate just like *osmosis*. Depending on how the leaders perceive their context and environment, they can have an impact and change it and at the same time they can change their mix of leadership styles in order to accommodate the specific context in which they operate. In order to achieve this, they allow some influence from the outside into the Leadership Radius, and, at the same time, they allow some influence from the inside towards the context in which the school is situated (meaning both the systemic and the local contexts).

In more concrete terms, the proposed framework depicts the interplay between the school leaders (the Leadership Radius as shown in the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Framework) and the context in which they operate. More specifically, the main interest lies in examining the leaders' perceptions of their context and how this interplay produces the best "cocktail mix" of effective leadership behaviors and practices. For example, is it a 20 % of the instructional style and a 50 % of the participative one that a leader has to adopt in order to be best effective within a particular context? And then, which specific behaviors and practices make up these percentages for each style?

The context, as we define it, is divided into two main levels: (1) system-level variables which include *Patterns of Centralization and Decentralization* as well as *Patterns of Evaluation and Accountability Arrangements* in each individual country and (2) school-level variables which consist of variables pertaining to the characteristics of the school as well as demographic information about the students and teachers. The working hypotheses here are multiple and complex. For instance, the degree to which an educational system is centralized or decentralized has an impact on the extent to which school leaders exercise their authority and their styles. It also has an impact on the school leaders' perception of their powers and the environment. Thus, the context can be inhibiting or permitting depending on the situation at hand, and therefore, school leaders will act differently depending on the permissiveness of their environment.

Then, the extent to which an education system has evaluation and accountability mechanisms in place may have an impact on how school leaders exercise their powers and how they lead their schools. Indeed school leaders act differently depending on whether they are totally accountable about their actions or inactions and depending on whether they will be evaluated every year or every 3 years or none at all. Further, depending on the kind of evaluation, whether it is summative or formative or both,

school leaders are usually inclined to act and behave differently. These are aspects of context which may have a direct bearing on how school leaders operate at the school level.

Finally, school leaders are better informed if they are aware of the demographics of their schools and act accordingly. Different leadership styles and qualities are expected in a school whose ethnic composition is very diverse; different sets of actions are probably required of an elementary school or a middle school or a high school. Further, depending on where the school is situated (urban, suburban, or rural), different constituents may have different demands of school leaders as well as different sets of expectations. However, school leaders do not have much leverage to change or to act on these last school-level variables. These are given: where their school is located, its student composition, etc. On the other hand, the previously mentioned patterns of centralization and evaluation can be changed and can be impacted on.

Then, the column to the right of the Leadership Radius (green color) depicts the main Intermediate School Climate Variables which we found in the literature review (Clifford, Menon, Gangi, Condon, & Hornung, 2012; Kythreotis & Pashiardis, 2006; Pashiardi, 2000). These are the variables through which school leaders can usually mediate and have an indirect effect on what happens to their students. Therefore, these are considered the most prominent school climate variables which include a learning and orderly climate, personal achievement orientation, evaluation and feedback practices, teachers' job satisfaction and commitment to the school, teacher-student interactions, students' opportunity to learn, explicit teaching strategies, and parental involvement.

The last column depicts desired dependent variables or outcomes at the school level. These outcomes indicate what is most important for school leaders: have my actions and behaviors had an impact on what my students have achieved? That is, did we have an influence on what kind of citizens they become and with what kind of academic achievements? Are these the kinds of persons whom society needs and wants from our schools? This is the final measure of one's impact and influence at the school level. With the above, we have completed the presentation of the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework, which became the guiding theoretical framework for the analyses that were attempted during the course of implementation for both pieces of research, that is, the LISA as well as the Pro-LEAD projects.

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Chapter 3
Methodological Approach for the LISA and Pro-LEAD Projects

Panayiota Kendeou and Petros Pashiardis

3.1 Rationale for the LISA and Pro-LEAD Project Methodologies

In this chapter, first we present the methodology used in the LISA project and second the methodology used in the Pro-LEAD project. In both projects, we followed a mixed-methods approach under the assumption that neither approach on its own was sufficient to answer the research questions posed. In the LISA project, we followed a sequential design where, first, a qualitative phase using in-depth interviews assisted in the development of the core instruments and, subsequently, a quantitative phase involved large-scale data collection using these instruments. In the Pro-LEAD project, we followed a sequential design with first, a quantitative phase that involved large-scale data collection using the core instruments and, subsequently, a qualitative phase that involved think-aloud protocols. In both projects, conclusions were drawn by mixing the quantitative and qualitative data in an effort to achieve convergence and completeness.

In both projects we followed a mixed-methods approach (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Mixed-methods research offers great promise for educational research and helps bridge both quantitative and qualitative research paradigms (Creswell, Plano Clark, Guttmann, & Hanson, 2003; Patton, 2002). The rationale for mixing quantitative and qualitative methods in

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a single study is that neither approach on its own is sufficient to answer the research questions posed (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). To follow a mixed-methods design, the researcher must make two primary decisions: (a) whether one wants to operate within one dominant method or not and (b) whether one wants to conduct the qualitative and quantitative phases concurrently or sequentially. In the present set of studies, we decided to operate predominantly within the quantitative research paradigm, since the thrust of our research was to primarily validate the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework (Pashiardis & Brauckmann, 2008) which was the guiding theoretical model for both research projects. With respect to the second decision, in the LISA project we followed a sequential design where first a qualitative phase using in-depth interviews assisted in the development of the core instruments and, subsequently, a quantitative phase involved large-scale data collection using these instruments. In the Pro-LEAD project, we followed a sequential design with first a quantitative phase that involved large-scale data collection using the core instruments (since they were already created during the LISA project) and, subsequently, a qualitative phase that involved think-aloud protocols.

In what follows, first we present the methodology used in the LISA project including the rationale and the development of the core instruments; second, we present the methodology used in the Pro-LEAD project including the rationale and the pilot test. We opted for a combined presentation of the methods of the LISA and Pro-LEAD projects because both are guided by core mixed-methods principles, and more importantly, instruments that were developed in the context of the LISA project were subsequently used in the Pro-LEAD project. Moreover, we opted for this combined presentation of the methods for the LISA and the Pro-LEAD projects, because, as mentioned above, both projects had the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework as their main guiding theoretical framework.

3.2 The LISA Project

3.2.1 Rationale and Overview

As mentioned earlier in this book, the core question of the LISA project is concerned with the role that principals' leadership styles, that is, their behaviors and practices, can play in contributing to the improvement and effectiveness of the school, especially educational outcomes such as the basic skills of students examined under the PISA program against the background of their national school system or any other form of examination that the participating countries have. For the development and testing of the core instruments for the LISA project, we followed a mixed-methods approach (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). First, we constructed three questionnaires which were to be pretested in order to examine their validity and reliability in three of the countries participating in the LISA project. One questionnaire was designed to assess school leaders' leadership style, another questionnaire was designed to assess school climate (intermediate) variables,

and the third questionnaire was designed to assess the governance structures and context in which the school leaders operated.

The LISA project was completed in two phases. In Phase 1, the primary goal of the study was to develop and validate the structured questionnaires that were used to assess principals' leadership styles and school climate. The development of these questionnaires was based on previous research. During the instrument development phase, in-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with school leaders (qualitative phase) to supplement the data that would be obtained from pilot testing of the questionnaires. A convenient sample of eight school leaders participated in this phase (principals and deputy principals). In order to avoid subjectivity and to develop objectivity, the interview questions were structured in a nondirective format. A list of open-ended questions was compiled, focusing on collecting information about the principals' perceptions on governance and government policies and school practices with regard to their leadership style. We interviewed people who would be forthcoming and therefore helpful. The data from the interviews were analyzed using the strategies of case analysis and cross-case analysis (Patton, 1990). In essence, it was decided that, given the complexity of the issues to be investigated in this study, a qualitative approach (Denzin, 1997; Miles & Huberman, 1994) was most appropriate in order to complement the data which were gathered through the questionnaires. Qualitative research enables a comprehensive and in-depth examination of the issues through comprehension of personal experience. Following the same rationale of that of the qualitative approach of the interviews, we used quantitative techniques, mainly Exploratory Factor Analysis and Confirmatory Factor Analysis within Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), in order to establish the validity and reliability of our questionnaires, as well as the fit of the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework (Pashiardis & Brauckmann, 2008).

In Phase 2 (the main study), the instruments that were developed during Phase 1 were then utilized in the main study. This phase involved adaptation of the core instruments to the seven different countries which participated in the LISA project: Hungary, Germany (North Rhine-Westphalia), England, the Netherlands, Italy, Norway, and Slovenia.

3.2.2 The Development of Core Instruments

The development of a comprehensive leadership model was the first step to developing the core instruments for the study. We adopted the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework (Pashiardis & Brauckmann, 2008) that is described earlier in this book. For the *School Leadership Style Questionnaire*, this process establishes content validity by demonstrating that the instrument measures leader behaviors demonstrated on the job and that the instrument is related to effective school leadership. Leadership styles were designed to encompass school leadership as well as general leadership. As such, the instrument development process started out with the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework as a working hypothesis

to be confirmed by subsequent data analysis. The instrument development process was enriched further with the data obtained from the interviews with the 8 school leaders in the three pretest countries.

In this context, a leadership style is defined as the nexus of all those behaviors and practices that school principals use in order to influence the behavior of others. The adopted definition is in congruence with the one provided by Pashiardis (2004). Therefore, across the leadership radius five styles may be distinguished which are as follows: (a) Instructional Style, (b) Structuring Style, (c) Participative Style, (d) Entrepreneurial Style, and (e) Personnel Development Style. Each leadership style consists of specific behaviors or practices which are likely to be exhibited by school principals. The *Instructional Style* (e.g., Hallinger, 2005) entails the practices of defining and enabling the achievement of the instructional objectives, setting high expectations, monitoring and evaluating students and teachers, and stimulating instructional innovation. The *Structuring Style* (e.g., Barnett & McCormick, 2004) entails the practices of clarifying the vision and mission of the school, establishing and following clear rules, dividing tasks/responsibilities among staff, enabling restructuring, and taking risks as well as managing facilities in an effective manner. The *Participative Style* (e.g., Pashiardis, 1994, 1998) is conceptualized as adopting a participative approach to formal and informal decision making, fostering staff cooperation, brokering and mediating conflicting situations, and promoting staff commitment. The *Entrepreneurial Style* (e.g., Leithwood, 2001) comprises the practices of involving the parents and other external actors in the school processes, acquiring resources for the school's smooth operation, building coalitions with external agents, as well as engaging in a market approach to leadership. Finally, the *Personnel Development Style* (e.g., Youngs & King, 2002) involves the effective teacher recruitment, the assessment of their personal and professional needs, the provision of training opportunities for them, the enhancement of their self-efficacy, as well as the provision of recognition and rewards for their exemplary performance.

The same process was followed in constructing the *School Climate* (*Intermediate*) *Variables Questionnaire* and the *Governance/Context Questionnaire*. With regard to the School Climate (Intermediate) Variables Questionnaire, the aim was to assess a number of variables suggested by the literature as mediating leadership practices and influencing student performance (e.g., Hallinger & Heck, 1996, 1998; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005; Ross & Gray, 2006). These consist of the professional, learning and orderly climate, personal achievement orientations, evaluation and feedback practices, teachers' job satisfaction and commitment to the school, teacher-student interactions, students' opportunity to learn, explicit teaching strategies, and parental involvement. These variables which operate at the school level are hypothesized to be influenced by the foregoing leadership styles and, in turn, to affect school outcomes; that is, they mediate the impact of leadership styles on student and leader outcomes. Consistent with the development of the Leadership questionnaire, the instrument development process was enriched further with the data obtained from the interviews with the eight school leaders.

With regard to the *Governance/Context Questionnaire*, the main goal was to compare each country's official policies with the perceptions of the school leaders who are

called to implement these policies. The context, as we define it, is divided into two main levels: (a) system-level variables which include Patterns of Centralization/Decentralization as well as Patterns of Evaluation and Accountability in each individual country and (b) school-level variables which consist of variables pertaining to the characteristics of the school as well as demographic information. With regard to system-level variables, the Patterns of Centralization/Decentralization include subvariables such as the devolution of decision-making authority, organizational capacity/support systems, network-type cooperation, and privatization/parental choice. The Patterns of Evaluation and Accountability Arrangements include the subvariables of accountability type, evaluative capacity/support systems, evaluation culture, alternative regulatory mechanisms, and the role of school leadership in the evaluation process. The school-level variables include items relating to the school type, size and location, the composition of the student body, the school resources, the student-teacher ratio, as well as the compound and characteristics of school leaders.

Double translation was followed in adapting the core instruments to the different countries. For example, during the pilot phase, all three instruments were translated from English into German and Hungarian. To ensure cross-validation with regard to the translation, each instrument in the respective language was translated back to English and checked for accuracy and meaning.

3.2.3 Validation of Core Instruments: Pilot Studies

The core instruments were validated via a pilot study that was conducted in three different countries. From a macro point of view, we selected countries that reflected different stages of development with regard to the implementation of educational governance as defined in the LISA framework. In this way, our pilot data would represent most of the countries participating in our project, and therefore, the validity and reliability of our instruments would be enhanced. Thus, three countries were selected for the pilot phase which reflected different stages of development in public education policies. Specifically, England was selected as one country with fairly decentralized educational structures and new models of school-system governance at an early stage. Germany was selected as a country with mostly established systems of accountability and external evaluation and increasing decentralization efforts. Finally, Hungary was selected as a country in transition and with a great deal of experimentation with changing its governance and policies in the public education system.

From a micro point of view, we differentiated between city schools and urban schools. We wanted to examine if the location of the school and the type of its clientele had any effect on the way school leaders perceived their leadership style and if teachers perceived their school leaders differently. So, in each country, we selected two rural and two urban schools. Furthermore, another criterion we applied was that the schools chosen for the pilot should be schools which will not be participating in the main project. With regard to student achievement (based on different

types of student assessments, such as PISA results, test results on teacher-made tests), the four schools selected in each country for the pilot should differ. We identified two schools with student achievement levels (based on student outcomes) above average and two other schools with student achievement levels below average. Furthermore, we excluded vocational schools in order to avoid school form effects (except in Italy, where out of the four schools, we included two Lyceums, a Technical and a Vocational school as well, due to some unforeseen difficulties), and thus, we concentrated on general education secondary schools. Finally, in all countries, we chose schools where their leaders were fluent in English, in order to be able to communicate with them easier.

3.2.3.1 Procedure for Data Collection

The process, as described in this section, is almost identical in all three countries with some variations due to circumstances and/or local culture. Data collection was implemented by a trained research team in each country headed by the two lead researchers for the project, namely, Petros Pashiardis and Stefan Brauckmann. First, the principal and vice-principal were interviewed and completed the Leadership Questionnaire. In all three countries (Hungary, Germany, England), the interview took place in the principals' offices. The duration of the interviews for the leadership styles and school variables instruments, as well as the governance/structure context questionnaire lasted between 1 and 1.30 h. All interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed for subsequent content analysis.

After the interviews were completed, the questionnaires were handed out to the school teachers. The procedure varied accordingly in an effort to adjust to each school context and country. For instance, in Hungary, the questionnaire was handed out in the teachers' staff room, whereas in Germany and in England, the filling out of the questionnaire took place in the conference room or in classrooms. Furthermore, in Hungary and in Germany, all teachers came in the room at the same time, whereas the teachers in England came in at different times. In all instances, the school's leadership was not allowed to be present during this process, so that no undue influence would be exerted on the teachers while they were "evaluating" their school principal, as well as the general climate of the school.

Upon completion of all data collection activities, the school leader would give the researchers a grand tour of his or her school. The tour assisted researchers in forming a more holistic picture of the school, its culture and setting.

3.2.3.2 Data Analysis

Data analysis for the interviews was performed in a number of stages. First, open coding was conducted (Strauss, 1987) during which preliminary categories were derived. Following that, axial coding was performed in two stages. During the first stage,

coding was done on the vertical axis, examining relations, content similarities, and differences between the preliminary categories defined in each interview and outlining more general categories. During the second stage, the horizontal axis was analyzed examining vertical axis categories in depth and comparing them among all interviews. Finally, categories were formed according to connections of similarities and differences. This analysis assisted us in the final development of all three core instruments (i.e., rewording items, eliminating items, adding items).

Data analysis for the questionnaires employed several descriptive and inferential statistics techniques. Specifically, *Exploratory Factor Analysis* (EFA) was used to uncover the underlying structure of the relatively large set of variables in each questionnaire (Bryant & Yarnold, 1995). The researcher's à priori assumption is that any indicator may be associated with any factor. This is the most common form of factor analysis. Following this data reduction technique, *Confirmatory Factor Analysis* (CFA) was used in the context of Structural Equation Modeling to determine if the number of factors and the loadings of measured (indicator) variables on them conformed to what was expected on the basis of the preestablished Pashiardis and Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework (Pashiardis & Brauckmann, 2008). Indicator variables (i.e., questionnaire items) were selected on the basis of the Exploratory Factor Analysis. The à priori assumption is that each factor (i.e., each leadership style) is associated with a specified subset of indicator variables (i.e., questionnaire items). A minimum requirement of Confirmatory Factor Analysis is that one hypothesizes beforehand the number of factors in the model, but usually also the researcher will posit expectations about which variables will load on which factors (Kim & Mueller, 1978).

3.2.3.3 Results for the School Leadership Questionnaire

The *School Leadership Questionnaire* included a total of 48 Likert scale items grouped under five categories of leadership styles (i.e., instructional, structuring, participative, entrepreneurial, and personnel development). Participants in the pilot study were 218 teachers from three countries: Hungary ($N = 50$), Germany ($N = 126$), and England ($N = 42$). In the total sample, 25 were males, 55 were females, whereas 138 did not report their gender (probably because they did not want to be identified). Responses to the *School Leadership Questionnaire* items were scored in a numerical scale from 1 to 5, in such a way that a higher score always represented a higher degree of agreement with a statement. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was chosen as the data reduction technique. Thus, the 48 questionnaire items were factor analyzed to assess which items were intercorrelated and to establish internal reliability. The data reduction process followed two criteria: first, Kaiser's criterion that only factors with eigenvalues greater than one are retained (Child, 1990) and, second, factors with only one item were excluded from the analysis. Principal axis factoring with a varimax rotation yielded, after careful examination of the scree plot, a five-factor solution involving 34 items with factor loadings above .40 that

explained 62.48 % of variance. The Bartlett test of sphericity indicated the presence of factor structure, $\chi^2(561) = 4,595.5$, $p < 0.0001$. The five factors extracted were labeled as:

1. Instructional Style
2. Participative Style
3. Personnel Development Style
4. Entrepreneurial Style
5. Structuring Style

The first factor named *Instructional Style* comprised five items (with Cronbach's alpha = .78) representing leadership practices that enable achievement of instructional objectives. The second factor named *Participative Style* comprised 12 items (with Cronbach's alpha = .95) representing leadership practices that promote cooperation and commitment. The third factor named *Personnel Development Style* comprised five items (with Cronbach's alpha = .86) representing leadership practices that promote training and development of teachers. The fourth factor named *Entrepreneurial Style* comprised seven items (with Cronbach's alpha = .90) representing leadership practices that promote the involvement of external actors. The fifth factor named *Structuring Style* comprised five items (with Cronbach's alpha = .87) representing leadership practices that promote establishment and implementation of clear rules.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was performed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM; EQS version 6.1). We tested a second-order factor model in which we hypothesized that the leadership radius is a second-order factor indicated by five first-order factors that corresponded to each one of the leadership styles extracted from the Exploratory Factor Analysis. These included (1) Instructional Style, (2) Participative Style, (3) Personnel Development Style, (4) Entrepreneurial Style, and (5) Structuring Style. Indicators for each of the five factors were the items extracted from the EFA. We adhered to the following criteria for evaluating good model fits: Comparative Fit Indices (CFI) and Tucker-Lewis Indices (NNFI) greater than .95, Root Mean Square Errors of Approximation (RMSEA) near .06, and nonsignificant chi-square values (Byrne, 2006; Hu & Bentler, 1999). Because the chi-square test is sensitive to sample size, we considered the ratio of chi-square over the df as a good index of model fit (<2). Finally, to improve the fit of the model, a number of error terms were allowed to covary. The model had a fairly good fit to the data, χ^2 (499, $N = 218) = 843.58$, $p < .001$; CFI = .92; NNFI = .91; RMSEA = .056 (CI.90 = .05 to .06).

This analysis resulted in the validation of the School Leadership Questionnaire that is designed to assess the presence of the five leadership styles in school settings by teachers themselves. The final 34 questionnaire items were further evaluated for clarity based on the qualitative data gathered from the interviews with the school leaders. This process resulted in the addition of 14 more items that were designed to capture various aspects of school leadership. Thus, the final instrument included a total of 48 items.

3.2.3.4 Results for the School Climate (Intermediate) Variables Questionnaire

The *School Climate* (*Intermediate*) *Variables Questionnaire* included a total of 47 Likert scale items grouped under seven categories of school climate variables. Participants in the present study were 224 teachers from three countries: Hungary ($N=56$), Germany ($N=126$), and England ($N=42$). In the total sample, 28 were males, 56 were females, whereas 140 did not report their gender.

Responses to the School Intermediate Variables Questionnaire items were scored in a numerical scale from 1 to 5, in such a way that a higher score always represented a higher degree of agreement with a statement. The 47 questionnaire items were factor analyzed to assess which items were intercorrelated and to establish internal reliability. Principal axis factoring with a varimax rotation yielded, after careful examination of the scree plot, a seven-factor solution involving 40 items with factor loadings above .40 that explained 60.33 % of variance. The Bartlett test of sphericity indicated the presence of factor structure, $\chi^2(780)=4{,}513.4, p<0.0001$. The seven factors extracted were labeled as:

1. Personnel Development Opportunities
2. Student Expectations and Involvement
3. Teacher Commitment to School
4. Evaluation and Feedback Practices
5. Parental Involvement
6. Teaching and Learning Practices
7. Student-Teacher Interaction

The first factor named *Personnel Development Opportunities* comprised seven items (with Cronbach's alpha = .86) representing practices that promote a climate for teacher professional development. The second factor named S*tudent Expectations and Involvement* comprised eight items (with Cronbach's alpha = .85) representing practices that promote student personal achievement orientation. The third factor named *Teacher Commitment to School* comprised five items (with Cronbach's alpha = .84) representing activities that show teachers' commitment to their job. The fourth factor named *Evaluation and Feedback Practices* comprised seven items (with Cronbach's alpha = .85) representing the evaluation and feedback practices for student outcomes. The fifth factor named *Parental Involvement* comprised four items (with Cronbach's alpha = .84) representing involvement of parents in school. The sixth factor named *Teaching and Learning Practices* comprised four items (with Cronbach's alpha = .76) representing the learning climate. The seventh factor named *Student-Teacher Interactions* comprised five items (with Cronbach's alpha = .74) representing the interaction between teachers and students.

This analysis resulted in the validation of the School Climate (Intermediate) Variables Questionnaire that is designed to assess school climate by teachers themselves. The final 40 questionnaire items were further evaluated for clarity

based on the qualitative data gathered from the interviews with the school leaders. This process resulted in eliminating 4 more items, so the final questionnaire consisted of 36 items.

3.2.3.5 Conclusions

The pilot phase resulted in the successful development and validation of the two out of the three core instruments and the examination of the fit of the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework to the data. The third instrument on governance structures was developed through this phase, but its validation was planned to be undertaken in the main study. The two core instruments, on *Leadership Styles* and *School Climate* (*Intermediate*) *Variables*, were finalized based on this set of analyses and were then used in the main study.

3.2.4   Main LISA Study

The instruments that were developed during the pilot phase (see Sect. 3.2.3) were then utilized in the main study. Recall that the final *School Leadership Style Questionnaire* included 48 Likert scale items; the final *School Climate* (*Intermediate*) *Variables Questionnaire* included 36 Likert scale items. Double translation (as described in the pilot study) was followed in adapting the core instruments to the seven different countries which participated in the LISA project: Hungary, Germany (North Rhine-Westphalia), England, the Netherlands, Italy, Norway, and Slovenia. Countries were selected primarily because school leaders' associations in these countries wanted to be involved in this EU-funded project. In essence, they were leaders genuinely interested in finding out more about the impact that school principals can have on school climate conditions and student learning. Furthermore, the spread of the countries gave a good geographical distribution within Europe, by including countries from the north, south, east, and west of Europe, as well as through the inclusion of countries with different governance and evaluation contexts and in different stages of their development.

The process of data collection was standardized in all seven countries. Data collection was implemented by a trained research team in each country. All three questionnaires were administered to teachers in a single session that lasted approximately 1.30–2 h. All teachers came in the testing room at the same time (this room was either a conference room in the school or the staff room) and in all instances, the school leadership was not allowed to be present during this process.

In each country, four schools were selected to participate so that teachers came from rural and urban schools, low- and high-achieving schools, respectively (rural-low achieving, rural-high achieving, urban-low achieving, urban-high achieving). With this limited sample of four schools per country, we certainly do not make any claims of generalizability based on our results. We do, however, claim that we have strong

indications through which we can identify some trends and similarities in order to be able to make some meaningful comparisons among the participating countries.

Participants in the main study were 1,287 teachers from seven countries: England ($N=264$), Norway ($N=112$), Germany ($N=203$), Slovenia ($N=174$), Hungary ($N=198$), Italy ($N=201$), and the Netherlands ($N=135$). In the total sample, 464 were males, 643 were females, whereas 179 did not report their gender. With respect to school location, 578 teachers were working in a rural school whereas 538 in an urban school. It is important to note that because of our differences in the sample size in each country, the results, such as averages and other composite scores, could be driven by the countries with the highest n, such as England and Germany. For this reason, analyses within country also were performed.

With respect to years in the current school, 654 teachers (66.5 %) indicated 10 or fewer years, 221 teachers indicated between 11 and 20 years (22.4 %), 88 teachers indicated between 21 and 30 years (8.5 %), 22 teachers indicated above 31 years, whereas 303 teachers (23.5 %) did not provide that information. With respect to teaching experience, 429 teachers (43.6 %) indicated 10 or fewer years, 267 teachers indicated between 11 and 20 years (26.7 %), 189 teachers indicated between 21 and 30 years (19.1 %), 102 teachers (10.4 %) indicated above 31 years, whereas 302 teachers (23.5 %) did not provide that information. Finally, with respect to school performance level, 467 (36.3 %) teachers worked in low-performing schools, whereas 820 (63.7 %) worked in high-performing schools.

3.2.4.1   Testing the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework

Responses to the Leadership Questionnaire items were scored in a numerical scale from 1 to 5, in such a way that a higher score always represented a higher degree of agreement with a statement. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was chosen as the data reduction technique. Thus, the 48 questionnaire items were factor analyzed to assess which items were intercorrelated and to establish internal reliability. The data reduction process followed two criteria: first, Kaiser's criterion that only factors with eigenvalues greater than one are retained (Child, 1990) and, second, factors with only one item were excluded from the analysis. The final solution was then entered into a Confirmatory Factor Analysis. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was performed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM; EQS version 6.1). We tested a second-order factor model in which we hypothesized that the leadership radius is a second-order factor indicated by five first-order factors that corresponded to each one of the leadership styles extracted from the Exploratory Factor Analysis. These included (1) Instructional Style, (2) Participative Style, (3) Personnel Development Style, (4) Entrepreneurial Style, and (5) Structuring Style. Indicators for each of the five factors were the items extracted from the EFA. We adhered to the following criteria for evaluating good model fits: Comparative Fit Indices (CFI) and Tucker-Lewis Indices (NNFI) greater than .95, Root Mean Square Errors of Approximation (RMSEA) below .05, and nonsignificant chi-square values

(Byrne, 2006; Hu & Bentler, 1999). Finally, to improve the fit of the model, a number of error terms were allowed to covary.

Within country analyses focused on exploring school location, gender, or school performance level differences on the leadership styles. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) aimed at comparing the relative level of each leadership style across school location, gender, and school performance level in exploring possible similarities and differences. *Multiple Logistic Regression* was used with school performance level as the dependent variable and each of the five leadership styles as the independent variables. The rationale for this analysis was to predict the probability that a teacher works in a low- or high-performing school given his/her beliefs about the leadership style(s) in his/her school. This analysis gave some indication of any direct relations between leadership styles and student achievement at the school level.

3.3 The Pro-LEAD Project

3.3.1 Rationale and Overview

The main aim of the Pro-LEAD project was to explore the possible relations between leadership styles, epistemological worldviews, and beliefs about contextual and educational governance structures of school principals in primary and secondary education. The Pro-LEAD project was completed in three phases. In Phase 1, the primary goal of the study was to develop and validate the three structured questionnaires that were used to assess principals' leadership styles, epistemological beliefs, and beliefs about the contextual and governance structures in which they operate. The development of all three questionnaires was based on previous research. Specifically, the Leadership Styles and Governance Structure questionnaires were adapted from the LISA project. A new questionnaire was developed to assess epistemological worldviews. All three instruments were piloted in a small-scale study before being used in the main study.

In Phase 2, quantitative data collection was conducted in a large random sample of primary and secondary education principals using the three structured questionnaires that were validated in Phase 1, to explore the possible relations between leadership styles, epistemological beliefs, and beliefs about contextual and governance structures. Qualitative data collection also was conducted using a subsample of primary and secondary school principals, to enhance the validity of the quantitative data. The qualitative data collection involved a think-aloud (Ericsson & Simon, 1993) during which principals were asked to read and think aloud about a complex problem in a school context. Principals' responses were coded to reflect aspects of their leadership styles, epistemological beliefs, and beliefs about contextual and governance structures. Finally, the quantitative and qualitative findings produced with regard to primary and secondary school principals were compared to identify similarities and differences.

The combination of self-report questionnaires and think-aloud protocol methodologies in the proposed study complemented each other. The self-report questionnaires allowed us to examine a large number of variables in a large sample of principals fairly easy. The think-aloud method allowed us to observe the spontaneous thoughts of individual principals when they encountered a realistic situation (i.e., case study). Validating questionnaire quantitative data with the think-aloud qualitative data strengthened any conclusions that might have been drawn from either methodology alone.

In Phase 3, we shared and discussed the findings obtained in Phase 2 with interested stakeholders in order to formulate a proposal for developing leadership training programs for primary and secondary school principals. To achieve this goal, we organized a meeting among the research consortium members, key professional groups, and the Cyprus Ministry of Education to share and discuss the findings of the proposed research and engaged in constructive dialogue for the development of school leadership training programs.

3.3.2 The Development of Core Instruments

Three structured questionnaires were developed and validated to assess principals' leadership styles, epistemological beliefs, and beliefs about the contextual and educational governance structures. The School Leadership Questionnaire and the Contextual Governance Questionnaire were adapted from the LISA project and were enriched with more questionnaire items based on current research and thinking. The *School Leadership Questionnaire* was comprised of 48 items tapping on each of the five leadership styles proposed in the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework. The *Epistemological Beliefs Questionnaire* was developed based on a similar instrument developed by Olafson and Schraw (2006) and included eight items and three vignettes which were designed to correspond to three epistemological worldviews: relativism, realism, and constructivism. Relativism posits that each learner constructs a unique knowledge base that is different but equal to other learners (Muijs, 2007). Realism posits that there is a fixed, core body of knowledge that is best acquired through experts via transmission and reconstruction (Olafson & Schraw, 2006). Constructivism, in turn, posits that knowledge is socially constructed (Kuhn, 1970).

The *Contextual Governance Questionnaire* was comprised of 93 items touching on issues related to decentralization measures as well as evaluation and accountability. The three instruments were translated into Greek to enable the school leaders to complete them in their own language and were adapted to the particular education system of Cyprus.

The three questionnaires were pilot tested in a small sample of 42 principals in order to test their validity and reliability. School principals selected to take part in the research were contacted via telephone calls at their individual schools and were asked to participate in the research. Provided the school principal agreed to participate,

the questionnaires were sent via post to the school, and the principal was requested to complete the questionnaires and return them via post. On average each questionnaire took participants around 10 min to complete.

3.3.2.1   Results for the Pilot Testing

In total, 42 school principals successfully completed the School Leadership Questionnaire while 32 participants completed the Epistemological Beliefs Questionnaire and the Contextual/Governance Questionnaire. Data analyses for the questionnaires employed several descriptive statistics techniques only. Due to the small sample size, we did not employ at this phase Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) that would potentially uncover the underlying structure of School Leadership and the Contextual/Governance Questionnaires. Instead, we assumed that the underlying structure of each questionnaire is based on the LISA project, and we explored the internal consistency of each underlying factor via a reliability analysis. This analysis revealed high internal consistency values (all Cronbach's alpha >.70) for all assumed factors. For the Epistemological Beliefs Questionnaire, we also computed a reliability analysis. This analysis showed that all three epistemological worldviews also had high internal consistency. Specifically, the Realist comprised four items with Cronbach's alpha=.87, the Contextualist comprised four items with Cronbach's alpha=.74, whereas the Relativist comprised three items with Cronbach's alpha=.73. Based on the pilot test results, all necessary adjustments and changes were made to the three research questionnaires before the commencement of the main quantitative data collection process.

3.3.3   Main Pro-LEAD Study

Data collection for the main study included a quantitative and a qualitative phase. The quantitative phase was conducted in a large random sample of primary and secondary education principals using the three structured questionnaires that were validated, to explore the possible relations between leadership styles, epistemological beliefs or worldviews, and beliefs about contextual and governance structures. The idea for the exploration of these possible relations was developed as a result of the LISA interpretations about how school leaders decide which leadership styles to use and under what circumstances. During the interviews with school leaders in the LISA project, school leaders stressed the fact that they would decide on which leadership style was best to use based on their beliefs of how they can best influence and impact on their teachers, thus touching upon the notion of epistemological beliefs.

The qualitative phase was conducted using a subsample of primary and secondary school principals, to enhance the validity of the quantitative data. The qualitative data collection involved a think-aloud methodology during which principals were asked to read and think aloud about a complex problem in a school context.

Principals' responses were coded to reflect aspects of their leadership styles, epistemological worldviews, and beliefs about contextual and governance structures. Finally, the quantitative and qualitative findings produced with regard to primary and secondary school principals were compared to identify similarities and differences.

3.3.3.1 Quantitative Phase

A total of 283 primary and secondary school principals in Cyprus took part in the quantitative questionnaire research. From the total of 283 school participants, 40 % was male while 60 % was female. Furthermore, 5.9 % of school principals who took part in the research had between 11 and 20 years of teaching experience, 32.8 % had between 21 and 30 years of service, while 61.3 % had between 31 and 40 years of service. Principals in the Cyprus educational system all start out as teachers who, after completing a certain amount of years in service, are eligible to apply for a position (a promotion) to become school principals. None of the school principals who took part in the research had less than 10 years of total experience (both as a teacher and as a principal). School principals were also asked to state the number of years they had been positioned at their present school. 57.2 % of school principals stated that they had served for only 1 year at their present school, while 14.4 % had been positioned at their school for 2 years, 11.7 % for 3 years, and 8 % for 4 years. It is noteworthy that only 8.8 % of school principals had been positioned at the same school for 5 years or more.

3.3.3.2 Qualitative Phase

The qualitative data collection involved a think-aloud task during which principals were asked to read and think aloud about a complex problem in a school context. A think-aloud methodology was used to investigate the principals' cognitive processes during reading because it allows the consideration of a variety of responses (Ericsson & Simon, 1993). Furthermore, this methodology has received extensive validation as a tool to reveal cognitive processes during reading (Afflerbach, 2002; Magliano & Graesser, 1991; Magliano & Millis, 2003). Participants were asked to read a case study scenario and spontaneously say out loud whatever came to mind at specific points. The same scenario was used in primary and secondary education principals with the only difference being that one scenario described a complex situation involving teachers, students, and the community in a primary school, whereas the other described the same situation taking place in a secondary school. Specifically, both primary and secondary school principals read a scenario in which they had to make a controversial decision regarding the safety of their school, deal with the potential objections of the teachers and parents to their decision, and make decisions regarding the resources needed to effectuate their plans. The aim of the think-aloud scenario was to extract participants' views on the issues which were touched upon in the questionnaire, that is, on the five leadership styles, the epistemological beliefs and contextual governance structures.

The think-aloud tasks were carried out via face-to-face single sessions with school principals who had been randomly selected and had agreed to participate in the think-aloud task. Practice of the think-aloud was performed before reading the actual case study with a short sample text. After practice, participants were asked to read out loud the case study, one sentence at a time, while thinking aloud at pre-specified points (when they encountered an asterisk in the text). Thinking points were selected so that the participants thought aloud every 2–3 sentences. Participants' responses were recorded.

Principals' responses were coded based on a coding scheme which was developed to capture principals' preference for leadership style, their epistemological worldviews, and beliefs about the context and governance structures in the Cypriot education system. The coding scheme was based on the constructs extracted from the quantitative analysis. Two independent raters applied the coding scheme and coded 20 % of the think-aloud protocols in common to practice and establish reliability to a criterion ($K > .80$). Once reliability was established, the rest of the protocols were divided among the two raters to code independently. The frequency of responses for each think-aloud category was analyzed using Correlation Analysis, ANOVA, and chi-square tests to explore the degree to which the relations among the variables corresponded to the relations identified in the quantitative analysis.

3.4   Conclusion

In summary, in both projects, we followed a mixed-methods approach under the assumption that neither approach on its own was sufficient to answer the research questions posed. In the LISA project, we followed a sequential design where, first, a qualitative phase using in-depth interviews assisted in the development of the core instruments and, subsequently, a quantitative phase involved large-scale data collection using these instruments. The core instruments developed in the context of the LISA project were subsequently adjusted and used in the Pro-LEAD project. Moreover, the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework constituted the guiding framework for the research for both projects. In the Pro-LEAD project, we followed a sequential design with, first, a quantitative phase that involved large-scale data collection using the core instruments and, subsequently, a qualitative phase that involved think-aloud protocols. In both projects, conclusions were drawn by mixing the quantitative and qualitative data in an effort to achieve convergence and completeness. Across both studies, four core instruments were developed and validated: The School Leadership Questionnaire, The School Climate (Intermediate) Variables Questionnaire, the Contextual/Governance Structure Questionnaire, and the Epistemological Beliefs Questionnaire. All questionnaires were designed for teachers to complete to ultimately assess their beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions in the respective areas. However, for the Pro-LEAD study, it was decided that the School Leadership Questionnaire would be filled out by school leaders, since in this project, the point of interest was school leaders' epistemological beliefs.

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Chapter 4
The Leadership Styles of the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework Across Europe

Petros Pashiardis

4.1 Sample Statistics and Procedures

Participants in the LISA study were 1,287 teachers from seven countries: England ($N=264$), Norway ($N=112$), Germany (North Rhine-Westphalia) ($N=203$), Slovenia ($N=174$), Hungary ($N=198$), Italy ($N=201$), and the Netherlands ($N=135$). As was previously mentioned, the teachers from each country came from four middle schools (gymnasia). In each country, two of the schools were identified as high performing, and two were identified as low performing. All teachers from each one of the four participating schools per country filled in the leadership questionnaire about their school principal. Schools were selected to be of approximately equal size in each country, ranging from about 30 to 60 teachers per school. The teachers participating in our study provided us with the quantitative data (from the Leaderships Styles Questionnaire), which included descriptions about their principals' performance. Further, in-depth interviews were conducted with the respective school leadership of the 28 schools participating in the project (four schools from each country), which provided us with the qualitative data. It should be noted that the interviews were contacted with school leaders. In essence, we tried to compare what teachers told us about their principal with what principals told us about themselves as leaders. In the total sample of the teachers, 464 were males and 643 were females, whereas 179 did not report their gender. With respect to school location, 578 teachers were working in a rural school whereas 538 in an urban school. With respect to years in the current school, 654 teachers (66.5 %) indicated 10 or fewer years, 221 teachers indicated between 11 and 20 years (22.4 %), 88 teachers

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indicated between 21 and 30 years (8.5 %), 22 teachers indicated above 31 years, whereas 303 teachers (23.5 %) did not provide that information.

Regarding teaching experience, 429 teachers (43.6 %) indicated 10 or fewer years, 267 teachers indicated between 11 and 20 years (26.7 %), 189 teachers indicated between 21 and 30 years (19.1 %), 102 teachers (10.4 %) indicated above 31 years, whereas 302 teachers (23.5 %) did not provide that information. Finally, with respect to school performance level, 467 (36.3 %) teachers worked in low-performing schools, whereas 820 (63.7 %) worked in high-performing schools. Following, a more detailed presentation of the results is presented. The reader should be reminded that results from the quantitative analyses were produced from the teachers' responses on our Leadership Styles Questionnaire, whereas the qualitative results were produced through the interviews of the participating school leaders. Finally, the results should be interpreted with caution, since the sample is not random and large enough to be representative of all the participating countries; however, it is large enough to be able to indicate some trends.

4.2 Exploratory Factor Analysis for the Leadership Questionnaire

Responses to the Leadership Styles Questionnaire items were scored in a numerical scale from 1 to 5, in such a way that a higher score always represented a higher degree of agreement with a statement. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was chosen as the data reduction technique. Thus, the 48 questionnaire items were factor analyzed to assess which items were intercorrelated and to examine reliability of the measurement. The data reduction process has been described in detail in Chap. 3. The final factor solution included 35 items in the Leadership Styles Questionnaire. The factor solution is presented in Table 4.1.

The five factors extracted were labeled as (1) Instructional Style, (2) Participative Style, (3) Personnel Development Style, (4) Entrepreneurial Style, and (5) Structuring Style. The first factor named *Instructional Style* comprised six items (with Cronbach's alpha = .85) representing leadership practices that enable achievement of instructional objectives (i.e., providing instructional resources; encouraging higher order forms of teaching and learning; promoting the implementation and use of knowledge in a variety of forms; monitoring standards of teaching and learning; providing concrete feedback to staff; utilizing evaluation data in order to improve personnel). The second factor named *Participative Style* comprised eight items (with Cronbach's alpha = .92) representing leadership practices that promote cooperation and commitment (i.e., promoting open communication with the staff; leaving instructional autonomy to teachers; creating a common vision for school improvement; actively involving staff in planning and implementing this vision; solving problems in cooperation with the teachers; implementing participative decision-making processes; facilitating decision making by consensus; discussing school affairs with the teachers). The third factor named *Personnel Development Style* comprised seven items

Table 4.1 Exploratory factor analysis for the leadership styles questionnaire

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
	Participative	Entrepreneurial	Personnel Dev	Instructional	Structuring
Q3				.523	
Q5				.528	
Q6				.523	
Q8				.698	
Q9				.666	
Q10				.581	
Q11	.697				
Q12	.632				
Q13	.649				
Q14	.671				
Q15	.692				
Q16	.692				
Q18	.675				
Q19	.650				
Q21			.641		
Q23			.716		
Q24			.578		
Q25			.662		
Q27			.456		
Q28			.696		
Q29			.438		
Q30		.604			
Q31		.674			
Q32		.668			
Q34		.662			
Q35		.748			
Q36		.663			
Q37		.637			
Q39		.601			
Q42					.502
Q43					.547
Q44					.798
Q45					.780
Q46					.656
Q47					.532

Extraction method: principal component analysis
Rotation method: varimax with Kaiser normalization

(with Cronbach's alpha = .88) representing leadership practices that promote training and development of teachers (i.e., providing recognition for excellence and achievement; rewarding teachers for their special contributions; encouraging the professional development of teachers; registering outstanding performance

of teachers; making informed recommendations to personnel placement, transfer, retention, and dismissal; complimenting teachers who contribute exceptionally to school activities; informing teachers about possibilities for updating their knowledge and skills). The fourth factor named *Entrepreneurial Style* comprised eight items (with Cronbach's alpha = .92) representing leadership practices that promote the involvement of external actors (i.e., encouraging relations between the school and the community and parents; promoting cooperation with other organizations and businesses; discussing school goals with relevant stakeholders; utilizing appropriate and effective techniques for community and parental involvement; promoting two-way communication between the school and the community; projecting a positive image to the community; building trust within the local community; communicating the school vision to the external community). The fifth factor named *Structuring Style* comprised six items (with Cronbach's alpha = .89) representing leadership practices that promote establishment and implementation of clear rules (i.e., ensuring clarity about the roles and activities of staff; ensuring clarity about work priorities; providing clarity in relation to student behavior rules; ensuring that school rules and consequences of misconduct are uniformly applied to all students; working on the creation of an orderly atmosphere; providing clarity regarding policies and procedures to be implemented).

4.3   Confirmatory Factor Analysis for the Leadership Questionnaire

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was performed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM; EQS version 6.1). We tested a second-order factor model in which we hypothesized that the leadership radius is a second-order factor indicated by the five first-order factors that corresponded to each one of the leadership styles extracted from the Exploratory Factor Analysis. These included (1) Instructional Style, (2) Participative Style, (3) Personnel Development Style, (4) Entrepreneurial Style, and (5) Structuring Style. Indicators for each of the five factors were the items extracted from the EFA. We adhered to the following criteria for evaluating good model fits: Comparative Fit Indices (CFI) and Tucker-Lewis Indices (NNFI) greater than .95, Root Mean Square Errors of Approximation (RMSEA) below .05, and nonsignificant chi-square values, as described in Chap. 3. Finally, to improve the fit of the model, a number of error terms were allowed to covary. The model had a good fit to the data, χ^2 (532, N = 1,287) = 2,121, 47, p < .001; CFI = .94; NNFI = .94; RMSEA = .049 (CI.90 = .047 to .051). The model tested is presented in Fig. 4.1.

From the data presented, it is important to note that the initial Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework was strongly supported by the exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses that followed (Pashiardis & Brauckmann, 2008a). More specifically, the initial five factors (Instructional Style, Participative Style, Personnel Development Style, Entrepreneurial Style, Structuring Style) clearly emerged
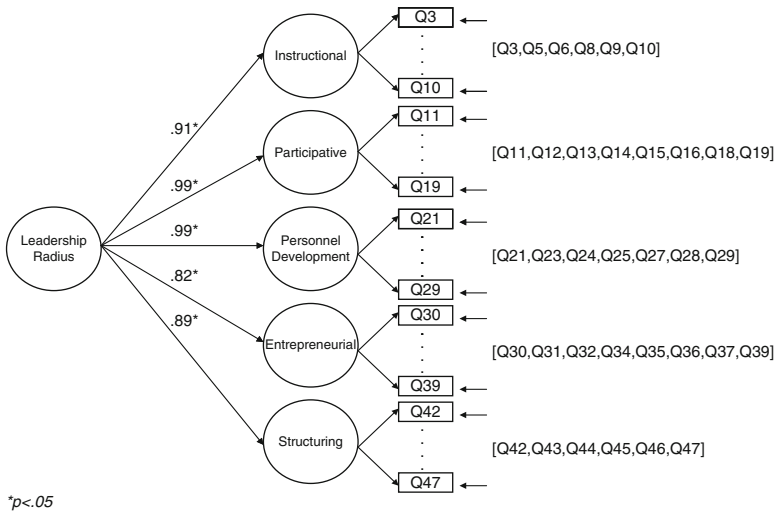
Fig. 4.1 Leadership styles model

in the Exploratory Factor Analysis establishing construct validity of the model. In addition, the model became even more parsimonious by retaining 35 out of the 48 items that were initially included in the School Leadership Questionnaire. The internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) of the items constituting each factor was especially high, with Cronbach's alpha = .85 being the lowest value. The Confirmatory Factor Analysis showed a good fit of this model to the data supporting directly our hypothesized theory of leadership styles and, in turn, establishing the validity of the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework within the seven European countries participating in this research project.

The validation of the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework is an important result of this piece of research, as we now have a guiding theoretical framework to use as a common foundation on which to begin building some understanding about how school leaders operate when exercising their leadership duties in the seven participating countries. Apparently, school leaders utilize all five leadership styles, some to a higher degree and some to a lesser degree, depending on their context. What is interesting is that all five styles are deemed to be important.

4.4 Leadership Styles and School/Student Performance

Next, Multiple Logistic Regression was used with school performance level of student achievement (high-/low-performing schools as reported by the school leaders participating in our study) as the dependent variable and each of the five leadership

styles as the independent variables. The goal of this analysis was to predict the probability that a teacher worked in a low- or high-performing school given his/her beliefs about the leadership style(s) utilized in his/her school. Thus, this analysis began to explore the degree to which leadership styles related directly to student achievement.

The model was significant as indicated by the Hosmer-Lemeshow Test, χ^2 (8, $N=1,287$) $=21.56$, $p<.001$. The results showed that all but one leadership style (i.e., the Instructional) significantly predicted the odds of a teacher working in a low- or high-performing school. One possible explanation as to why the Instructional Leadership Style was not related to the level of student achievement (at least for the schools participating in our research project) could be that the specific style is taken for granted (or that it is not perceived as such) from the teachers' point of view. Maybe, school leaders exercise this style in a subtle way, as they are aware of the fact that teachers do not ordinarily like to be observed while teaching. What this probably means is that ensuring clarity of instructional objectives, monitoring and evaluating students and teachers, and stimulating instructional innovation are behaviors that are considered as standard for a school principal to operate on, at least in the schools participating in our research. The afore-mentioned behaviors are at the core of what a school is all about, and therefore, it is probably implied that these behaviors are taken for granted when exercised by the school principals.

In addition, it was found that the Structuring Style predicted to a greater extent than the rest of the leadership styles whether a teacher works in a high-performing school. In fact, for one unit of increase in the Structuring Style, the odds of being in a high-performing school increases approximately by a factor of 2. This probably indicates that providing clear rules and policies as well as working in an orderly climate *does* matter in the context of these participating schools in the seven European countries. The importance of the Structuring Leadership Style probably indicates how strongly teachers feel about working in a climate which is conducive to learning and where rules and regulations are observed and adhered to by all concerned. Moreover, teachers apparently expect a coherent vision from the school leadership about where the school is going and that there is a certain amount of consistency on how to get there.

The Personnel Development Style follows with also a good prediction of high performance. In particular, for one unit of increase in the Personnel Development Style, the odds of being in a high-performing school increases by a factor of 1.44. This may suggest that the items included in this leadership style, such as rewarding teachers and providing opportunities for their professional development, are strongly related to higher student outcomes. Thus, one could argue that the Personnel Development Style does matter (at least) for teachers and school principals in the participating schools as a whole, and it could be beneficial for school leaders to lead their schools with an increased attention towards the Personnel Development Style, by providing training opportunities for their teachers, enhancing their teachers' sense of self-efficacy, and finding ways in which to acknowledge and reward them.

Furthermore, it was also found that the Participative and Entrepreneurial Styles predict in a negative way the odds that a teacher works in a high-performing school. In fact, for one unit increase in the Participative and Entrepreneurial Styles, the odds of being in a high-performing school decreases by .581 and .484 respectively. Thus, it seems that the leadership practices which promote cooperation and commitment inside the school (Participative Style) as well as the involvement of external actors outside the school (Entrepreneurial Style) are not positively related to higher student outcomes, at least in the participating schools when taken as a whole in the LISA project.

One possible interpretation for the above findings may be the fact that it is more likely to find the participative and entrepreneurial school leaders in low-performing schools, thus suggesting that there is more need to employ these styles in cases where performance needs to be improved, by adding pressure to the teachers from outside sources. At the same time, probably school leaders in low-performing schools choose to behave in more participative ways in order to have higher levels of engagement by the teachers. In a sense, principals in schools which are already high achievers do not feel the need to exhibit these two styles, at least not to a great extent. In short, it seems that the more Participative and Entrepreneurial a school leader is perceived to be by the teachers, the less likelihood that the school is high performing. Additionally, the more Personnel Development and Structuring the principal is considered to be by the teachers, the more likelihood there is that the school is high performing.

4.5 Leadership Styles and Years of Teaching Experience

To explore the relation between leadership and teaching expertise, *ANOVA* was used with each of the five leadership styles as the dependent variables and a categorical variable comprising of novice (0–5 years), somewhat experienced (6–15 years), experienced (16–29 years), and very experienced teachers (30–43 years) as the independent variable. The goal of this analysis was to explore the degree to which teachers' beliefs about the leadership style(s) in their school varied as a function of teaching experience. This analysis showed no significant effects. The analysis also was conducted by collapsing the novice and somewhat experienced groups (0–15 years) and the experienced and very experienced groups (16–43 years). Again, no significant effects were observed, suggesting that teachers' views about the leadership style of their principal do not change with years of experience.

In other words, teachers regard all five leadership styles as being equally important irrespective of their years of experience. Based on this finding, it seems that school leaders should probably employ all five leadership styles when they exercise their school leadership duties, irrespective of the experience of the teachers they are dealing with. What is important to be taken into consideration is the current situation of the school and the specific tasks that need to be performed by the school leader and the teachers when working together as a group.

4.6   Within Countries Comparisons and Analyses

Within country analyses focused on exploring differences in leadership styles as a function of school location, gender, and school performance level. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) aimed at comparing the relative level of each leadership style across school location, gender, and school performance level to explore possible similarities and differences. *Multiple Logistic Regression* was used with school performance level as the dependent variable and each of the five leadership styles as the independent variables. The goal of this analysis was to predict the probability that a teacher worked in a low- or high-performing school given his/her beliefs about the leadership style(s) in his/her school.

4.6.1   England

Descriptive Statistics showed that the Instructional Style had the highest mean for this country ($M = 3.81$). The Entrepreneurial Style came second with a mean of $M = 3.76$, and the Personnel Development Style came third with a mean of $M = 3.64$. The results of the ANOVA analyses showed no gender or school location effects. With respect to school performance level, the results indicated that there were significant differences among high- and low-performing schools only with respect to the Instructional Style. Specifically, low-performing schools had a significantly higher mean in the Instructional Style than high-performing schools, $F (1, 262) = 5.25$, $p = .023$.

Furthermore, Logistic Regression analysis showed that only the Instructional and the Participative Styles significantly predicted the odds of a teacher working in a low- or high-performing school. Specifically, for every one unit increase in the Instructional Style, the odds of being in a high-performing school (versus a low-performing school) decreased. However, for every unit increase in the Participative Style, the odds of being in a high-performing school (versus a low-performing school) increased.

4.6.1.1   Instructional Style

The results from the quantitative data analysis provided by the teachers of the participating schools were juxtaposed with the interview data provided by the school leadership. To a large extent, the results from the quantitative analysis converged with those of the qualitative analysis. For instance, with regard to the Instructional Style, the principals from England suggested that this was their predominant style in use, especially if they felt that their school was low performing. More specifically, they mentioned that, with regard to monitoring and evaluation of teachers and students, they used statistical analysis of students' results every year in order to plan for improvement by highlighting areas of underperformance, incorporating them into the development plan for that year, and prioritizing funding for them.

Furthermore, they mentioned that they monitored teaching and learning through lesson observations carried out across the school, a parental survey, student forums, checking exercise books, and monitoring student reports and exam results, especially where they had some evidence of poor performance, as a result of poor teaching.

4.6.1.2 Participative Style

Additionally, the principals from England stressed that with regard to the Participative Style, they acted as the mediating agent in their efforts to resolve conflicts through discussion thus, creating an amicable climate within the school; in case where these conflicts could not be resolved, the school principal directed the necessary course for action. Moreover, school leaders stressed that they use a Participative Style of leadership especially with regard to decisions affecting the instructional variety at the school so that the less able teachers would benefit from the more able ones. These findings suggest that the Participative Style is instrumental for teachers in high-performing schools, as exercised by principals in English schools, and that the teachers are in agreement with the way this leadership style is manifested at the school level.

4.6.1.3 Sensemaking

To sum up, the fact that in England, Instructional leadership was found to have the highest score from all leadership styles may be attributed to the fact that strong accountability mechanisms with regard to student performance exist in England, thus "forcing" principals to place special emphasis on the instructional core of education, especially if their schools are not performing well. This is further explained in the relevant Chap. 7, which focuses on England. Moreover, it was shown that low-performing schools had a higher mean of Instructional leadership than high-performing schools. This may be better comprehended if we consider the fact that low-performing schools feel that they need much more of the Instructional Leadership in order to raise student standards, because of the high-stakes testing. In other words, low performance, coupled with strong accountability, instigates principals to focus on the Instructional Leadership Style.

   With regard to the Participative Style, it was found to predict to a high degree the probability of belonging to a high-performing school. Specifically, more participation in England is more likely to be found in a high-performing school. It seems that the specific leadership style is utilized by English principals in order to increase or sustain student success. These findings indicate that, most likely, the appraisal of English school principals should be differentiated and could focus more on Instructional leadership in low-performing schools and on Participative leadership in high-performing schools. In essence, the argument here is that a school leader's evaluation should be contextual in nature depending on how his/her school is performing. Therefore, differentiated evaluation should be the norm and not one size fits all (Pashiardis & Brauckmann, 2008b).

4.6.2   Norway

Descriptive Statistics showed that the Participative Style had the highest mean for this country ($M = 3.66$). Second came the Structuring Style with a mean of $M = 3.65$, and third came the Entrepreneurial Style with a mean of $M = 3.50$. The results of the ANOVA analyses showed no gender effects. With respect to school location, they showed that there were significant differences among rural and urban schools only with respect to the Personnel Development Style. Specifically, urban schools had a significantly higher mean in the Personnel Development Style than rural schools, $F (1, 110) = 14.31$, $p = .0001$. With respect to school performance level, the analysis showed that there were significant differences among high- and low-performing schools only with respect to the Personnel Development Style. Specifically, high-performing schools had a significantly higher mean in the Personnel Development Style than low-performing schools, $F (1, 110) = 14.30$, $p = .0001$.

Furthermore, Logistic Regression Analysis showed that only the Personnel Development and the Entrepreneurial Styles significantly predicted the odds of a teacher working in a low- or high-performing school. Specifically, for every one unit increase in the Entrepreneurial Style, the odds of being in a high-performing school (versus low-performing school) decreased. However, for every unit increase in the Personnel Development Style, the odds of being in a high-performing school (versus a low-performing school) increased.

4.6.2.1   Participative Style

These results from the teachers were enhanced with those from the leadership interviews. For instance, with regard to the Participative Style (which had the highest mean for this country) and decision-making mechanisms (formal and informal), school principals mentioned that there was a lot of discussion with teachers about what should be included in the school schedule (taking into account teachers' preferences). Moreover, lead teams consisting of three teachers held meetings with the subject head every week; results from the lead teams were communicated back to the year groups, and therefore, everybody felt involved. Furthermore, with regard to the brokering and mediating role of the principal, conflicts were resolved via discussions with everybody involved. These findings suggest that this leadership style is indeed in high use by Norwegian principals.

4.6.2.2   Structuring Style

The Norwegian principals also mentioned that they used the Structuring Style (which had the second highest mean) quite extensively. This is indicated by their efforts in the schools to clarify their vision and mission. As they stated, vision was communicated via many documents as well as through a logo which was usually evident throughout the school signifying its philosophy. They also implemented consistently the rules and regulations, as they did not regard themselves as being

big risk takers, since not many of their decisions were controversial in relation to formal regulations and rules. Thus, rules and regulations were evenly enforced for everyone.

4.6.2.3 Personnel Development Style

Moreover, the Norwegian principals mentioned that they tried to utilize the expertise of their mature teachers in order to assist the newcomers as well as utilizing the many opportunities for teachers' professional development. On this same note, it is interesting to observe that the Personnel Development Style was the strongest predictor for working in a high-performing school which was situated in an urban setting. It can be suggested that, through a participatory and entrepreneurial approach, these Norwegian principals were able to take advantage of the strengths appearing both within the schools (by using expertise among their teachers) as well as outside the school by taking advantage of the opportunities afforded to them in their urban environment.

4.6.2.4 Sensemaking

Summarizing the above discussion, it seems that in Norway, it was found that school principals score highest on the Participative and Structuring Styles. Indeed, Scandinavian countries such as Norway have exhibited during the last years a strong inclination towards more democratic forms of leadership while maintaining their focus on clear policies and rules (Johansson, 2004; Møller et al., 2007). Moreover, it was found that urban schools and high-performing schools have a higher score on the Personnel Development Style. It seems that urban schools have better resources and infrastructure that allow the principals to promote the professional development of teachers. Moreover, it can be suggested that the enactment of this style is more likely to lead to higher performance. On the other hand, it could also be argued that high performance instigates principals to focus on this style as a way to sustain the already attained high standards. In addition to this, the Entrepreneurial Style was found to be negatively associated with high school performance according to the student results of the participating schools. In other words, the Entrepreneurial Style is more likely to be encountered in low-performing schools in Norway. Specifically, it is likely that lower student performance acts as a motivator for school principals to be more resourceful, trying to build alliances with external forces and ask for more parental participation in the school's life.

4.6.3 Germany (North Rhine-Westphalia)

Descriptive Statistics showed that the Entrepreneurial Style had the highest mean for this lander ($M = 3.73$). The Personnel Development Style came second with a mean of $M = 3.45$, and the Structuring Style came third with a mean of $M = 3.38$.

The results of the ANOVA analyses showed no gender effects. With respect to school location, they showed that there were significant differences among rural and urban schools only with respect to the Participative Style. Specifically, urban schools had a significantly higher mean in the Participative Style than rural schools, F (1, 162)=5.71, p=.018. With respect to school performance level, the analysis showed that there were significant differences among high- and low-performing schools only with respect to the Participative Style. Specifically, low-performing schools had a significantly higher mean in the Participative Style than high-performing schools, F (1, 162)=5.94, p=.018.

Furthermore, Logistic Regression Analysis showed that only the Participative and the Structuring Styles significantly predicted the odds of a teacher working in a low- or high-performing school. Specifically, for every one unit increase in the Participative Style, the odds of being in a high-performing school (versus low-performing school) decreased. However, for every unit increase in the Structuring Style, the odds of being in a high-performing school (versus a low-performing school) increased.

4.6.3.1 Entrepreneurial Style

Consistent with these findings, the analysis of the interview data from the German principals (in the North Rhine-Westphalia lander) with regard to the Entrepreneurial Style showed that they took extra care to involve parents in the daily management of their schools. For example, their school development groups were comprised of parents, teachers, and students who were collectively involved in developing a work plan and making suggestions for new initiatives at the school level. Furthermore, the principals emphasized that there was cooperation with parents, especially with regard to questions of career orientations for their children. In terms of coalition building, there were frequent contacts with the town administration which was very helpful, and the political connections created this way resulted in enormous advantages for individuals and schools.

4.6.3.2 Structuring Style

Moreover, the Structuring Style also played an important role for high-performing schools in this area, and teachers perceived that this was indeed the case, as indicated by their responses on the relevant questionnaire. For instance, school leaders in high-performing schools stressed the fact that they insisted on having a school which is functioning in an orderly manner and that conflicts were kept at a minimum. In addition, school leaders mentioned that they tried to include as many teachers as possible in school activities, thus helping their teachers to create a sense of belongingness at their school; in this way, they were hoping that the teachers would be more willing to be involved in professional development activities.

4.6.3.3 Sensemaking

In summary, German principals in North Rhine-Westphalia scored the highest on the Entrepreneurial Style showing a tendency towards involving the parents and the community in school affairs as well as other external actors. Apparently, the feeling among respondents in this piece of research is that the schools alone cannot do it anymore and they need the assistance of other outside players to assist with the growing difficulties of dealing with students and social problems. In essence, what the Entrepreneurial Style is telling us is that, in order for school principals to be more successful, they need to build alliances with external forces and ask for more parental and community participation in the school's life.

Moreover, significant differences were found with respect to the Participative Style. In particular, urban schools and low-performing schools were found to have a higher degree of Participative leadership. With respect to these findings, one could argue that urban schools are much larger in size, and therefore participatory structures are needed in order to facilitate the management of the school. Similarly, low performance may actually act as a catalyst for principals by providing more opportunities for participation and empowerment among teachers as a way to improve student achievement.

Additionally, the Structuring Style was found to be positively associated with student achievement to a high degree. Apparently, higher Structuring leadership in the participating schools from Germany (North Rhine-Westphalia) is associated with higher student achievement. Generally speaking, this finding is also in congruence with German culture which is perceived to be characterized by the abidance to rules and procedures and being more disciplined. Overall (albeit limited by our small sample), it could be inferred that evaluators of German principals should probably suggest to principals of urban and low-performing schools that they exhibit more of a Participatory Leadership Style when leading their schools in order to enhance exchanges among teachers. At the same time, the suggestion could be made to school leaders of high-performing schools that probably exhibiting increased levels of a Structuring Leadership Style is more appropriate and conducive to student achievement in their schools.

4.6.4 Slovenia

Descriptive Statistics showed that the Entrepreneurial Style had the highest mean for this country ($M = 3.95$) as was the case with Germany (North Rhine-Westphalia) as well. The Structuring Style came second with a mean of $M = 3.89$, and the Personnel Development Style came third with a mean of $M = 3.80$. The results of the ANOVA analyses showed no gender effects. With respect to school location, the analysis showed that there were significant differences among rural and urban schools with respect to all styles but the Structuring Style. Specifically, rural schools had a significantly higher mean in the Instructional, Participative, Personnel Development,

and the Entrepreneurial Styles than rural schools. With respect to school performance level, the analysis showed that there were significant differences among high- and low-performing schools with respect to all styles but the Structuring Style. Specifically, low-performing schools had a significantly higher mean in the Instructional, Participative, Personnel Development, and the Entrepreneurial Styles than high-performing schools.

Furthermore, Logistic Regression Analysis showed that only the Entrepreneurial Style significantly predicted the odds of a teacher working in a low- or high-performing school. Specifically, for every one unit increase in the Entrepreneurial Style, the odds of being in a high-performing school (versus a low-performing school) decreased.

4.6.4.1 Instructional Style

Consistent with these findings, the analysis of the interview data showed that principals in low-performing schools in Slovenia paid special attention to all leadership styles except the Structuring Style. For instance, they mentioned that within the Instructional Leadership Style, and with regard to monitoring and evaluating of teachers and students, they achieved that through mutual exchanges and appraisals of each other (teacher peer review) and with the principal (external review). Then, feedback to teachers was provided at post-conferences, analyzing each activity after the assessment period and after lesson observation. Furthermore, in order to enable the achievement of the instructional objectives, they provided teachers with an analysis of students' performance which in turn was used for the analysis of teaching performance. Based on this analysis, a plan about how a teacher could potentially improve with regard to the educational successes of his/her students was outlined. Moreover, principals encouraged teachers to visit each other's classrooms. In addition, they linked appraisals to the review and monitoring of the annual plan. Finally, in order to stimulate instructional innovations, the results of the work of students were analyzed, and if needed, additional measures were implemented to ensure student success. All of the above activities suggest a combination of a formal and informal atmosphere throughout the school, which operated without the strict observance to the rules or clarification of roles (Structuring Style), but rather through an unofficial adjustment and accommodation process within the school which resulted in mutual adjustment and coordination by everybody.

4.6.4.2 Personnel Development Style

With regard to the Participative Style, extra care was taken to involve the teachers in the planning and implementation of the school vision. As regards to Personnel Development, the Slovenian principals implemented this by providing training opportunities, thus encouraging the professional growth of their teachers. Furthermore, they enhanced their teachers' self-efficacy by asking them to design

their own educational plans and then assisting them in finding ways to implement these plans by seeking outside assistance from the local environment through their Entrepreneurial Style. Finally, Slovenian principals acknowledged and rewarded their teaching staff through various means, such as praising teachers in public, providing financial prizes, assigning special roles (e.g., becoming escorts for a special trip), creating better working conditions for the outstanding teachers, and providing them with greater opportunities for further professional and personal development.

4.6.4.3   Sensemaking

In summary, the Entrepreneurial Style was also found to have the highest score just like in Germany (North Rhine-Westphalia), as described above. Again, apparently the feeling among respondents in this piece of research is that the schools alone cannot do it anymore, and they need the assistance of other outside forces to assist with the growing difficulties of dealing with students and social problems. Moreover, rural schools and low-performing schools were found to score higher on all but the Structuring Style. One possible interpretation is that the rest of the leadership styles (Instructional, Participative, Entrepreneurial, and Personnel Development) are present in rural schools due to their smaller size and in low-performing schools as a way to increase low achievement.

4.6.5   Hungary

Descriptive Statistics showed that the Entrepreneurial Style had the highest mean for this country as well ($M = 4.0$). Then, followed the Structuring Style with a mean of $M = 3.99$ and third came the Personnel Development Style just like in Slovenia. The results for these two countries were very similar throughout the LISA project. It should be borne in mind that both countries used to belong to what was the "Eastern Bloc countries" and were going through similar structural changes with regard to their educational systems. The results of the ANOVA analyses showed no gender effects. With respect to school location, the analysis showed that there were significant differences among rural and urban schools only with respect to the Instructional Style. Specifically, rural schools had a significantly higher mean in the Instructional Style than urban schools, $F (1, 196) = 4.00$, $p = .047$. With respect to school performance level, the analysis showed that there were significant differences among high- and low-performing schools only with respect to the Entrepreneurial Style. Specifically, low-performing schools had a significantly higher mean in the Entrepreneurial Style than high-performing schools, $F (1, 196) = 6.98$, $p = .009$.

Furthermore, Logistic Regression Analysis showed that only the Entrepreneurial and the Structuring Styles significantly predicted the odds of a teacher working in a low- or high-performing school. Specifically, for every one unit increase in the Entrepreneurial Style, the odds of being in a high-performing school

(versus low-performing school) decreased. However, for every unit increase in the Structuring Style, the odds of being in a high-performing school (versus low-performing school) increased.

4.6.5.1 Structuring Style

After a close examination of the interview data, it was confirmed that the views of the teachers, as expressed through the questionnaires, were very similar to those of the principals, as expressed by themselves through the interviews. For instance, principals in high-performing schools mentioned that, with regard to the Structuring Style, there was an increased emphasis towards clarity of vision which was created collectively during staff meetings. At the same time, all the required rules and guidelines were used in actual situations only when they were really needed; in other words, the management style and processes relied more on human contact and persuasion than formal rules. Thus, with regard to establishing and following clear rules, it was understood that they could not be followed blindly, and therefore, all necessary information was provided in order to understand the reason for special treatment and exceptions to the rule. This approach resulted in some creativity in the enforcement of relevant rules and regulations, coupled with a human touch and a more personalized type of management style. Thus, it appears that the Structuring Style was perceived by the teachers to be very much evident, but in an informal and humane way, as opposed to a strict observance to the rules and regulations.

4.6.5.2 Entrepreneurial Style

Finally, with regard to the Entrepreneurial Style, it was confirmed that parents were heavily involved in school projects and, at the same time, schools were opening up to the community their own facilities, especially when the school was perceived as being low in its performance. Furthermore, especially in the rural schools, there was heavy evidence of a strong Entrepreneurial Style by the school leaders. For instance, as one principal informed us, the school had opened a sports pitch for the local residents, and it also opened up its library for the local citizens. Furthermore, the principal in one of the high-performing schools mentioned that it was important for the schools to have a market orientation. As he mentioned, the relationship with the local mayor was excellent and he promoted the school. This was exactly why the outside communication was an important priority, and therefore, his school regularly published articles in the local press. However, these views did not seem to be in agreement with the views of the teachers. To the contrary, a divergence was detected with regard to the extent that the school leader was entrepreneurial; in fact, in the school where the principal was perceived as very entrepreneurial, teachers indicated that this was done at the expense of the principal's duties within the school, i.e., the school principal spent most of his time looking outside rather than

looking inside the school. Apparently, the belief among the responding teachers was that if the principal was way too entrepreneurial (looking outwards and building coalitions and alliances), he/she was more likely neglecting "internal" school duties, such as being the instructional leader.

4.6.5.3   Sensemaking

Summarizing, it seems that the most highly rated leadership style employed by Hungarian principals was the Entrepreneurial one, just like in Germany (North Rhine-Westphalia) and Slovenia. Again, in essence, what the Entrepreneurial Style is telling us is that, in order for school principals to be more successful, they need to build alliances with external forces and ask for more parental participation in the school's life and become more resourceful. With regard to the Instructional Leadership Style, rural school principals had a higher score than urban ones. This may be due to the fact that rural schools are smaller in size and therefore school principals can more easily provide instructional direction to the teachers and students involved. Moreover, in low-performing schools, principals had a higher score on Entrepreneurial leadership. Findings also showed that Entrepreneurial leadership can predict the odds of being in a high-performing school in a negative way. Thus, low performance seems to instigate principals to act in an entrepreneurial manner, again, trying to be more resourceful and ask for more parental involvement (probably as external pressure in order to influence internal processes). In essence, the dictum is "do more with less."

4.6.6   Italy

Descriptive Statistics showed that the Entrepreneurial Style had the highest mean for this country ($M = 3.81$). The second highest mean was that of the Structuring Style ($M = 3.65$), and the third highest mean was that of the Participative Style ($M = 3.52$). The results of the ANOVA analyses showed no gender effects. With respect to school location, the analysis showed that there were significant differences among rural and urban schools in all styles except the Participative Style. Specifically, rural schools had a significantly higher mean in the Instructional, the Personnel Development, and the Entrepreneurial Styles than urban schools. Urban schools had a significantly higher mean in the Structuring Style than rural schools. With respect to school performance level, there were no differences.

Furthermore, Logistic Regression Analysis showed that only the Participative Style significantly predicted the odds of a teacher working in a low- or high-performing school. Specifically, for every one unit increase in the Participative Style, the odds of being in a high-performing school (versus low-performing school) decreased.

4.6.6.1 Entrepreneurial Style

After a close examination and analysis of the school principals' interview data with regard to the Entrepreneurial Style, it was concluded that there was high convergence between the views expressed by the teachers and the principals. Specifically, it seems that Italian principals did go the extra mile in coalition building. They invited important people from the community to their annual ceremony of recognition for best students, they asked for support for school projects, and they encouraged the community to propose common initiatives. They also organized open days frequently, they invited people from external businesses to deliver speeches, they hosted meetings and conferences, and they organized extensive activities of high caliber for their students. These examples resonated with the fact that the Entrepreneurial Style had the highest mean for this country. Another explanation, as we will see in Chap. 6 where the Italian perspective is being presented in depth, was probably the Italian cultural temperament of being more vocal, outspoken, personable, and very public in terms of behavior.

4.6.6.2 Participative Style

However, with regard to the Participative Style, the views of the teachers did not converge with those of the principals. Principals believed that, with regard to decision-making mechanisms, they were doing good in trying to involve all teachers in the organization of activities; furthermore, school planning was mostly decided by the teachers themselves, although the decision was taken at a collective level; finally, teachers participated in the decision making for many issues, such as textbooks, in-service training, deciding on which pedagogical materials to include, projects to carry on, and activities to which additional resources were given. All of the above efforts aimed to increase teacher participation and were implemented by principals in an effort to enhance higher performance. However, teachers indicated (through their questionnaire responses) that they preferred less participation in decision-making processes. Apparently, due to the centralized nature of the Italian system, teachers perceived themselves as (mostly) agents for teaching and did not wish to be involved in (what they perceived as) "administrative" or "managerial" issues. The belief probably was that these issues rested mostly with the school administration. This result is further corroborated by the fact that the more participative Italian principals were in their leadership style, the less likelihood there was for their school to be high performing, according to the perceptions of their teachers. Apparently, teachers indicated that they wanted to be left alone and go on with their teaching duties.

4.6.6.3 Sensemaking

To sum up, in Italy, school principals' highest score was again in the Entrepreneurial Style. Just like in Germany (North Rhine-Westphalia), Slovenia, and Hungary, the feeling among respondents in this piece of research is similar, as explained previously.

In essence, what the Entrepreneurial Style is telling us is that, in order for school principals to be more successful, they need to build alliances with external forces and ask for more parental participation in the school's life. It seems that the call for the day in most countries is for school leaders to become more resourceful and more able in involving outside factors and actors into the schools as, probably, the schools are asked to do more with less in order to resolve social and economic problems.

Moreover, rural school principals had a higher score in all styles except for the Participative and Structuring ones, while urban school principals had a higher score in the Structuring Style. As an interpretation, on the one hand, rural school principals usually work in smaller settings and with fewer people, and therefore it is easier for them to provide instructional direction and opportunities for professional development, as well as involve parents and the community in school affairs. On the other hand, since urban schools are larger in size, it follows that the establishment of clear rules and policies is more needed in order to create a sense of homogeneity and order in all school departments. Logistic regression also indicated that the Participative Style is negatively associated with high student performance. In other words, high Participative Leadership is encountered mostly in low-performing schools. It seems that in this case as well, low performance constitutes a lever for school principals to act in a participative manner and assist teachers in learning from each other in more inclusive and participatory ways.

4.6.7 The Netherlands

Descriptive Statistics showed that the Entrepreneurial Style had the highest mean for this country ($M = 3.70$). The Structuring Style came second with a mean of $M = 3.61$, and the Participative Style came third with a mean of $M = 3.52$. The results of the ANOVA analyses showed no gender or school location effects. With respect to school performance level, there were also no differences. Furthermore, Logistic Regression Analysis showed that only the Participative Style significantly predicted the odds of a teacher working in a low- or high-performing school. Specifically, for every one unit increase in the Participative Style, the odds of being in a high-performing school (versus low-performing school) decreased.

4.6.7.1 Entrepreneurial Style

After a close examination of the interview data, it was confirmed that the views of the teachers, as expressed through the questionnaires, were very similar to those of the principals, as expressed by themselves through the interviews. The principals were in tune with the teachers when discussing the importance of the Entrepreneurial Style. For instance, Dutch principals mentioned that parents were involved in their schools both formally (parent-teacher associations, parents' councils) and informally (feedback groups, asking for their opinions using parental satisfaction surveys, and involvement in school activities). Furthermore, with regard to involving other

external actors, Dutch principals invited stakeholders to think about and provide recommendations on matters concerning the school (e.g., formulating and evaluating the strategic policy plan of the school). They also had regular contacts with municipal authorities in their respective regions.

4.6.7.2 Participative Style

At the same time, the principals were advocating and pursuing for more Participative Style in order to have higher-performing schools through working teams to determine direction and through the departments to determine the content, while teachers were developing and shaping the school curriculum. However, teachers were not in agreement with the school principals regarding their involvement to such a great extent. In conjunction with the finding suggesting that an increase in the Participative Style decreases the odds of being in a high-performing school, school principals in the Netherlands should probably be somewhat more skeptical for too much participation and involvement of their teachers into what is perceived by them (the teachers) as more administrative and managerial type of duties which falls in the realm of the school leadership. In a sense, it seems that in high-performing schools, teachers want to be left alone in order to concentrate primarily on their teaching duties.

4.6.7.3 Sensemaking

Summarizing, the Dutch principals' highest score was also on the Entrepreneurial Style. Once more, it seems that the feeling among respondents in this piece of research is that the schools alone cannot do it anymore and they need the assistance of outside forces to assist with the growing difficulties of dealing with students and social problems. Additionally, the Participative Style was negatively associated with high student performance. In other words, high participative leadership is most likely to be encountered in low-performing schools. Low performance then probably instigates school leaders to act more in a participative style.

The above results for every country highlight the fact that school leadership is highly contextual and cultural in nature. They further stress the fact that the various leadership styles are probably perceived differently by teachers and principals depending on their historic, cultural, and local context of education.

4.7 Dominant Trends: The Entrepreneurial and Structuring Styles

The results and analyses already presented shed some light on a number of issues related to the scope of the LISA project. As can be seen from Table 4.2 which follows, there is a general trend towards the *Entrepreneurial* Style among the

Table 4.2 Highest leadership style means by LISA country

	Entrepreneurial	Structuring	Participative	Personnel	Instructional
NE	3.7 (1)	3.6 (2)			
NO		3.6 (2)	3.6 (1)		
IT	3.8 (1)	3.6 (2)			
GE	3.7 (1)			3.4 (2)	
HU	4.0 (1)	4.0 (2)			
SL	3.9 (1)	3.9 (2)			
EN	3.7 (2)				3.8 (1)

seven participating countries in the LISA project. Several explanations seem plausible. For instance, this emphasis on the Entrepreneurial Style could be regarded as a strategic approach in order to respond to "potential" budget cuts or generally as a response to limited resources in terms of money, time, and personnel; in essence make more out of less. Furthermore, it could be perceived as a strategic effort in order to create other support systems which were originally situated at other governance levels within the educational system. In fact, it seems that school principals are trying to create their own "privately organized" systems in order to close the gap of the support systems as organized and provided by the state at the national and/or regional levels, thus, enhancing their radius of influence with regard to areas of decision making where the school cannot decide autonomously.

Apparently, there is also a general trend towards the *Structuring* Style. This could probably be seen as the response of an institution with regard to the expanded roles and responsibilities of the school; it is an effort to mark unmarked territory through a clear division of tasks and responsibilities and through the clarity that is provided by rules and regulations. In fact, the Structuring Style can be seen as the enabling mechanism for the internal restructuring of the school by establishing clear roles, responsibilities, and goals.

Conclusively, one can notice some obvious patterns concerning the leadership styles employed by the European school leaders who participated in this research, albeit such patterns should be interpreted with caution because of the small sample of four schools per participating country. Firstly, in most of the European countries, the Entrepreneurial Leadership Style has acquired the highest score. This probably means that the Entrepreneurial behavior of principals can be regarded as a transversal European dimension of successful school leadership. Further, the Entrepreneurial and Structuring Styles are perceived as the predominant leadership styles which can be interpreted as:

- An increased level of awareness with regard to the expanded responsibility of the school
- Internal organizational stability effort in order to cooperate with leaders outside the school at an equal footing, thus guaranteeing the willingness and capacity of the school to collaborate both internally and externally

- An approach to stimulate the school improvement and development process by creating a community of shared responsibility between internal and external stakeholders of the school, thus acknowledging the educational landscape of the region and the community where the school is situated
- A point of reference in order to exhibit leadership competence and authority by inviting important external stakeholders into the school and showing them around

At the same time, it should be noted that in all seven countries, three of the five styles, that is, the Instructional, the Structuring, and the Personnel Development Styles, were utilized and exercised in almost all circumstances and almost irrespective of the perceived level of school performance. On the other hand, it was observed that the Participative and the Entrepreneurial Styles were enacted differently depending on the perceived level of school performance. For instance, when the school was perceived as low performing, then there was more of the Participative and the Entrepreneurial Styles. These two styles are the "coalition and group building" mechanisms inside (Participative) and outside (Entrepreneurial) the school. What this tendency probably indicates is that when the perceived level of performance within the school is low, then school leaders tend to exhibit more participatory and inclusive approaches of leadership so that they can probably exert more pressure for higher performance from within (through greater teacher participation and collaboration), as well as from the outside (through pressure from the parents and the community at large).

What remains to be seen is if we will ever reach a formula about what the best leadership mix looks like or if it will remain a secret recipe for every individual principal who should be made aware of the necessary ingredients, but, in the end, the creation is unique and only his/her own. What is also becoming increasingly more evident is that school leadership is highly contextualized not only at the system (country) level, but also at the school level (Brauckmann & Pashiardis, 2011). This, by itself, constitutes a major finding of this piece of research towards the validation of the *Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework*. A school leader would be wise to examine what the situation of his/her particular school context looks like and then act according to the specific situation; by *Context*, we mean both at the system/national level as well as at the local level. Whether a school is rural or urban, high or low performing, and whether it is situated in a centralized or decentralized national education system, a different mix of all these five leadership styles is needed. More of one style probably assumes less of another. However, it is important to bear in mind that all styles are necessary to be utilized, but one should also be reminded that there is some overlap among the various leadership styles, and thus, their utilization and possible mix are situational.

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Chapter 5
Leadership Styles and School Climate Variables of the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework: An Intimate Relationship?

Petros Pashiardis and Stefan Brauckmann

5.1 Introduction

As mentioned previously in this book, research has shown that school principals influence student achievement mostly in an indirect manner, that is, through their influence on a number of school climate variables. For the purposes of our project, a number of school climate variables were selected from the international literature and used as mediating variables between the principal's leadership styles and student achievement. These variables mainly concern the school's functioning as a system and the organizational conditions through which improved teaching and learning occurs. The *Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework* (Pashiardis & Brauckmann, 2008) employs such a mediated effects model incorporating intervening variables at the school level. Thus, in this chapter, we will examine a mediated effects model incorporating intervening variables at the school level in order to explore school principals' influence on student achievement. In this way, we aim at identifying the mechanisms through which leadership influence seeps through to student learning. Both the exploratory and the confirmatory factor analyses for the school climate variables pointed towards a model comprising seven factors. The seven factors extracted were labeled as follows: *Professional Development Opportunities*, *Evaluation and Feedback*, *Teacher Commitment*, *Parental Involvement*, *Teaching and Learning Practices*, *Student-Teacher Interactions*, and *Student Expectations*.

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Specifically, Multiple Linear Regression Analysis, at the European level (including all seven countries participating in the LISA project), was conducted in order to examine whether the various leadership styles can explain variation in each of the seven school climate variables included in the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework. The five leadership styles were used as the independent variables, whereas each school climate variable was entered as the dependent variable. Therefore, this analysis sought to examine the degree to which school leadership styles reliably predicted school climate variables.

These analyses were conducted with data from all teachers responding in the seven countries at the European level. Each school climate variable was entered individually as the dependent variable, and then, all school climate variables were treated as a composite variable. Therefore, in the following sections of this chapter, readers will be able to see how each of the seven school climate components interacts and relates with the five leadership styles in order to mediate student achievement.

5.2   Exploratory and Confirmatory Factor Analyses

Responses to the School Climate Variables Questionnaire items were scored in a numerical scale from 1 to 5, in such a way that a higher score always represented a higher degree of agreement with a statement. At this point, it should be reminded that the responses to the school climate variables questionnaire came from the teachers of the participating schools; they are the ones who replied to the questionnaires. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was chosen as the data reduction technique. Thus, the 47 questionnaire items were factor analyzed to assess which items were intercorrelated and to establish internal reliability. After careful examination of the factor loadings, a seven-factor solution involving 34 items with factor loadings above .40 that explained 58.95 % of variance was produced. The factor solution is presented in Table 5.1.

The seven factors extracted were labeled as follows: (1) Professional Development Opportunities, (2) Student Expectations, (3) Teacher Commitment to School, (4) Evaluation and Feedback Practices, (5) Parental Involvement, (6) Teaching and Learning Practices, and (7) Student-Teacher Interactions. The first factor named *Professional Development Opportunities* comprised seven items (with Cronbach's alpha = .86) representing practices that promote a climate for teacher professional development (i.e., provision of sufficient opportunities for professional training, provision of necessary information to teachers in order to perform their duties, free discussion of issues regarding teacher continuous improvement, motivating job at the school, useful feedback received by teachers, and participation in decision-making processes).

The second factor named *Student Expectations* comprised three items (with Cronbach's alpha = .70) representing practices that promote student personal achievement orientation (i.e., interest in improving their academic performance,

Table 5.1 Exploratory factor analysis for the school climate variables questionnaire

	Component						
	Professional development	Teacher commitment	Teacher practices	Parental involvement	Student–teacher interaction	Evaluation-feedback	Student expectations
Q2	.583						
Q8	.645						
Q9	.715						
Q13	.624						
Q21	.651						
Q22	.722						
Q23	.731						
Q1		.581					
Q4		.783					
Q5		.725					
Q10		.665					
Q12		.446					
Q19		.480					
Q24		.615					
Q11			.529				
Q17			.452				
Q31			.687				
Q32			.775				
Q33			.691				
Q38			.689				
Q6				.751			
Q29				.505			
Q41				.792			
Q42				.780			
Q45						.635	
Q46						.736	
Q47						.748	
Q16					.451		
Q25					.414		
Q26					.777		
Q27					.690		
Q34							.726
Q35							.712
Q36							.680

Extraction method: principal component analysis

Rotation method: varimax with Kaiser normalization

participation in various European educational programs and competitions, and noble competition which enhances their performance).

The third factor named *Teacher Commitment to School* comprised seven items (with Cronbach's alpha = .84) representing teachers' commitment to teaching and learning practices (i.e., teachers have a clear understanding of what is expected from

them in their work; teachers are committed to achieving the school goals; teachers are committed to maintaining high standards of discipline; teachers feel responsible for the quality of their work; teachers have a clear perception of the school's direction; teachers have a strong emphasis on student learning; and teachers try to perform to the maximum extent possible).

The fourth factor named *Evaluation and Feedback Practices* comprised three items (with Cronbach's alpha = .85) representing evaluation and assessment practices (i.e., concrete feedback is given to staff on teaching and learning; valuations of teaching are used for improvement and change; evaluations of teaching meet external requirements).

The fifth factor named *Parental Involvement* comprised four items (with Cronbach's alpha = .80) representing parents' involvement in school settings (i.e., parents are actively involved in school affairs; there is frequent communication and cooperation with parents; parents are actively involved in the governance of the school; and parents are actively involved in the day-to-day operations of the school).

The sixth factor named *Teaching and Learning Practices* comprised six items (with Cronbach's alpha = .76) representing the learning climate (i.e., considerable efforts are made to improve teaching practices; there is close alignment between content taught and content tested; considerable efforts are made to improve student outcomes; teachers explain and answer precisely to students' questions; teachers return promptly the graded tests and explain the expected answers; and a step-by-step procedure is followed in teaching).

The seventh factor named *Student-Teacher Interactions* comprised four items (with Cronbach's alpha = .68) representing the interaction practices among teachers and students (i.e., student progress is regularly monitored; students communicate effectively with the staff; students feel comfortable to express their feelings, problems, or concerns to their teachers; and teachers discuss on one-to-one basis with their students about issues concerning their progress).

Following, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was performed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM; EQS version 6.1). The model had an acceptable fit to the data, χ^2 (381, $N = 1,304$) = 1896.21, $p < .001$; CFI = .90; NNFI = .89; and RMSEA = .055 (CI.90 = .053–.058). The model tested is presented in Fig. 5.1.

5.3 Findings with Regard to School Climate Dimensions

5.3.1 Professional Development Opportunities

Initially, we examined which of the School Leadership Styles, if any, predicted the provision of Professional Development Opportunities to teachers. The model was significant, accounting for 33 % of the dependent variable's variance. Responsible for this effect were the Instructional Style, the Participative Style, the Personnel Development Style, all with a positive effect, and the Entrepreneurial
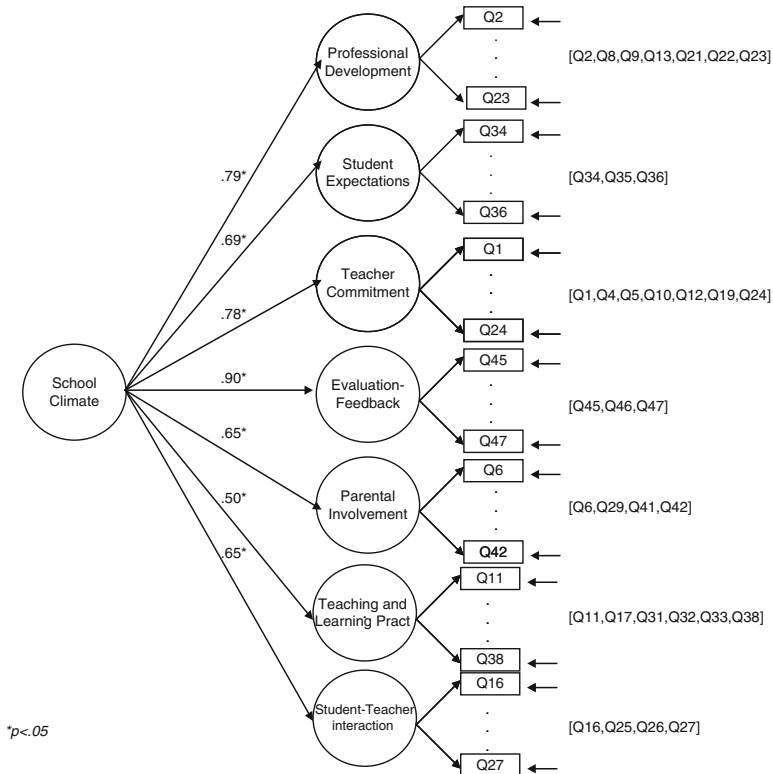
Fig. 5.1 School climate variables model

Style with a negative effect. The Structuring Style did not predict in a significant way the provision of Professional Development Opportunities. These findings suggest that when school leaders exhibit more of the Instructional Leadership Style, then Professional Development Opportunities increase at the school level. At this point, it should be noted that the Instructional Leadership Style includes a clear definition of instructional objectives, monitoring and evaluating students and teachers, setting high expectations, enabling the achievement of instructional objectives, and stimulating instructional innovation. Similarly, if school leaders exhibit more of the Participative Leadership Style, again, this has a positive effect on Professional Development Opportunities at the school level. By Participative Leadership Style, we mean participation in decision-making mechanisms (formal and informal) for the teachers, fostering staff cooperation, brokering and mediating between teachers, as well as promoting commitment. Finally, it seems that the Personnel Development Style, which includes the provision of training opportunities, the enhancement of self-efficacy, and acknowledging and rewarding teachers, also enhances the Professional Development Opportunities presented at the school level.

However, when there is an increase in the Entrepreneurial Leadership Style, it seems that there is a decrease in the provision of Professional Development Opportunities. Through the Entrepreneurial Leadership Style, we mean increased Parental Involvement, acquiring resources, coalition building, and a market orientation of the school leader.

As was expected, the Instructional, Participative, and Personnel Development Styles were found to predict in a positive way the provision of Professional Development Opportunities to teachers. One would also expect the Entrepreneurial Style to have a positive influence on the Professional Development Opportunities, as principals would probably be looking outside the school boundaries in order to find professional growth opportunities for their teachers. However, this style was not perceived in this way by the teachers, since teachers might have in mind a principal who devotes too much of his/her time on external relations and who is not very much concerned about the internal state of teacher development within the school. This finding is consistent with the results of the Leadership Questionnaire presented in Chap. 4.

In short, the Entrepreneurial Style is probably seen by teachers as exercised at the expense of teachers' professional growth, because the school leader is apparently more concerned with looking outside the school, building alliances and coalitions as opposed to providing professional growth opportunities for teachers. Therefore, one could discern two competing and, at the same time, complementary sets of leadership styles: an internal one consisting of the Instructional, Participative, and Personnel Development Styles and an external one which includes the Entrepreneurial Style. These results from the teachers (which emanated from their responses to the school climate variables questionnaire) are in tune with what the majority of school leaders mentioned in their interviews, citing that they very much use those three styles in order to enhance the Professional Development Opportunities of their teachers. Moreover, in England, the *Instructional Style* was found to predict in a significant and positive way each of the individual, as well as the composite of the school climate variables. Therefore, with regard to the *Instructional Style*, it can be argued that England is one of the more representative cases of the aforementioned Europe-wide findings.

In addition, with regard to the *Personnel Development Leadership* Style, it was mentioned by another English school leader that "teachers are required contractually to take responsibility for their own professional development, thus they need to demonstrate that they are analyzing their performance and seeking appropriate professional development to address their needs." Furthermore, in Slovenia, the *Participative Style* predicted in a significant and positive way *Professional Development*. It seems that, within the Slovenian context, a participative approach to leadership can promote a positive climate for teacher professional development in the sense that school leaders' cooperation with teachers has a developmental content and approach which seems to be conducive to their growth as teachers.

5.3.2   Teacher Commitment

Then, we examined whether any leadership style predicted Teacher Commitment. The model was significant, accounting for 21 % of the dependent variable's variance. The variables responsible for this effect were the Instructional and Structuring Styles. According to these findings, when we have an increase in the Instructional and the Structuring Styles, there is an increase in Teacher Commitment. It seems that teachers enjoy working in an environment where there is clarity of roles, responsibilities, and expectations and, at the same time, there is an emphasis on teaching and learning; these two seem to increase their commitment to the school.

Again, when comparing the views of the teachers as expressed in the quantitative part of the results with the views of the principals, it seems that the majority of school principals also agree that through the Instructional and Structuring Styles, there is increased Teacher Commitment. For example, a school principal in Norway mentioned that the accomplishment of the instructional aims creates a very clear feedback on how well the school is doing and, at the same time, to what extent the school has achieved its main objectives. As the school leader explained, this, by itself, creates a sense of commitment for the teachers because they can see that their hard work has paid off. This remark is representative of what most principals mentioned with regard to the Instructional Style and Teacher Commitment in the seven countries participating in the LISA project. Moreover, a principal from the Netherlands mentioned that classroom observation of teachers and conducting student surveys (enabling 360° feedback) are another ways of knowing whether the school has achieved its main objectives, thus indicating how the Instructional Style is implemented in actual practice by gathering data from students and teachers. As the principal continued, in turn, this information is used in order to acknowledge and reward teachers. As was further mentioned, when teachers see that their principals acknowledge and appreciate them and they get positive and concrete feedback, they become more committed to their school.

With regard to the Structuring Style, creating a common vision was high on the agenda of all participating principals, as well as providing clarity of rules and regulations with a "human touch," as mentioned by most of the principals participating in the project. Principals echoed the sentiment that clarity of roles and responsibilities was high on their agenda, thus enhancing teachers' commitment to the school. Moreover, principals mentioned that when there is clarity of roles and duties, there are fewer conflicts and teachers feel that they belong to the school and do not want to move. In fact, this clarity of roles and responsibilities helps create a stable environment in which teachers enjoy to work; thus, their commitment is enhanced. In sum, it seems that there was great congruence between the teachers' responses on the School Climate Variables Questionnaire on the one hand and the principals' comments during the interviews on the other hand, with regard to what influences Teacher Commitment.

5.3.3   Teaching and Learning Practices

Following, it was found that three of the leadership styles also predicted the school climate variable of Teaching and Learning Practices. The model was again significant, explaining 10 % of the dependent variable's variance. The leadership styles responsible for this effect were the Instructional, the Entrepreneurial, and the Structuring Styles. The findings show that when we have an increase in the three leadership styles mentioned above, then the Teaching and Learning Practices in the school are improved. This finding again makes sense, as it indicates that the more emphasis is placed on the quality of instruction that takes place at the school, as well as the more inviting and open to parents the school becomes, then there is an increased involvement of parents in the school's affairs. Parents feel welcomed and are given more space to get involved. This, in turn, probably adds some pressure on teachers to improve the teaching and learning practices exercised at the school.

   These results from the teachers' responses on the questionnaire are in agreement with the views of the school principals, as expressed during the interviews. For instance, a principal from Italy stressed that principals always try to stimulate instructional innovation and experimentations with regard to teaching practices such as collecting data from internal students' assessment and from international surveys in which the school is involved in order to improve on their instructional methods. Furthermore, teachers pay great attention to "new" learning tools (making extensive use of the Internet and informal ways of sharing best practice knowledge by participating in social networks such as Facebook) while trying to incorporate them into their teaching methods; teachers, then, try to be innovative as well when they know that the principal is encouraging them. Moreover, a principal from the Netherlands stressed the fact that the schools there adhere to the rules of the government and the ministry but, at the same time, overstep these rules without hesitation when the needs of the school or its students require them to do so; therefore, the rules of the ministry are adjusted to the schools' own situation and to the students' teaching and learning needs, thus establishing their own Structuring Style when leading their school. These views were representative of other school leaders participating in the LISA project. This is also a good example of Entrepreneurial Leadership Style in action when the principal tries to adjust the external environment (in this case the Ministry of Education) in order to suit the purposes of the school and, in turn, trying to influence his/her environment. In this, she was representative of most principals participating in the LISA study within the seven European countries.

5.3.4   Parental Involvement

Parental Involvement was then entered as the dependent variable in the regression analysis. The model was significant, explaining 14 % of the dependent variable's variance. The leadership variables responsible for this effect were the Instructional

and the Entrepreneurial Styles. According to these findings, when we have an increase in the Instructional and in the Entrepreneurial Styles, we have an increase in Parental Involvement.

Moreover, from the qualitative data (principals' interviews), it seems that indeed principals in the LISA study took extra steps in order to involve parents in the daily and long-term affairs of their schools, thus exhibiting an Entrepreneurial Leadership Style in action. For instance, in Hungary, school principals organize open days for parents on different topics (such as drug abuse and talent grooming). In Slovenia, parents are encouraged to participate in school projects and they are involved in formal decision making (such as parents' councils, school board meetings, and parental meetings), thus, enhancing the instructional opportunities accorded to students. In Germany (North Rhine-Westphalia[1]) parents can collaborate in many ways (such as afternoon working groups, cafeteria), they take an active role during the Christmas bazaar, and they make suggestions for specific themes for parent evenings. In this way, the bonding between the parents and the school is enhanced for the benefit of their children. In the Netherlands, school leaders mentioned a few examples of Parental Involvement during the interviews, such as asking for their opinions using parental satisfaction surveys with regard to school activities, inviting stakeholders to think about and provide recommendations on matters concerning the school (e.g., formulating and evaluating the strategic policy plan of the school), having regular contacts with municipal authorities, and getting the neighborhood and the parents of the pupils involved in its activities.

5.3.5 Student-Teacher Interactions

Additionally, we also examined whether any leadership style explained the variance in Student-Teacher Interactions. The model was again significant, explaining 10 % of the dependent variable's variance. The leadership styles responsible for this effect were the Instructional and Structuring ones. According to these findings, when there is an increase in the Instructional and the Structuring Styles, Student-Teacher Interactions increase as well.

With regard to Student-Teacher Interactions, it seems that school principals' views are again aligned with the teachers' views. For instance, a principal from Germany mentioned that establishing and following clear rules (e.g., Structuring Style) helped enormously with having fairer and more honest interactions between students and teachers. This is further enhanced, because there are house and school regulations which are aligned. As was mentioned, the school has introduced a school contract, which is signed by parents and pupils who are new to the school; this school contract gives clear regulations about house rules (including a code of good behavior). Thus, the school has formulated an education consensus (a contract for fairness

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[1] It should be noted that the responsibility for the school systems and schools in Germany rests within the different Länder (provinces). For more information, the reader is directed to Döbert (2007).

in life), involving parents, pupils, and teachers. In this way, as school leaders mentioned, all stakeholders are committed to the school because they know that the rules being enforced both at the school and at home are the result of a joint consensus among everyone involved. Additionally, a principal from England stressed the fact that rules about the code of conduct between students and teachers are widely published in several places – in homework journals, in classrooms, in staff handbooks, and on the website. In this way, the principal concluded that everyone is informed and becomes aware of what is at stake with regard to the observance of rules and regulations. Furthermore, behavior and sanctions policy applied was regularly reviewed with staff. Again, this practice enhanced adherence to the rules, thus providing clarity and consistency to the relationships between students and teachers and, therefore, exhibiting both the Instructional and the Structuring Styles in action.

5.3.6   Evaluation and Feedback Practices

Another School Climate Variable, Evaluation and Feedback Practices, was also entered as a dependent variable, based on the teachers' responses. The regression model was significant, accounting for 25 % of the dependent variable's variance. The Instructional, Participative, and Personnel Development Styles were responsible for this effect. The findings show that when we have an increase in Instructional Leadership, Participative Leadership, and the Personnel Development Styles, Evaluation and Feedback Practices also increase at the school level.

With reference to these findings, the views of the teachers (on the questionnaire responses) converge (to some extent) with the views of the principals with regard to provision of feedback approaches and professional development especially towards new teachers. According to school principals, teachers need and expect to be given concrete feedback about specific aspects of their teaching quality in order to enhance their instructional abilities. Furthermore, principals mentioned that their teachers appreciated the provision of targeted in-service for professional growth (mainly on aspects how to provide effective evaluation and feedback to students). However, there is divergence of these views with regard to the degree of participation in decision making around the school. In their interviews, principals seemed to believe that the more participation from the teachers, the better; indeed, school leaders, during their interviews, gave the impression that they believe that they are better and more democratic leaders if they require more participation on behalf of the teachers for decision making, thus, enhancing teachers' feedback opportunities.

From the quantitative results, however, it seems that teachers do not want (and probably do not expect) to be involved in every decision-making process nor do they consider this involvement as a means conducive to their professional enhancement or that this type of involvement results in more democratic governance at the school level. It seems that principals should be cautious about too much participation; probably, too much is as damaging as too little. This was particularly evident in Italy, where it seems that teachers are not willing to take part in participative forms

of school management and that the more the principals try to involve them, the more the teachers seem to react in a negative way (e.g., decreased commitment). This is probably a consequence of the Italian system of educational governance which favors a more centralized mode of decision making at the local/central educational authorities. This assumption on behalf of the teachers probably makes them assume that it is the principal's duty to administer and lead the school and not theirs. Therefore, the negativity expressed by school teachers towards the Participative Style in Italy is probably rooted in the (traditionally) centralized school administration of Italian schools. More discussion and explanations are provided in Chap. 6, where the Italian perspective is treated in more detail, by school principals themselves.

5.3.7   Student Expectations

Leadership style also reliably predicted Student Expectations. The regression model was again significant, accounting for 9.4 % of the dependent variable's variance. The leadership styles responsible for this effect were the Instructional and Structuring Styles. According to these findings, when we have an increase in the Instructional as well as in the Structuring Styles, Student Expectations increase as well. Indeed, it seems that when the Structuring Style of leadership is more emphasized at the school, there is more clarity about what to expect from students. In essence, through the Structuring as well as through the Instructional Leadership Styles, school leaders are able to provide guidance about what is expected, what the standards are, and, therefore, what everybody in the school ought to be doing. In short, it seems that when there is clarity of goals, rules, and regulations, then teachers feel clearer and safer about what to expect from their students and of themselves as teachers. It seems that the environment at the school level becomes more stable and conducive to learning. Teachers know what the objectives are and are able to clearly transmit them as student expectations. Moreover, when learning objectives also become clearer, then teachers know what to teach and students know what they need to learn and to what level of proficiency.

5.3.8   School Climate as a Composite Variable

Finally, we examined whether any of the leadership styles predicted school climate variables as a composite variable taken as a whole. The model was again significant, accounting for 31 % of the dependent variable's variance. Responsible for this effect were the Instructional, Structuring, and the Entrepreneurial Leadership Styles. According to these findings, when we have an increase in the Instructional as well as in the Structuring and the Entrepreneurial Styles, we have an increase in the School Climate taken as a whole.

From the quantitative results (i.e., the teachers' responses to the School Climate Variables Questionnaire), we can suggest that providing structure, which means clear rules and regulations that are consistently implemented, can help enhance teachers' expectations of their students by creating a climate which is conducive to teaching and learning. The way the Structuring Style is treated in this piece of work is that the school leader is concerned with the aspects of providing direction, clarity, and coordination to the school. Indeed, there is ample research which has shown that the principal's vision positively affects their instructional and strategic behavior (Kruger, Witziers, & Sleegers, 2007) and helps them focus on the goals as well as increases their use of innovative and professional teaching practices (Barnett & McCormick, 2004). The study of Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003) also indicates that the leadership responsibility of establishing standard procedures and routines in order to secure order and discipline is positively associated with an increase in student achievement. Finally, according to Pashiardis (1998), effective structuring leaders manage all school facilities effectively and supervise efficiently their maintenance to ensure clean, orderly, and safe buildings and grounds, thus enhancing the school's climate as a whole.

Even more so, when school principals exhibit their Instructional Style, it also helps increase the expectations for improved instructional practices at the school as well. This leadership style has a strong focus on the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning. According to Hallinger (2005), school principals lead through building a learning mission and aligning teaching and learning activities with the defined purposes. In addition, effective instructional leaders develop a climate of high expectations for teaching and learning (Hallinger, 2005; Nettles & Herrington, 2007) and engage in monitoring and evaluation activities (Waters et al., 2003). Finally, effective school leaders are constant stimulators of instructional innovation. According to Waters et al., this "instructional optimizer role" adopted by school leaders contributes to a further increase in student achievement, through the improvement of the school climate conditions as a whole.

5.4 The Intimate Relation of Leadership Styles and School Climate: A General Discussion

The results already presented shed some light on a number of issues related to the scope of the LISA project. First, from a methodological point of view, it is important to note that the central part of the initial Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework (the Leadership Radius) was strongly supported by the exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses that followed. More specifically, the initial five factors (*Instructional* Style, *Participative* Style, *Personnel Development* Style, *Entrepreneurial* Style, *Structuring* Style) clearly emerged in the Exploratory Factor Analysis, thus establishing the validity of the model, as described in Chap. 4. In addition, the model became even more parsimonious by keeping 35 out of the 48

items included in the Leadership Styles Questionnaire. In turn, the Confirmatory Factor Analysis showed an acceptable fit of this model to the data (χ^2 (532, N = 1,287) = 2,121,47, $\rho < .001$; CFI = .94; NNFI = .94; RMSEA = .049, CI.90 = .047 – .051), supporting directly our hypothesized theory of leadership styles, thus establishing the validity of the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework within the seven European countries participating in the LISA project.

Stemming from the above, we are now in a better position to establish relations between the principals' leadership styles and the school climate variables that were investigated.[2] The *School Climate Variables* composite was found to be predicted mainly by three of the leadership styles: the *Instructional*, the *Structuring*, and the *Entrepreneurial*. The *Instructional Style* seems to be a core aspect of leadership that promotes school conditions conducive to student learning. This is probably due to the very content of this style that concerns the leadership of teaching and learning at the school level. The *Structuring Style* provides a safe and orderly ground for the development of positive school conditions with a vision since clear expectations and procedures are communicated to teachers and students. Apparently, based on the teachers' responses, one can observe that the climate is improved at the school level if the school leader exercises primarily the Instructional and Structuring Styles; this finding makes good sense because it is through these leadership styles that school leaders encourage instructional experimentation and high expectations. At the same time, school leaders, through the Structuring Style, clearly delineate goals and objectives to be achieved and therefore assist teachers in improving their teaching practices by providing a vision and an aspiration with regard to where they want their schools to be at.

Moreover, the *Entrepreneurial Style* was found to influence, in a positive way, school conditions. As parents and the community are important stakeholders in school affairs, it seems that their involvement improves the school's functioning either through a mechanism of external accountability or through their intervention for continuous school improvement. Furthermore, it seems that the more Entrepreneurial the school leader is, the more improvement in school climate is found inside the school. This finding indicates that the more a leader invites "outsiders" (such as parents) inside the school, the more improvement there is in the teaching and learning climate of the school; this is probably because of a "felt" increase in pressure from the outside, with the result of improvement on the inside. We will proceed with a more detailed discussion of the three leadership styles and their relationship with the school climate, as it seems that these styles formulate the "irreducible minimum" when school leaders exercise their authority at the school level. It is therefore important to get into a more in-depth discussion about how the Instructional, Structuring, and Entrepreneurial Leadership Styles interact and operate at the school level in order to create the conditions for effective

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[2]Again, the reader should be cautioned that each participating country was represented by four schools each which do not allow us to talk about Europe at large; however, we might be leading towards a European perspective of certain leadership styles since these communalities are described as trends across seven different school systems.

teaching and learning to take place. At the same time, in this section, an effort is made to connect the findings of the LISA project with prior research.

5.4.1 The Instructional Style

As previously mentioned, *at the European* level (including all seven countries), it was found, as expected, that the *Instructional Style* constitutes a core dimension of leadership which is conducive to a healthy school climate and a smoother functioning of the school. Specifically, the *Instructional Style* predicted in a significant way each *individual* as well as the *composite of the School Variables* (i.e., Teacher Commitment, Teaching and Learning Practices, Student-Teacher Interactions, and Student Expectations, taken all together). The fact that the *Instructional* Style seems to be considered, the foundation for school leadership in all seven countries of our project is supported by the evidence gathered through the interviews process with the participating school leaders in the LISA project. For instance, during the personal interviews, English leaders mentioned that they use statistical analyses of students' results every year in order to set objectives to plan for improvement by highlighting areas of underperformance, incorporating them into the development plan for that year, and prioritizing funding for them. They further monitor teaching and learning through (1) lesson observations carried out across the school, (2) by conducting a parental survey, (3) through student forums, (4) by grading exercise books, and (5) by monitoring student reports and exam results. In a similar fashion, school leaders from Hungary and the Netherlands mentioned that when it comes to stimulating instructional innovations, "the pupil's knowledge brought from the outside environment is used and connected with what takes place in classrooms." Moreover, another Dutch principal stressed that "a connection is made between the education provided at the school and developments outside the school (especially other school sectors)," thus relating the reality of the outside world to the reality of the classroom. Similar comments were also made by the rest of the principals in the participating countries.

From the aforementioned, it can be observed that indeed the *Instructional Leadership* Style is present and very strongly evident in the schools which participated in the LISA project. This finding is further corroborated by its congruence with previous research that showed *Instructional Leadership* to be an essential constituent of effective school leadership (e.g., Dinham, 2005; Hallinger, 2005 Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). Therefore, we can suggest (albeit with the limitations of our small sample) that *Instructional Leadership* is of great importance to the European countries participating in this project and that it is a necessary component of European school leadership taken as a whole. Indeed, special attention should probably be granted to this leadership style since it comprises practices and behaviors that are directly related to a school's core mission, which is teaching and learning.

What is of particular importance is the fact that the *Instructional Leadership* Style is evident in all seven countries, irrespective of context. That is, whether the

country's educational system is more centralized or whether there are evaluation and accountability mechanisms, the Instructional Style is present. Apparently, what seems to matter to principals is the fact that the *Instructional Leadership* Style is right at the heart of a school, and therefore, they apply and practice it irrespective of outside forces in place. More specifically, in almost all of the countries participating in the LISA project, the *Instructional Leadership Style* predicted in a positive way *the school climate* variable of *Evaluation and Feedback*. This is probably because the *Instructional Leadership Style* includes aspects of monitoring instructional outcomes which seem to be reflected on the general practices of evaluation and feedback at the school level. Through this *Evaluation and Feedback*, teachers are probably better able to gauge their performance and act accordingly or modify their teaching behaviors so that their students become more successful. Moreover, we should point to the fact that the *Instructional Leadership Style* is also concerned with the provision of instructional guidance to teachers and their encouragement towards experimentation with new teaching methods and can, therefore, be linked to *Professional Development* in terms of the provision of useful instructional feedback for their teachers' further growth and development with regard to teaching and learning practices.

Linked with the above, the *Instructional Leadership Style* also predicted in a positive way the variable *Teaching and Learning Practices*. As mentioned previously, the *Instructional Leadership Style* is related to the provision of instructional direction to teachers as well as setting high expectations and monitoring and evaluating students and teachers and stimulating instructional innovation. All of these activities are likely to be reflected in the teachers' *Teaching and Learning Practices*. If the principal conveys to the teachers his/her expectations regarding the pedagogical aspects of their work, then teachers will be more likely and encouraged to act in a way that promotes these expectations for the benefit of their students.

Furthermore, among the two styles which appear most frequently to predict *Professional Development* was the *Instructional Leadership Style*. Moreover, *Student-Teacher Interactions* were found to be influenced mainly by the *Instructional Leadership Style*. The specific variable constitutes an aspect of the learning environment that teachers need to create in order for effective teaching and learning to take place. The *Instructional Leadership Style* might include this dimension in the form of feedback provided to teachers and hence the positive effect on *Student-Teacher Interactions*.

5.4.2   The Structuring Style

Apart from the *Instructional Leadership Style*, the findings showed that the *Structuring Style* can predict in a significant way most of the *School Climate Variables* (i.e., *Teacher Commitment*, *Teaching and Learning Practices*, *Student-Teacher Interactions*, and *Student Expectations*) including the composite *School Climate Variables*. This probably indicates that the principals' behavior of providing

direction and coordination within the school can further promote the effectiveness of school operations. The finding that the *Structuring Leadership* Style was at the center of every school leader's behavior is also in accordance with previous research. For instance, according to Waters et al. (2003), effective school leaders establish standard procedures and routines in order to secure discipline and order in their schools. Moreover, effective principals ensure that school rules are uniformly observed by all students. These aspects of leadership were also found to be important for the seven European countries participating in the project. More importantly, with regard to *Teacher Commitment*, the leadership style that positively predicts this variable in most of the countries is the *Structuring Style*. This can be interpreted in that the provision of clear rules and procedures, as well as clear expectations, creates a positive and orderly atmosphere for teachers to work in. Teachers have a clearer understanding of what is expected from them and expend their efforts towards the accomplishment of the school goals, as opposed to dealing with disruptive student behavior. On the other hand, although previous research (e.g., Leithwood & Mascall, 2008) highlights the effect of participative forms of leadership on Teacher Commitment, this was not the case for the teachers and principals of the European countries participating in the project. In fact, teachers in the LISA project seem to become more committed to their school when there is clarity of vision and mission; moreover, teachers seem to be more committed when school leaders are concerned with establishing and following clear rules and having a distinct division of roles and responsibilities among staff – in short, having safe and orderly conditions at the school with established routines probably makes the European teachers who participated in the LISA project feel more committed to their school.

5.4.3 The Entrepreneurial Style

Parental Involvement was found in most cases to be explained in a positive way by the *Entrepreneurial Leadership Style*. This finding may be corroborated by the principals' actions that promote the creation and fostering of a close and constructive cooperation with the external community. The parents are among those groups of external stakeholders that principals keep frequent communication with. The direct result of this contact is to have an active involvement of the parents in school affairs. Another interpretation about the reasons that the Entrepreneurial Style seems to be so important for the successful functioning of the school could be that organizations and enterprises from the community put pressure on the school for higher student outcomes, which the school tries to reach through the enhanced engagement of parents in their children's learning. Similarly, Harris and Chapman (2002) concluded that school principals who had implemented successful school improvement programs had broken down the barriers between the school and the community and sought to engage parents in school life. Furthermore, the variable of

Student Expectations was most often found to be predicted by the *Entrepreneurial Leadership Style*, either positively or negatively. In the case of a positive prediction, we can argue that the close contact of the principal with the community and the parents can raise the expectations that teachers have for their students. This can be achieved through pressure enacted by the parents for their children's learning as well as through the community's expectations of the future human capital who will work for its further development. In the case of a negative prediction, it seems that *Student Expectations* are lower in countries where the *Entrepreneurial Style* is more frequently enacted by the principal. This might be due to the fact that the school leader is probably spending more time looking outside the school than monitoring what is going on inside the school. In any case, what these findings probably tell us is that this specific leadership style is rather contextual and its application should be more closely connected with regard to the external (and more immediate) environment that the schools are operating in.

5.5   Concluding Remarks with Regard to the "Magic Triangle" (Instructional, Structuring, Entrepreneurial Styles)

In conclusion, within their own cultural and governance structural constraints, principals in the seven participating countries in the LISA project find a way (through the application of different leadership styles) to promote aspects central to the school climate and the smooth functioning of their schools, thus influencing student achievement in an important, albeit indirect way. Apart from the *Instructional Leadership Style* which forms the baseline of effective school leadership across Europe, it is becoming increasingly more evident that there is no best cocktail mix of leadership styles which can predict school climate variables. This study has just provided some additional evidence to the largely held assumption that when it comes to leadership, the "one-size-fits-all" approach does not (and probably should not) work. However, what also seems to be true is that the *Instructional*, *Structuring*, and *Entrepreneurial Styles* of leadership, or what can be called the "Magic Triangle," are essential components of this "leadership cocktail mix" irrespective of context. In turn, what also seems to be true is that the other two remaining leadership styles from the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework, *the Participative* and *Personnel Development Styles*, are more situational and contextual in nature. In essence, it seems that we have some of the ingredients in order for school leaders to become more successful in their schools, but we do not have the right dosage. As mentioned elsewhere in this book, the right dosage or amount of each leadership style will probably remain the personal secret of every effective school leader, who creates it bearing in mind the context (as described in this piece of research), as well as his/her own moral purpose.

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Chapter 6
An Italian Perspective

Antonino Petrolino and Antonello Giannelli

6.1   Context of the School System

Italy was one of the seven countries participating in the LISA project through some of its schools, principals, and teachers. The main goal of this chapter is to provide a broad description of the Italian education system, its current challenges, and then conclude with some implications and suggestions, as a result of the participation of the Italian schools and principals in this research project.

6.1.1   General Description of the Italian School System

The Italian school system used to be a very centralized one. Initially, it was shaped very much like the French one, following a hierarchical and bureaucratic model. For instance, the Ministry of Education used to issue, every year, several hundreds of "circular letters" in order to regulate all kinds of school activities. This was not a peculiarity of schools: it was indeed the way in which the entire public governance was regulated. However, since the late 1990s, things have been slightly changing and many aspects of the public services (education, health, road maintenance, and so on) have been passed on to local authorities (regions, but also provinces and municipalities).

With regard to education, this process is still at a very early stage. No real power has been transferred to local authorities: they continue to deal only with buildings, maintenance, transportation, meals, and so on. On the other hand, schools are formally given a wide range of autonomy while, at the same time, they are bound by

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an increasing number of monitoring and reporting tasks and they still receive detailed instructions for every activity. This situation ends up in an enduring bureaucratic regulation of the system: in addition, the lack of financial resources puts schools in a condition of increasing dependence on the Ministry.

In general terms, the pattern of management can be defined as "input driven": many detailed instructions prior to doing, limited, or non-existent verifications afterwards. There is no external evaluation of schools or of teachers. Students' achievements have been appraised through external tests only since 2009.

6.1.2   The Three Main Challenges Which the Italian School System Currently Faces

The three main challenges which the Italian school system currently faces are:

(a) The passage from a "knowledge based" teaching to a "competence/skill centered" learning. Many teachers still act as "transmitters" of notions, whereas the demand from the field is rather for "active students," able to develop their own learning with some greater degree of autonomy.
(b) A second major challenge concerns the growing age of many teachers. A great majority is "over 50" and an increasing number is "over 60." Since the global financial crisis which obliged the government to raise the retirement age, this situation became even more critical.
(c) The lack of financial resources that forces schools to refocus the range of their activities is a third major challenge. The standard curriculum continues to be delivered: but there is less and less possibility for tailored-to-the-needs teaching, for special education, for remedial strategies, for promoting excellence, and so on.

At this point, it is important to briefly describe the regulatory framework that governs the roles and responsibilities of school leaders. The formal definition of school leaders' role is found in a single law article: number 25 of the Legislative Decree (from now on: LD) n. 165, March 30, 2001. In addition to that, there are many other laws and bylaws regulating school activities that refer to the school leader tasks. All of them are in effect, independent from each other and, sometimes, even overlapping with each other. The school leader is held responsible for all aspects of general laws and decrees concerning trade unions, work regulation, safety and health, privacy, purchase of goods (under public rules), contracts, and so on.

The conceptual framework of a school leader's role can only be defined by law. When the need for change or updating arises, the Ministry usually consults trade unions, universities, and the employers' associations, in order to obtain suggestions. But the final decision is up to the Parliament, since the school principal legally represents the State's authority in the field of education.

6.2   Context Within Which Schools Operate

6.2.1   The Governance Structure of Schools

In each Italian school the balance of powers between the various actors is formally regulated in the same way, on the basis of legislative rules. It is true that the situation underneath may vary quite a lot, depending on local circumstances. But this is a matter of fact, not the legal framework. For example, the *school principal* is chosen by the Ministry of Education, through its Regional Director, among those having passed a national competitive exam, based on many subjects (law, administration, but also pedagogical issues, communication skills, ICT, and more). Neither the teachers nor the School Board are consulted about the choice of school principals. He/she is the legal representative of the school, manages all its resources, and is accountable for the respect of all the laws and regulations within the school. Among the principal's tasks are all the organizational issues (including teachers' schedules, students' timetables and exams). The school principal is also entitled to sign contracts and external obligations, to administer the budget, and to negotiate with internal and external unions' representatives.

The *School Board* (consiglio di istituto) is composed of 18 members, all of them elected (8 teachers, 2 clerical staff, 8 parents [however, in upper secondary school, 4 parents plus 4 students] – LD n. 297, April 16, 1994, article 8.1). In addition, the school principal is a member ex officio. There is no representative at all from local authority or other stakeholders. This means that the school governing body predominantly represents internal interests. It is chaired by one of the parents' representatives, elected by all the members and is renewed every 3 years. The School Board sets the school policies, adopts the budget and the final accounts, and decides about general issues (for instance, changes in lessons timetable, whether lessons are given during 5 or 6 days per week, participation of students in external activities). It also formally has the final voice concerning the school project, due to the Presidential Decree (from now on: PD) March 8, 1999, n.275, article 3 but, in practice, the School Board's powers are fewer than it initially seems, due to technical incompetence of its members.

In fact, there is no preparation for being a member of the board: all of them are elected (parents elect parents, teachers elect teachers, and so on). Only the school principal is automatically a member and has specialized knowledge and skills. Because of this situation, the board members are not prepared enough for deciding on almost any of the issues they have to deal with. In consequence, they vote according to the interests of their electors. When it comes to deciding about financial matters, they generally follow the school principal's advice; when they have to deal with pedagogical-/instructional-related issues, it is up to the teachers to pave the way.

The *Teachers' Assembly* (Collegio dei Docenti) is composed of all the teachers working at the school at a given moment, including the temporary ones. It is the most powerful body, since it decides about all the core business: subject matter contents to be delivered, teaching methods, criteria for assessing pupils, projects to

be carried on. It also draws the entire school project, although this one is formally adopted by the School Board (which is not entitled to change it). The assembly is chaired by the school principal: it meets 4–5 times per school year. Between the plenary sessions, decisions are normally taken by smaller work groups, depending on the internal organization of the school (LD n. 297, April 16, 1994, article 7).

The *Class Council* (consiglio di classe) is composed of all the teachers providing lessons in that form plus 4 parents' representatives (in upper secondary schools: 2 parents +2 students, elected). It is a consultative body, which has no decisional powers: it is meant to give advice and make proposals to the other bodies. It is chaired by the school principal, who usually delegates this function to one of its teacher members. The most important task of this council is the formal assessment of the students, two or three times per school year. When deciding about this issue, it does not include the external representatives. The final assessment also decides whether each student is allowed to proceed to the next grade or has to be retained one more year at the same level (LD n. 297, April 16, 1994, article 5).

Local authorities have no direct impact in ruling the schools. Counties (province) and municipalities (Comuni) only provide services, such as buildings, heating, electricity, maintenance, school meals, and transportation. Regions decide about the actual duration of the school year (minimum 200 school days, usually around 210), the beginning date, and some local holidays. They also decide where to locate schools and what kinds of secondary schools streams to have within their territory (LD n. 112, March 31, 1998, articles 138-9).

The structure described in this section is not dependent on any context characteristics like primary or secondary school, size, type, location, or other variables. Apart from having or not students elected in the different boards and councils (only upper secondary schools have them), there is no other significant difference in the balance of powers. Even the choice of the school principal is not related to the type and level of the school.

6.3 Leadership Roles and Functions with Regard to New School Policies

6.3.1 School Autonomy

School autonomy is not really implemented yet in Italian schools. Schools in general are really able to make only minor decisions, mostly about organizational and bureaucratic details. The general instructional framework (subjects, how many hours of lessons are to be given for each of them, instructional goals, syllabi, rules for assessing students, exams, and so on) is still decided by the Ministry for all the schools. Moreover, the Ministry continues to deliver hundreds of "circular letters" every year, even on matters that the formal regulations attribute to school autonomy. It is quite common that these circular letters are issued "in order to ensure coherence and uniformity of choice among schools," that is, the exact opposite of autonomy. From a legal point of view, this type of "micromanagement" is a result of the fact

that schools are "public entities," which are bound by the Italian Constitution to be neutral and to ensure "equality of treatment" for all citizens. In consequence, they are autonomous according to the law, but they are obliged, again according to the law, to behave in the same way and to take similar decisions, in order not to cause inequality in students' social and personal rights.

In fact, school autonomy – after having been introduced in the late 1990s and having evolved for some years – has been narrowing in the last 5 years. Usually, it is normal that more autonomy implies more external accountability: what makes the situation in Italy quite unique is that there is more and more accountability while having less and less autonomy. In fact, this is a unique Italian paradox. Given this context, it is difficult to say if the autonomy of schools has really changed the way in which they function. The most visible change, in the day-to-day activities, consists in the increasing number of directives received, the continuous demand for reports and monitoring activities, and the ongoing scarcity of financial and structural resources. There is a gap between the formal recognition of a status of legal autonomy and the reality of a growing bureaucratic control. Schools are asked to be accountable for the autonomy they are formally given, not for the one they really have.

As a result of the above and despite the fact that decentralization has not really been realized, the increased demand for accountability has shifted the balance of the principal's working time towards more administrative tasks. A school principal is obliged to spend a great part of his/her work on reports, analysis, forms to be filled in, negotiations with unions and other social partners, and various legal and financial controversies. Therefore, there is not enough time left in order to perform educational and instructional tasks.

Do school leaders feel prepared for their role? Generally speaking, the fields in which a majority of school principals experience problems are those where a higher level of technical mastery is required, such as accounting, labor disputes and relations with the unions, safety and health in the premises, and privacy issues. All these matters are regulated in the schools according to the same rules which are in force within companies. However, companies have the ability to hire lawyers and consultants, whereas schools are not allowed to do so. The school principal is given – during his/her training period – some information on these issues, but this cannot replace a degree in law and administration.

Although one cannot really claim that the increasing complexity of the role is the result of a larger degree of school autonomy (not in Italy, at least), it is true that this is a major challenge, both at the governmental as well as at the professional level. In fact, the training period for principals *after* the recruiting exam is too short and too concentrated for it to be effective. It would probably be preferable that those willing to become school principals follow specific courses, much like those delivered by the National College for School Leadership in the UK. Such courses should be flexible, both in duration and in content, in order to take into account the needs of each candidate: but the completion of a kind of *degree in school management* should be a preconditioned before applying for the recruiting exam. Of course, initial training is vital but not sufficient. Since the job profile is unceasingly changing, additional opportunities for continued professional development should be supplied during the entire working life of a school principal. This could

be undertaken both by some specific training centers and through professional associations. The latter ones are already active in this field, whereas the Ministry does not really care much about "its own" school principals once they are recruited.

6.3.2   Accountability and Evaluation

Italian schools have been bound to an increasing level of accountability in the past 10 years. But what schools have to face is primarily *administrative accountability*: i.e., schools are accountable about finance, budgets, providing statistical information, providing quantitative indicators, administrative procedures, labor negotiations, and so on. Furthermore, they are accountable only to the Ministry (or to be more precise, to the Ministries), not to parents, local authorities, or other stakeholders.

On the other hand, evaluation is still at its infancy within the Italian system. Since 2004, the National Agency for the Evaluation of the School System (the so-called INVALSI) has been created (LD n. 286, November 19, 2004, article 1). However, it spent a great amount of time in order to define its internal organizational structure and then its mission. Moreover, one must bear in mind that this is not an independent Board: it rather is a ministerial branch. At the moment, there is no provision for evaluating neither the system in its entirety nor the schools or the personnel. INVALSI's mission is to explore the learning outcomes of students. Each student will be tested, in Italian and Mathematics, at the end of every other school year during his/her entire compulsory education, from 6 to 16. It is under debate whether to test them also in Sciences, at least after the primary school. This test program has been launched in 2009 (Ministerial Directive n. 76, August 6, 2009).

INVALSI carries out its tasks through two different procedures: the first one is addressed to all the students as mentioned before. The tests are administered by the class teachers, evaluated locally on the basis of a given frame and then sent to INVALSI, to be analyzed. The second one is based on a sample of students, drawn to be statistically representative of the population. In this case the tests are administered by external researchers, trained for the job. This second survey is used as a benchmark.

6.3.3   Changes in Accountability and Evaluation Which Had an Impact on the School Leader's Role(s) and Function(s)

As indicated at the beginning of this section, in Italy there is only one type of evaluation, which focuses on the learning results of students. This evaluation is at a very early stage and its results are still not known: hence it is not possible to say how it may have affected any changes in the school. The only remark that has been made is that, in some schools, teachers were against the tests, fearing that their results could end up in some kind of hidden and unfair evaluation of their professional performance.

Concerning accountability, the trend is towards an increasing number of procedures, oriented almost exclusively to administrative and financial aspects. The increasing pressure for formal accountability did have an impact on the role and functions of many school leaders. They are led to pay more and more attention to the administrative and legal side of their job, whereas the instructional dimension of it receives less time and energies. It is relatively rare that a school principal can visit a class; in large schools he/she may also not know personally all his/her teachers. Generally speaking, education is no longer the core business or, at least, the main concern of the school leader.

The new measures have been introduced during the last 5 years, normally through the annual finance law, in order to reduce costs and to enhance effectiveness in the public sector. School leaders, as the rest of the public managers, had to follow. They receive instructions under the form of guidelines, directives, and various papers, but they are not really trained for the new tasks. In essence, they have to self-train. In any case, a subsidiary form of training has been provided by their professional associations, like ANP (National Association of Principals).

This lack of training represents a real problem. One might say that more (and more targeted) training is the solution. This is true, in the sense that now there is hardly any training. But, the problem mostly lies elsewhere: it has to do with the right balance between the different aspects and demands of a principals' job. Recently, its managerial and administrative side has been too much overstressed, whereas the educational and instructional mission has not been supported enough. This trend is fostered by two convergent, yet independent, pressures: the already mentioned legislative demand for more control over public spending and the influence from the teachers' unions. These ones are traditionally against the fact that school principals can interfere with the teaching activities: therefore, they are favorably disposed towards this shift in the principals' job balance. The more the principal has to deal with finances and managing issues, the less time there will be to spend looking after the teachers' job.

If one had to indicate a single necessary precondition in order to make school principals more effective in their work, one would say that a school principal should receive more competent support for the legal and administrative aspects of his/her work. More specifically, a member of the staff should be placed in charge for those issues, whose activity would only be supervised by the principal or the possibility (and the budget) to hire professional consultants when needed. Not only could these solutions provide the principal with more time to spend on students and teachers, but they could also ensure that the delegated tasks are carried out in a more competent way.

6.3.4   School Choice and Voice

Until the late 1970s, school choice was not granted to parents. They had to send their children to the school provided for them (the "zip code system"). This measure was the consequence of the boom in school demand after World War II, and it was

also legally justified with the central control that the Ministry was supposed to ensure over the quality of schools. If schools are all equivalent, why give parents the right of choice? Later on, views changed. Nowadays, there is no legal restriction concerning school choice, except when a school cannot receive all the students wishing to attend it. In this case, priority is given according to the proximity of a student's livelihood. Of course, this freedom of choice is more or less real, according to the local situation: if the family lives in a small town, where only one school exists (or one of each type), its choice is very limited.

Concerning voice, parents are legally given voice in all the school councils, except the Teachers' Assembly (Collegio dei Docenti – *see above*). This means that they can elect some representatives, who take part in the sessions and have the right to vote. But, since they are always a minority, it is very rare that their advice can prevail. Moreover, they are generally not competent to discuss technical or pedagogical matters with the teachers. In practice, their role is mostly that of spokespersons for the other parents. They are heard, they are informed, they report, and that's all.

With regard to what is called "pact of co-responsibility," this is a law provision, first introduced in 2007 (LD n. 235, November 21, 2007, article 3), with the aim of creating a new relationship of mutual trust between school and families. All the schools have to elaborate this document, which should be signed by both parts: the school principal and the students' parents (or the adult student). Its effectiveness is very questionable, since the subscription is mandatory for the school, while it remains optional for the parents. In consequence, sometimes it represents just another sheet of paper with no importance, whereas in other cases it really proves to be a good basis for better mutual understanding.

Furthermore, with regard to the extent to which parents can choose the school for their child and voice out their objections, once again the answer largely depends on the context. In large cities, where parents can choose among a number of schools, the freedom of choice is a powerful tool. Although school funding is not automatically depended on the number of students, when a school shrinks teachers lose their position. They are not really fired, but they may have to move to another school, sometimes far away from their home. In consequence, competition among schools is very strong and this, indirectly, provides parents a greater power of voice. Their advice has a different influence when they can take their children and move them to a more "welcoming" school. And parents have the right to ask for a change of school even during the school year.

Moreover, the legal aspects of parents' choice and voice have not changed very much during the last 30 years. Generally speaking, the situation can now be considered quite stable. A possible exception exists with regard to the schools where a considerable number of immigrant students from foreign and remote countries have arrived in the last few years. This may represent a major challenge: not only because of their special needs (many of them do not understand the Italian language), but also of (sometimes) critical health and safety concerns. There are some other issues, depending on cultural factors, that may require special attention. For instance, immigrants from certain countries are not ready to

accept to obey a woman, even when she is the school principal. Since problems like this have their origin deeply rooted in religious and community beliefs, one should be especially careful when dealing with such issues. As a result, among the skills that school principals must have nowadays is intercultural awareness, which becomes more and more important and should be part of their training program. On the other hand, the possibility of having organizational support to deal with the practical aspects (interpreters, medical aid, social workers) could be of great help as well.

6.4 A Synthesis of the Context of the School (School Autonomy, Accountability and Evaluation, and School Choice and Voice)

School autonomy has proven itself to be a formidable tool for innovation (despite the fact that it has not yet been fully assimilated by the education system), but its positive effects have been greatly diminished by the lack of real management tools which might allow principals to improve the learning outcomes of their schools and to be accountable for their general effectiveness. The concept of leadership itself that used to be synonymous with steering and managing activities has changed in the day-to-day practice of many, if not most, school principals, whose expectations were oriented towards a more pedagogic and generic vision of the role. Although they were given the formal title of school principal, they remained nevertheless deeply influenced by their previous professional status and culture as teachers. In addition, the survival of forms of bureaucratic red tape, inherited from the old centralized system, and resistances from the unions have further compromised the launch of a really autonomous regime. For instance, all the representative bodies within the school date back to the early 1970s, when the system was still heavily centralized. As a consequence, they are no longer fit for supporting the differentiated needs that principals and teachers have to face today.

When autonomy was first introduced in the system, all the existing school heads were "promoted" to principals ("dirigente"), after a 300-h training course, but without any final check about their attitudes and expectations. Moreover, they did not receive (neither at the beginning nor later on) any real support in order to deeply understand the nature of the new challenges they had to face. Once in the field, they also had to deal with various kinds of resistance, both from the *center* (which was happy to decentralize tasks of an administrative or bureaucratic nature, but was not willing to delegate decision-making powers) and from the *base*, which tended to take out its frustrations on the nearest identifiable representative of the employer, i.e., the school principal.

Therefore, it becomes clear that a policy which aims to construct a lightweight State, giving birth to a system of autonomy and subsidiarity, in order to better meet local needs and requirements, cannot confine itself at (praiseworthy) declarations of intent, but must empower the autonomous institutions by supplying them

with adequate instruments (tools, economic and human resources), in order to make the service efficient and effective. There has been no response to the need – which the school principals themselves have underlined – for a system of evaluation to check up on their activity in order to improve it, and as a second step for an incentive mechanism based on merit.

Schools are often seen as a sounding board of social dysfunctions: they have to cope with all the existing variances of adolescent behavior, including antisocial attitudes, alcohol and drug abuse, lack of interest in studying, dropping out, bullying, and so on. Despite that, they are at the same time held responsible for the disappointing results of the learning outcomes. It would then be appropriate that political priorities were inspired by the will to support the activity of schools with adequate resources, even while taking into account measures to rationalize costs.

6.5 Context Within the Schools

6.5.1 Conceptualizing School Leadership

When it comes to "conceptualizing" school leadership, it must be preliminarily defined from which point of view one looks into leadership; the first and necessary one is the legal definition. As the entire school system in Italy is tightly regulated by several national laws, it is unavoidable to refer to them in order to get a deeper insight into school leadership's meaning and functions. In particular, one has at least to consider both the LD n. 165, March 30, 2001, article 25 and the older LD n. 297, April 16, 1994, article 396. Of course, since very many law provisions *indirectly* concur to define and model the leadership's role, it is impossible here to list all of them. It will be sufficient to recall that:

1. A school principal legally represents his/her school which, according to the law, is an autonomous public body.
2. He/she can freely choose his/her staff, in that sense that he can delegate tasks to some teachers; but it is to be borne in mind that teachers cannot be drawn away from their teaching duties (with very few exceptions). This system of delegated tasks can (in principle) give rise to a kind of distributed leadership.
3. He/she is, in theory, a true executive director, with full powers to decide how to use financial resources, equipment, and human resources; but
4. Those powers are rather weakened through a complex concoction of other laws and national collective labor agreements provisions; e.g., the budget must undergo a prior approval by the School Board (usually under teachers' control); usage of overtime has to be negotiated to a certain extent with schools' trade unions; financial resources assigned by the national Ministry of Education are always experiencing more severe cuts and make it more and more difficult to cope with difficulties like teachers' absence.

Now let us consider some kind of "social" definition of school leadership: it should be stressed that the most famous and widespread surname attached to the principals is, by far, "preside-manager." This definition is affected by a somewhat unconfident mood, since it refers to a person who thinks, plans, and acts like a manager in a private company, although the schools are public bodies. It unveils a negative connotation since many people, and most school people, believe that, at least in schools, the managing power should not be left in only one person's hands but rather shared among several persons.

Such a negative vision appears nonetheless incoherent with the exigencies of effectiveness, of ensuring respect of laws and regulations among the school personnel, and of intervening promptly when requested by unhappy circumstances. In those occasions, the principal is frequently urged by several people (students, teachers, parents) to do things hardly accepted by them in different, more usual, situations.

This incoherent behavior probably stems from the general perception of the principal as the sole school leader. Even though this is true with reference to the existing strict regulations, it must be considered that leadership, in practice, is often distributed among the principal and other school professionals: a vice principal can sometimes play a strong role; other principals' assistants may as well be relevant to students' and parents' eyes. This is mainly due to the principal's frequent delegation to those persons of some of his/her duties in the public relations area.

6.5.2   Main Challenges Currently Faced by School Leadership in Italy

All Western countries are experiencing deep modifications in their social systems, due to the increasing presence of migrants, to the always more demanding requests of the job market, to the increasing exigencies of effective public services, also in connection with the implementation of the subsidiarity principle, etc. Among the many difficulties and challenges that this continuously changing situation is raising, in reference to the school leadership responsibilities, it is worth mentioning the following three:

- Increasing complexity of schools as organizations
- Lack of standards in education
- Lack of control onto the hiring of teaching personnel

The subject of the increasing complexity of school management has at least two different roots: the first one is the large administrative decentralization occurring during the last decade, which has turned out in a heavy overload of tasks to be accomplished by schools. The second one is the higher level of the requested school service, including more sophisticated pedagogical approaches, based onto personalized teaching and new technologies, a better accountability and transparency

of administrative activity, needing a stronger preparation of personnel other than teachers, and a smart usage of new technologies for administrative activities.

Since so many aspects of school activities (including the overload of administrative tasks and the choice of teachers) are centrally controlled, it would seem obvious that a good in-service training should be provided by the Ministry of Education, for school principals to stay up-to-date with all those issues.[1] Unfortunately, no evidence of such training exists, with very rare exceptions across the country, and this leaves the school leaders alone against the huge amount of new competences to acquire. At this point, it should be stressed that an increasing number of administrative nonfulfillments turn out now into big fines charged *personally* to the school principal.

As for the second issue, lack of standards in education, it should be considered that the Italian school system does not know any standard, with reference to students' assessment and evaluation. Some effort is being devoted to the introduction of the European Qualifications Framework, aiming at recognizing greater relevance to competences than to notions, but the situation is by far unsatisfactory. The unavailability of standards prevents schools from being evaluated, thereby making it impossible to reward the best ones and to identify the worse in order to improve their performance. School leaders too can hardly be evaluated; in particular, it is impossible to identify and reward the best ones among them, since any form of social accountability should probably rely on the school's academic results. Such a situation also implies, in turn, that teachers' performance cannot be evaluated. It is therefore impossible, in principle, to distinguish good from bad teachers, on the basis of objective data. Good reputation among the stakeholders is the only available award, but it cannot carry any administrative consequence.

Coming now to the third challenge, lack of control onto the hiring process, it is in some way connected to the previous one. If good teachers cannot be distinguished from the others, keeping the system healthy would require at least that school leaders be given a meaningful role in hiring qualified teachers. Monitoring and assessment of teachers' qualifications, as well as any decision in order to finalize their hiring, should be left to some internal committee, chaired by the principal. The present day situation is highly irrational, since teachers are hired through public examinations, with no role for the schools where they will serve. This implies that there is no evaluation of teachers' motivation to do their job, in a specific school, but they are rather examined paying only attention to the knowledge of the subject matter they will teach. Moreover, the most recent of these examinations took place 10 years ago, and teachers are still enrolled based on the results of those exams. Maybe, at that time they were well prepared and even highly motivated, but it is questionable whether they maintain those attitudes after such a long delay in being employed.

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[1] Italy, having a highly centralized education system, depends heavily on central authorities to provide necessary staff in-service training and other professional growth experiences to principals and teachers.

6.6 The LISA Findings and Leadership Styles in Italy

A leadership style is defined as the way a leader plays his/her role in order to achieve the assigned goals. It does not consist of mere or formal attribution of powers, but it rather leans on some amount of charm, more or less intentionally used by the leader to influence other people and to get more commitment from them. According to several authors – Pashiardis (2004), Hallinger (2000), Leithwood, Jantzi, and Fernandez (1994), Bolman and Deal (1991), Youngs and King (2002), and Printy (2008) – there are certain important leadership styles that have been identified (though not everybody uses the same terminology), which school leaders utilize in their schools and deal with teaching and learning, professional growth of teachers, school climate, organization of resources, etc. More specifically though, for this piece of research, Pashiardis and Brauckmann (2008) offered the following leadership styles: structuring, instructional, participative, personnel development, and entrepreneurial. It should be borne in mind quite clearly that social sciences do not allow sharp definitions and distinctions among different categories and that some overlapping among them is unavoidable.

Using a particular leadership style would be a conscious choice but, nonetheless, it has much to do with personal inclinations. A school principal able to use only one style is a "poor" professional, in the sense that he/she will be obliged to make use of only one "tool" for many different situations. A good professional, on the contrary, is someone able to act differently according to different contexts. Ideally, he/she should be able to master all five leadership styles and to shift among them. In that sense, there is another, well known, metastyle, which should be mentioned: the situational leadership (Hersey & Blanchard, 1988, among others).

The LISA project's main goal was to find out if, and to what extent, the leadership style conceptualization has to do with the school principal's daily life in the participating countries. The research has also allowed to distinguish among the different styles on the basis of a quantitative approach. Italy's participation in the project was entrusted to four high schools of three different kinds (two Lyceums, one Technical, and one Vocational school), belonging to four different geographical areas: Northwest, Northeast, Center, and South.

LISA results for leadership styles are summarized in Table 4 of the Brauckmann and Pashiardis (2011) paper, which is also the main scientific reference for the remaining of this chapter. The Italian situation, compared to all LISA schools, is reported in the following Table 6.1:

The analysis shows to what extent the several styles are adopted in Italy and allows for a quick comparison to the other participating European countries. With the only exception of the personnel development style (to be discussed later in further detail), the practice of the different leadership styles in Italy is quite similar to what happens in the LISA sample as a whole.

Table 6.1 Italian leadership styles comparisons

	Italy	All countries
Instructional	3.51	3.59
Participative	3.52	3.57
Personnel development	3.34	3.57
Entrepreneurial	3.81	3.80
Structuring	3.65	3.68

6.6.1 Structuring Leadership Style

The structuring style mainly concerns the aspects of organization and coordination. It can be fruitfully used in situations where rules, roles, and functions are blurred or have not even been set.

Such a scenario, in Italy, frequently occurs in schools that have not focused onto organizational issues for years. In those cases, a clear rule setting could even be seen as an increased level of bureaucracy, as any attempt to suddenly regulate disordered environments is likely to turn out in arising difficulties. In fact, when people are not acquainted to the respect of rules, they are hardly capable of seeing the medium- or long-term advantage of a better organizational climate. As seen from students and families' side, a poorly organized school is obviously unsatisfactory, and this is of the utmost evidence when one considers, as an example, the discipline enforcing issue: if regulations were ambiguous, penalties could be given without liability or, vice versa, misconducts could be left unpunished.

The structuring style is more conveniently implemented by asking all individuals to participate in the task of rule setting, by means of brainstorming sessions and through a progressive identification of sensible proposals to improve the organization. The principal can play a very effective role during the subprocess of proposals identification. The proposals have to be finally adopted, through democratic decisions, by the two main school administrative bodies, the School Board and the Teachers' Assembly.

LISA data also support the idea that the Italian agreement of the structuring style is quite similar to what occurs across all the participant countries, as the total average takes on the value of 3.68. It can also be observed that, apart from Hungary and Slovenia, whose factor values rank at the top throughout the whole project, and from Germany which does not exhibit much appraisal of this style, the other countries show very similar results. This provides some evidence for Italy's school system being comparable to those of the Netherlands, Norway, and the UK, as far as the structuring style is concerned (Brauckmann & Pashiardis, 2011).

6.6.2 Instructional Leadership Style

This style, also known as the pedagogical style, is focused on the teaching practices and aims at improving the quality of teaching/learning. According to Hallinger (2000), its goal is both defining a mission for the school, managing curriculum and

instruction, and promoting a learning climate favorable for student learning. An ideal scenario in which this style can be useful is offered by a school where, for some years, poor efforts have been devoted to increase the quality of teaching and/ or little attention has been paid to what students were really learning. This latter aspect is unfortunately very frequent in Italy, since any systematic assessment of students' achievements, at the national level, is still to come into practice. It must also be observed that, in the end, focusing on the teaching is definitely much easier than ensuring an effective and meaningful learning.

Usage of this style is particularly urgent when student achievements are low, as a satisfactory level of learning would be the "core business" in any school. In situations where effective teachers experience good practices, principals usually feel that it is worth prompting those teachers to diffuse their expertise among other (less able) colleagues. If good teaching examples are not available, the question is harder to face and requires careful identification and planning of professional development activities for teachers. As such activities can be expensive, schools may conveniently agree to coordinate and provide staff development together, in order to pursue economies of scale. Such a procedure is encouraged by the Italian law provisions on school autonomy, but the Ministry's financing is usually so low that it does not allow for a sensible implementation.

Nonetheless, the instructional style cannot be ignored, in order to bring the average level of students' learning to be acceptable, as it involves very basic school functions. If the principal successfully triggers (among the teachers) an imitation-based process, where pedagogical focus is more and more centered onto the end product of the teaching process, e.g., the students' achievements, rather than onto the quite obvious initial request of delivering "good" lessons, this is a great gain. It is worth stressing that a greater attention to the learning results is being injected into the Italian system as part of a recent reformation of upper secondary school, and hopefully things may improve within a few years (PD n. 87, 88 and 89, March 15, 2010).

The numerical value for the LISA factor concerning the instructional style across Italy's schools is 3.51. This supports the idea that the Italian principals are at ease with such a style almost as their foreign colleagues, since the average mean value within the whole LISA sample is 3.59 and is quite close to the previous one. Of course, such a result does not allow drawing concluding remarks about the effectiveness of the teaching process in Italy, because it is notoriously uncorrelated to students' academic results. This is one of the critical aspects concerning the Italian school system, whose origins can be traced back to a general lack of the evaluation culture (there is, in fact, no experience of a systematic and objective assessment) and to a persistent idealistic philosophical background that denies scientific dignity to the teaching/learning theories.

6.6.3   Participative Leadership Style

Within the participative style conceptualization, staff members are prompted to contribute actively to the leader's decisional process. It can also be seen as a way for

implementing distributed leadership, since collaborating teachers should feel encouraged to take decisions on behalf of the leader, through a competent system of delegation. This is a true example of an empowerment technique, by means of which teachers' competences are likely to improve and deepen.

This style is necessarily used in big or complex schools, where the leader cannot realistically take care of all activities. A demanding organizational plan is needed to delegate activities effectively, making use of written acts where both vagueness and fussiness have to be avoided, entrusting the right person with the right task, and undertaking control of their execution. Selection of reliable teachers, in order to delegate them effectively, is a very delicate issue. Great attention should be paid to motivate teachers to take charge of those new responsibilities, since financial incentives are usually moderate, and to prevent the arising of scarce self-confidence with the first difficulties. The motivation issue requires much care even at the end of scheduled activities, as some kind of prizes should be awarded to distinguished teachers.

LISA results about diffusion of the participative style in Italian schools (3.52) are, once again, fully comparable to the average result of all LISA schools for this same style (3.57). As a matter of fact, all countries obtained very similar scores and Italian principals enact this style in as much the same way as their LISA colleagues do. This is quite a reasonable outcome, since the Italian school system is characterized by the lack of any central – and even local – systematic evaluation of teachers' activity, and the most effective tool the principals can use, in order to improve school performance, is thereby participation and empowerment.

This leadership style allows schools to obtain good results, when the principal is capable of stimulating teachers' involvement in decisional processes and of obtaining some standardization of students' learning assessment procedures. It should in fact be always kept in mind that absence of standards represents perhaps the weakest point of the Italian school system and that identifying common evaluation procedures through a participative mechanism strongly enhances the system's performance.

6.6.4   Personnel Leadership Development Style

This leadership style includes actions and practices to foster teachers' personal and professional competences. It is likely to occur in schools where a good structuring phase has already been settled, and it is necessary to get a more advanced educational environment.

Perhaps the best way to carry out this style is offered by Youngs and King's (2002, p. 647) beautiful definition: "Principals can enhance teachers' knowledge, skills, dispositions and other aspects of school capacity by connecting teachers to external expertise, by creating internal structures, and by establishing relations with school staff." In other words, the principal's main concern should be establishing tight connections between school and external knowledge sources. The creation of "internal" structures clearly reverberates, once more, what has already been stated about the structural and the participative styles.

The LISA mean value concerning the personnel development style for the Italian schools is 3.34. It is significantly lower than the average LISA schools result (3.57) and shows that this style hardly appeals to the Italian principals. This is not a surprise, because of the lack of any in-service training culture in the Italian system. It must be stressed that there is no career for teachers, since pay increases are solely based on seniority. Furthermore, the Italian system does not require teachers to keep themselves updated, nor does it control them through any process of "on-the-job" evaluation: teachers' evaluation by the principal is even illegal. As a further remark, schools cannot rely on any financial aid from the Ministry for designing and implementing training activities for teachers.

6.6.5   Entrepreneurial Leadership Style

School leaders utilizing this style give their schools an "outward orientation," that is, according to Pashiardis (2004), a continuous communication and collaboration with the parents and the wider community. Efforts to raise funds and to acquire resources are made as well. This style is based undoubtedly upon a leader's creativity, since he/she has to find out good "occasions" for the school. A "low resources" situation is a typical situation where such a style could likely arise and develop. In Italy, financial resources are attributed directly to schools from the Ministry of Education, but they are being cut down more and more. It is thereby quite reasonable that leaders are prompted to utilize an "entrepreneurial" style.

It is worth saying that some unique personal characteristics are necessary, in order for the principal to be able to promote his/her school's activities with a positive return, even in terms of the school's image. This style is also capable of compensating some lack of formalization and of structuring in the school organization, since a brilliant and convincing leader is able to establish sympathetic relations with the stakeholders, overcoming poor service-related difficulties. It also fits well with autonomy of schools, since this requires negotiation, communication, and public relations capabilities.

The LISA entrepreneurial mean for the Italian schools (3.81) gives evidence to their preference of such a style, as it is a little bit higher than in the LISA schools ensemble (3.80) and shows that the "entrepreneur" role is effectively played by Italian principals. Their performance in this style, apart from the always on the top Hungarian and Slovenian colleagues, is in fact the highest among the other countries (Brauckmann & Pashiardis, 2011).

6.6.6   The Context Within the School and the LISA Findings

With reference to the LISA's portraying of the four Italian schools, it is possible to draw several conclusions about the interplay among the different styles and about

the relationship of styles with governance, even though the limited number of examined schools does not allow to claim for statistical generalizability to the larger population.

The entrepreneurial style appears to be prominent, since it is adopted in many, if not all, scenarios. It is cheap, it is substantially based onto a leader's creativity, and it pays off very much in terms of both material and immaterial return, if wisely used. In fact, being based on individual skills and actions (a "one man style" so to say), it does not need an expert team, requires less distributed expertise, and conveys less organizational complexity. It could also be of great usefulness to compensate failures on other fronts: poor service, lack of formalization, insufficient structuring or regulation, and meager public funding. It needs rather peculiar features in the leader, since he/she has to be a public relations-oriented person, with good communication skills. As these features are perhaps natural to the Italian temperament, the entrepreneurial style is the favorite choice in this country. LISA results give evidence that this holds true, since the corresponding factor value (3.81) is Italy's highest. It can also be pointed out that this style can be performed "alone," that is, without utilizing the other ones, due to its (already seen) peculiarities.

The instructional leadership style appears to involve a certain number of teachers, if not all, to reach its goals. As remarked by Brauckmann and Pashiardis (2011), this style is in fact utilized by all principals, as it has to do with the very essence of a school, which is quality teaching and learning.

Nonetheless, styles do not generally live separately from each other. Some of them share common features, as in the case of the delegation of activities encompassed by the structuring style: it overlaps both the teachers' involvement foreseen by the participative style and the skills' development pursued by the personnel development style. This latter is, perhaps, the most "advanced" or "mature" leadership style, as it needs a good leader and a good staff, due to its complexity, and a high-working harmony, as it implies a strong sharing of the common objectives. It has already been pointed out previously that such a style is not easily viable in Italy, due to the unpleasant constraints existing in its system, and LISA results confirm this expectation.

Seen from the side of internal governance, the structuring and the participative styles are undoubtedly useful, as they tend to distribute tasks and responsibilities and then involve more people into the decision-making processes. This behavior implements some form of participative management, thereby preventing the rise of internal conflicts. This is the reason why, even though in the LISA sample the Italian principals rely on these styles as their foreign colleagues do in the average, these two styles are likely to be the most widely practiced. The entrepreneurial style, as seen before, is able to inspire confidence and optimism, but it hardly encompasses professional growth of personnel as it totally depends on the leader's ability. In the LISA project it appears to be Italy's first choice, but it must be clear that this style is not easily exercised by everyone, because it needs a principal with very unique personal characteristics.

As for the external governance, the entrepreneurial style is once more outstanding, when performed by an able principal, as he/she acts effectively to promote the

school's image. This can lead to great successes of school activities and reputation and can provide additional funding in case of need. The main drawback is represented by the crucial role played by the leader, since the school success dramatically depends on him/her and hence continuity is not ensured when he/she moves to another school. Moreover, personnel's collective efforts receive limited attention in this context.

6.7   Concluding Remarks with Regard to the Relationship of Context, School Policies, and Leadership Styles

The widespread opinion in Italy is that school policies do not really relate much with leadership styles. In fact, policies are mainly set at the Ministry level, whereas only relatively minor choices are actually made within the school. The great number of administrative instructions issued by the center does not encourage initiatives taken on the field, even when the legislative framework would allow them.

On the other hand, many leaders choose or adopt their leadership styles in total freedom, regardless of school policies, since these ones are generally weak and not very compelling. In addition, it is worth pointing out that the Italian school system, differently from several other countries, is not based upon municipalities, and thereby schools can be relatively unbound from local realities. Such a situation can eventually turn out to be an advantageous one because, when new policies deriving from an abrupt change of governmental and political orientation – such a circumstance has already occurred several times – are relatively incoherent to the previous ones, school principals are hardly into confusion and are not really induced to modify their styles.

The choice of leadership styles can instead be strongly driven by major social changes, as it is quite certain that the entrepreneurial style, heavily relying on a leader's public relations capabilities, fits in better with a school embedded in a media-dominated society. According to Brauckmann and Pashiardis' (2011) conclusions, this style appears to match adequately the exigencies of the European context, and, to a certain extent, it seems to warrant some success to the principals who exercise it.

It is true, on the other hand, that political decisions are able to influence and modify social habits, but discussing this point in depth would unavoidably lead us beyond the purposes of this book. From a different point of view, it should be borne in mind that any increase in social complexity calls for more intense negotiation activities, and then it is likely that a leader with good mediation and moderation skills can cope successfully with internal conflicts. As a result, it should be recognized that both the structuring and the participative styles must be regarded as valuable tools in certain – mostly conflictual – scenarios.

Anyway, the (perhaps) ultimate and "most mature" style to be exercised by a leader is the personnel development one, since within this style he/she is required to stimulate and motivate people to change. Such behavior encompasses continuous retraining, in order to stay professionally up-to-date. The personnel development

style can only be performed in "mature" working environments, which necessarily have gone through less advanced situations. Factors such as unruliness, poor organization, conflicts, and refusal to undertake responsibilities prevent organizations from remaining up-to-date and, in the end, from tackling the challenge of innovation.

The previous considerations allow us to draw a "common sense" conclusion: there is no best style for any situation. Successful leaders must be able to switch among different attitudes, depending on what the environment specifically needs. This flexibility is perhaps the best feature of able leaders and should be ascertained before hiring them.

It is now clear why policymakers should care about leadership and should embrace it as a strategic resource, in order to achieve the system goals set by themselves: some key factors, such as professional growth of teachers, innovation of teaching practice, more participation, and democracy within the working environment, are in fact only attainable if well-prepared and skilled leaders are in charge.

Good leaders might effectively advice policymakers with clever suggestions, even though policymakers hardly take into account their opinion. In particular, the whole issue of teachers' hiring should be reconsidered, since leadership has no role in this process, at least in the Italian context. Teachers are badly selected through old-fashioned public examinations that do not ensure adequate motivation nor pedagogical skillfulness. Furthermore, the hiring procedure is carried out by the Ministry and not by municipalities or by schools. If schools, and therefore their leaders, were directly involved in selecting the teachers they effectively needed, a great improvement would be attained towards a more functional school service, at the same time allowing students to get better preparation, better results, and, in the end, better life opportunities.

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Chapter 7
An English Perspective

Ian Bauckham

7.1 Context of the School System

This chapter will offer a background to the dynamic and fast changing English school system, including its recent history in broad outline, and explore possible reasons why the LISA research outcomes pointed towards some strongly distinctive leadership features among English school heads. The secondary school system in England is complex and has evolved markedly over recent decades. In addition, it is in a phase of rapid and radical change at the time of writing, in the wake of the 2010 Education Act. Therefore, before considering the application of the *Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework* (Pashiardis & Brauckmann, 2008) to the English context, we will first set out in broad terms the key features of the system as it is now encountered and consider briefly its recent evolution and the main challenges we see it facing in the next decade.

7.1.1 The Birth and Demise of the Tripartite System in Secondary Education: 1944 to the 1970s

The "Butler" Education Act of 1944 established the tripartite system of maintained (publicly funded) secondary schooling, rationalizing and modernizing the patchy and inconsistent system which had existed prior to that time (Benn, 2011). Grammar schools set out to offer a classical academic curriculum, suitable for taking students on to the traditional universities and into the professions; technical schools a more modern and technically flavored curriculum adapted to the age of technology; and

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"secondary modern" schools set out to educate everyone else. Admission to the first two types of school was by a test taken in the final year of primary schooling, known quickly and universally, to this day, as the Eleven Plus (11+).

In terms of governance, there were schools wholly maintained by the local education authorities (the vast majority), which initially (at least) were coterminous with counties. Then there were "direct grant" schools, often of venerable historical character, maintained by a grant from the central government. And there were "voluntary aided" schools, run collaboratively by either the Roman Catholic Church or the Church of England and local authorities.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, there was increasing dissatisfaction with the tripartite division of secondary schools (Adonis, 2012). Three main factors motivated this: the technical schools never really established themselves as strong alternatives to grammar schools, which remained highly sought after by the growing middle classes in the postwar years. Secondly, competition for places at grammar schools became increasingly intense during the 1960s, and many middle class and aspirational families found themselves experiencing difficulty in obtaining grammar school places for their children. The matter was highly contentious, for example, in the 1962 general election, and many commentators (e.g., Benn, 2011) believe the Conservatives lost the 1964 election on this issue. Thirdly, there was an increasingly strong view that value of the separation of children into three (or two) types of school at age 11 was not supported by educational research and was socially divisive and inappropriate to the more egalitarian age which was beginning to dawn. Most (though not all) local authorities, England therefore abolished the 11+ by the mid-1970s and created comprehensive secondary schools. This change had broad political support, although both main parties had some divisions on the issue. In fact, it was Margaret Thatcher as education minister from 1970 to 1974 who in her Circular 10/70 gave local authorities full power to discontinue the 11+ test. At about the same time, most direct grant schools also disappeared, although the voluntary aided schools remained.

So by the mid-1970s in most areas of England, there were comprehensive secondary schools complemented by much smaller numbers of voluntary aided schools which had, and still have, some peripheral freedoms on denominational matters in exchange for small contributions from their respective churches to school finances.

7.1.2 Control and Autonomy in the 1970s

In terms of finance, the schools had relatively little autonomy. They were not budget holders for their own financing, and increasingly elaborate local authority bureaucracies ran most aspects of the schools, employing teachers and maintaining the fabric of the buildings. Pedagogically, however, there was much independence. Inspection, ran by the so-called HMI ("Her Majesty's Inspectorate") service, was "light touch" in the extreme, often visiting a school once in 5 or 10 years, and then rarely, if ever, inspecting classroom practice in a way we might now consider rigorous or detailed (Adonis, 2012).

Examinations were run by boards supervised by universities, and information about what to teach to prepare for the examinations passed on by tradition and word of mouth almost as much by published syllabuses. There was no external accountability for results of examinations and certainly no publication of data. Authors such as Adonis (2012) have argued that after comprehensivization there were "comprehensive" schools which were high performing and saw themselves as the heirs of the grammar schools, while there was a substantial proportion of comprehensives where standards and aspirations were low. These schools, Adonis argues, represented the extension of the poor standards of the secondary moderns into a wider number of schools.

7.1.3 The Marketplace "Revolution" of the 1980s

This was the system inherited by the revolutionary – or reactionary – Conservative government when it came to power in 1979. By the mid-1980s, far-reaching change was afoot (Adonis, 2012). This change had a double effect: in terms of teaching and learning, teacher level autonomy was decreased. In business terms, school level autonomy increased.

Under Local Management of Schools (LMS), for the first time, schools had significant portions of their budget delegated to them to spend as they wished. Governing bodies and head teachers became able increasingly to employ their own teachers, advertising for them and interviewing them. They were for the first time able to take personal responsibility for decisions about resourcing and maintenance, using their own budgets. The model, of course, which was in the minds of the Conservative policymakers, was that of the business and the market. Competition, it was believed, would drive up performance and standards. The belief was that it was easy to apply these principles to the business side of school life. Let schools manage their own resource budgets; parents, the consumers, would soon see a range of outcomes, and pressure would mount on the less effective stewards of their budgets to improve, especially if there were a deregulation of the earlier system of students having to attend their local school to introduce "choice" for parents. Market principles were applied to the work of schools more globally as well.

From this point, education policy was dominated by a trend towards autonomy on the one hand and public and transparent accountability on the other. Examination results would be published in "league tables" directly into the public domain. Parents could then compare schools' effectiveness, choose the best school for their own children, and pressure would build, by a natural market-driven process, on underperforming schools to "raise their game." The publication of examination results of course required that the results were valid and comparable and that schools were setting out broadly to teach the same things. Thus the rather loose and unregulated range of examinations overseen by very unthatcherite universities and academics was subjected to a rigorous overhaul, and a highly prescriptive national curriculum was introduced along with tests or examinations at 7, 11, 14,

and 16 to report on the effectiveness of its delivery. And all results were published, of course. And finally, to make sure that all schools and teachers were cooperating with this brave new age, and to root out the final vestiges of lax practice, a re-energized inspection service, a new inspectorate, Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education) was introduced at the start of the 1990s. All schools were now to be frequently inspected – every 3–5 years – and, of course, inspection reports were to be sharply judgmental and placed in the public domain to assist choice and build pressure on schools to improve.

By the early 1990s, English education had moved from what Hargreaves (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009) calls the "first way" well and truly into the "second way." If the first way was characterized by professional autonomy, inspiration but inconsistency, eclecticism, passive trust, loose collegiality, and discretion, then the new second way featured prescription, teaching to the test, market-inspired competition, detailed standardization, high-stakes targets, and a "presumption of mistrust" in schools and teachers. Financially and in business terms, autonomy for schools increased, although, certainly in comparison with what was to follow, funding levels were not high.

As far as autonomy educationally was concerned, a contradictory situation pertained. Because of the regime of published test results, the now completely open market with respect to admissions and the omnipresent inspection regime, there was in effect very little freedom to exercise professional autonomy in the classroom. Thus it continued for most of the 1990s, and it was the system in which the present author spent the first decade or so of his teaching career.

7.1.4   The Challenge of the Marketplace Losers: New Labour from 1997

Of course, the downside of competition is that those who lose the race go to the wall. Politically, the next revolutionary moment in British postwar history occurred in 1997 when 18 years of Conservative rule were ended as Tony Blair's New Labour Party swept to power on a tide of optimism and thirst for change. Once again, it took several years for the new government to find its feet educationally, but when it did so, it discovered that while in affluent areas the legacy of the revolutionary Conservative reforms was serving communities reasonably well, in poorer areas and in the inner cities in particular, there was entrenched poor performance, low expectations, and widespread disengagement from education. Adonis (2012) discusses this in some depth as the backdrop to the academy movement.

The extent to which the reforms the Labour administration introduced during the first decade of the twenty-first century constituted a radical departure from the "second way" is unclear. As the Chinese premier famously said to President Nixon when asked about the effect of the French Revolution nearly 200 years earlier, "it is too early to say." Certainly, there was an intense focus on socially and educationally

deprived areas and communities, with unprecedented levels of funding for new school buildings, higher pay for teachers, flexible incentive payments for teachers in challenging areas, and the recruitment of a new breed of highly paid and dynamic principals.

Teachers were "reprofessionalized" and are "protected" from having to undertake non-educational or purely bureaucratic work, a process witnessed at first hand by the author. There was some relaxation of the testing regimes, with the tests at age 7 and 14 being discontinued. There was a marked move to recruit more imaginative thinkers into government departments and associated bodies working on the curriculum, and greater freedom was introduced into the national curriculum. There was much rhetoric about collaboration and a downplaying of competition, and some genuine incentives put in place to incentivize collaboration between schools (Adonis, 2012). School leaders were encouraged, not least by the ground-breaking National College for School Leadership, to see themselves as system leaders and to take responsibility corporately for all students in their areas. And, following several high-profile tragedies resulting from poor communication and inaction, there was a move to coordinate all children's services in localities – education, police, social services, and health. Engagement with local communities was encouraged and incentivized.

7.1.5   Continuity or Reform: The Rise of the Data Technocracy

These moves would all lead one to believe that a new educational era had been brought into being since 1997. On the one hand, schools were more autonomous and much better funded, but on the other, they were operating in an environment of intense public scrutiny informed by publication of performance data and Ofsted inspection reports. In other words, despite some incentivizing of collaboration, the tendency towards both autonomy and accountability commented on already continued during this period. This was the period of the author's early headship.

Perhaps most significantly though was the emergence of the target-setting regimes driven by data. Many would argue that this has impacted more on the lives of teachers and school leaders than any other feature of the years 2000–2010. Conceived as a way of lifting performance among poorly performing public services, target-setting cultures came to dominate schools in the latter part of the New Labour period.

In secondary schools, there is still a highly complex system of targets and published measures covering almost every aspect of a school's work. Indeed, the post-2010 coalition government is committed to maintaining and further intensifying the publication of performance and other data. At the time of writing a further consultation on accountability is underway (Department for Education, 2013) which construes accountability almost entirely in terms of the publication of different types of performance data both in order to inform parents and incentivize schools,

through market pressures, to improve. Constant measuring of work against targets and performance indicators has become a major part of the work of school leaders, a phenomenon witnessed and experienced by the author in his work in school leadership.

Numerical performance indicators or targets exist (subject to review but not reduction by the consultation referred to above) for attendance, authorized absence, unauthorized absence, persistent absence, achievement in science, achievement in modern languages, English, mathematics, percentage getting 5 GCSEs at grade C, percentage getting 5 GCSEs at grade G, average point score at GCSE, achievement of students entitled to free school meals (a deprivation indicator), achievement of girls and boys, achievement of special needs children, achievement of ethnic minorities, value added, contextualized value added (discontinued from 2011), functional skills (discontinued from 2011), and destinations of students when leaving – especially those not going into training or employment.

When one considers that until recently many of these indicators were also published for 14-year-olds as well as the 16-year-olds for whom the list above applies, one could agree with Hargreaves that English education was (and some would argue post 2010 still is) veritably in the grip of a technocracy – on the surface, school autonomy, good funding and pay levels, and less prescription and, under the surface, rule by targets and at the mercy of data-driven technocrats (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009).

7.1.6   The Law of Diminishing Returns and Education for Depth and Sustainability

The view that the current preoccupation in English education with continuous incremental improvement in outcomes, measured by the data technocrats, is not sustainable into the long term is gaining ground. West-Burnham (2009) uses the analogy of a virus – a virus either kills its victim or, after some time, the victim becomes immune and ceases to react. So it is with interventions designed to raise outcomes measured in the ways with which we have become familiar. West-Burnham advocates "transformational leadership" as a way to get off the rail tracks we seem currently stuck on. This will take us beyond the meeting of targets and will emphasize dimensions of school leadership eclipsed by the rule of the data technocrats, intellectual, and spiritual leadership among them.

Hargreaves & Shirley (2009) talks of the development of a "fourth way" which will build trust, create transparency, and replace accountability with "responsibility." There subsists in the English education tradition a continuous thread which has to some extent "gone underground" since the 1980s which asserts that education is about more than tests and results. This aspect of the tradition, which emphasizes a more holistic approach, has continued overtly in the independent school system,

which is (largely) outside state control and educates around 7 % of the school age population. As we think about the future, we will certainly not discard all aspects of the reforms of the past 40 years.

English history is famously evolutionary, and continuous overlapping and coexistence of different and sometimes contradictory approaches are something which are not alien to the British approach. The relative thickness of these overlapping layers was certainly a determinant in the varying outcomes of the primary LISA research in the four very different schools. Many would take the view that there is now a need to build capacity and loosen control, without jeopardizing the many genuinely positive achievements of the past 30 years. Others would take the view that in our postindustrial, perhaps postmodern, society in an uncertain world, learning to live together, learning to be happy and to find purpose, should be reemphasized against the mere learning of workplace skills to enhance employability.

7.1.7   The Conservative "Revolution" (or Reaction) 2010 Onwards

At the general election in May 2010, no single party won overall control, but the Conservative party emerged as the largest in the new House of Commons. A coalition was created with the Liberal Democrats, and Michael Gove, a Conservative, was appointed Secretary of State for Education. With one exception, all the junior ministers in the Education Department were Conservatives. In fact, the department was immediately renamed "Department for Education," having previously been named "Department for Children, Schools and Families" in its most recent incarnation under the Labour government. The change in name gives some clue – perhaps misleadingly in the light of future developments – about an intended shift in policy emphasis.

Michael Gove had been the shadow minister in the Conservative opposition since 2007 and undoubtedly a very strong grasp of his brief. A biographical study, beyond the scope of the current chapter, might uncover some possible explanations for his passion and focus on particular aspects of reform. The principal measures which his government is planning to take were set out firstly in the Conservative manifesto prior to the election and then in the coalition agreement between the two parties when the new government was formed. They amount to nothing short of a revolution. It is impossible at this stage to write a descriptive account of the system in England because the English system, since the 2010 election, is in a state of profound flux and radical reform. In the following paragraph, we will look at the main areas of change, consider their background, and focus in particular on their implications for school leadership.

In summary there are three main challenges for the future: what to do about stubborn underperformance in the lowest quartile which is significantly worse

than in other countries and has appeared resistant to all measures to address it so far (The Framework for the National Curriculum, 2011). Then, another challenge is how to build capacity in schools and reduce dependence on external accountability, an aim constantly reiterated by the Secretary of State Michael Gove. Finally, how to tackle the crisis levels of emotional and mental health problems among the young, identified by UNICEF among others (UNICEF, 2007) – treat the symptoms or tackle the causes.

7.2   Context Within Which Schools Operate

Throughout this chapter we take England as the case study jurisdiction. Scotland has always had complete independence in education, and since devolution in the 1990s, Northern Ireland and Wales have taken responsibility for their own education policy and are increasingly going their separate ways. There is a vast body of legislation covering almost every aspect of schooling and education. There are variations between different statuses schools may have, but broadly speaking, the framework is as follows: every school has a governing body comprised of governors. Governors include elected parents and teachers, representatives of the local authority, where applicable representatives of trusts or church bodies, local business members and other local stakeholders. A typical size has been 15 members, but the trend is towards smaller governing bodies. The governing body is responsible for setting strategic direction and holding the school and the head teacher to account. Sometimes the head teacher is also a governor. In some schools, the governing body is the legal employer of staff, and in others, the local authority is the employer, although almost always decisions about employment are made by the head teacher with the support of the governing body.

The head teacher is employed by the governing body, or the local authority, and is responsible for the operational level of the school, in other words running the school, making day-to-day decisions, and implementing the governing body's strategic direction. There is a list of legally defined responsibilities for governing bodies, some of which may be delegated to the head teacher, and some of which may not. Governing bodies thus agree their own levels of delegation to the head teacher. In most cases, in practice, the level of delegation to the head teacher is considerable so that most head teachers have high levels of day-to-day autonomy, including over the use of the almost completely delegated budget (for a secondary school, this can be anything from about £4 million to £10 million), depending on the size and location of the school.

Areas for which the head teacher is accountable, either formally because that has been delegated by the governing body or informally because although not delegated she/he is the lead professional, would typically include implementation of a curriculum which is legally in line with the national curriculum; all aspects of the quality of classroom teaching; all examination results; meeting requirements about religious education and daily worship; attendance by students at school; all

liaison with parents and other community stakeholders; teacher pay, promotion, and professional development; communicating a strategic and motivating vision for the school; and ensuring the delegated budget is spent legally and meets the school's objectives.

7.3 Leadership and School Reform Under New Political Leadership

7.3.1 The Consequences of the Election of May 2012

In order to be clear about what the new government is setting out to do, before we look at some of the detail and the implications for school leadership and governance, it is worth summarizing the agreed plans for the (new fixed term) parliament from 2010 to 2015. The coalition agreement sets out the priorities as follows:

> The Government believes that we need to reform our school system to tackle educational inequality, which has widened in recent years, and to give greater powers to parents and pupils to choose a good school. We want to ensure high standards of discipline in the classroom, robust standards and the highest quality teaching. We also believe that the state should help parents, community groups and others come together to improve the education system by starting new schools.
>
> 1. We will promote the reform of schools in order to ensure that new providers can enter the state school system in response to parental demand; that all schools have greater freedom over the curriculum; and that all schools are held properly to account.
> 2. We will fund a significant premium for disadvantaged pupils from outside the schools budget by reductions in spending elsewhere.
> 3. We will give parents, teachers, charities and local communities the chance to set up new schools, as part of our plans to allow new providers to enter the state school system in response to parental demand.
> 4. …
> 5. We will reform the existing rigid national pay and conditions rules to give schools greater freedoms to pay good teachers more and deal with poor performance.
> 6. …
> 7. We will simplify the regulation of standards in education and target inspection on areas of failure (Cabinet Office, 22 Whitehall, London SW1A 2WH, 2010, p. 29–29; note: in the original the points are not numbered, only bulleted).

7.3.2 Autonomy, Freedom, and Academies

The vision of a school system which is largely characterized by vigorous, flourishing, independent schools funded by the state but largely free from regulation is at the heart of the Gove vision and strongly supported by the Conservative leadership. It runs as a powerful thread right through the coalition agreement. Independence, freedom, and minimal regulation are the key themes underpinning this new vision.

Let us focus first on "academies." These were promoted by Tony Blair, as Labour Prime Minister, as a way of attracting money and creative new thinking into areas of educational underachievement and deprivation (Adonis, 2012). The government-run teacher information website TeacherNet described them in this earlier incarnation as follows: *Academies are publicly funded independent schools that provide a first class free education to pupils of all abilities. They are established by sponsors from business, faith or voluntary groups working with partners from the local community to replace weak and failing schools or to meet the basic need for school places in areas of educational underperformance and other disadvantage … The independent status of Academies allows them the flexibility to be creative in their management, governance, teaching and curriculum, to find innovative solutions to meet local needs … Sponsors provide £2 million towards the capital costs for each academy with the Government providing the balance and funding recurrent costs … Each Academy is set up as a company limited by guarantee with charitable status and will have a board of governors responsible for the governance and strategic leadership of the school.*

The new government is seeking to enable as many schools as possible, both primary and secondary, to acquire the status and consequent freedoms enjoyed currently only by academies, whether the schools are in areas of deprivation or not. Schools started to "convert" to academies from September 2010. Schools converting to academy status are promised not only additional freedoms, for example, freedom from the national curriculum and from teachers' national pay and conditions of service (including contractual limits on teachers' working hours), but also additional funding which will be acquired by the new academy acquiring the portion of funding from central government previously "top-sliced" by the local education authority.

In areas where large numbers of schools are becoming academies, local education authorities are almost ceasing to exist as agencies for managing school provision because they have seriously reduced funding. At best, they will become very lean commissioning agencies for services to schools that may or may not choose to buy the services back from their former local authority; it will be a free market as far as service provision is concerned, and there will be many companies and organizations competing for the contract from academies. Additional funding as a result of academy conversion varies around the country. The government's aim is to have a majority of schools operating as academies by the end of the parliament in 2015, and in the autumn of 2011 was reporting that about half of secondary schools would have academy status by summer 2012.

7.3.3   Leadership Implications for the New Autonomous Educational Landscape at a Time of Budget Constraint

The first purpose of the LISA research project (Pashiardis & Brauckmann, 2008) was to explore ways in which school leadership, directly or indirectly, affects student achievement. In the English context, as in others, much of the impact of school

leadership is indirect. A number of intermediary variables with a locus between head teacher leadership activity on the one hand and student outcomes on the other were identified during the course of the research, and some of these are thrown into strong relief in the context of an autotomizing national schools policy. Learning climate, school mission, teacher commitment to the school, classroom performance goal structure, and teachers' expectations are all examples of variables where, in more autonomous contexts, the influence of the head teacher can become more significant.

The autonomy and freedom which the new schools in England have – and this will not be limited to schools actually acquiring academy status, for the coalition government is promising significant additional freedoms to schools which do not choose to take on academy status – will undoubtedly have profound implications for school leadership, already heavily conditioned by over two decades of operating in a diverse and market-modeled environment.

The process itself will be a demanding one for head teachers and other school leaders. Governing bodies are comprised of unpaid volunteers – many have great commitment and enthusiasm, but levels of expertise and capacity for vision are at best variable. The burden of leading the school through the process to achieving academy status will rest with the school's head teacher and leadership team. It will not be an easy process for many.

In the author's own school, an 11–18 Church of England secondary school of 1,500 students, there were high levels of concern from the local teacher unions when it emerged that interest had been expressed in acquiring academy status. In London and other major cities, where teacher unions are often more militant, there is very robust opposition to schools changing status. This is because of fears over worsening conditions of service in academies, such as longer working hours, and over concerns about academies worsening inequalities for students in the system. These tensions are heightened by the general austerity program, which includes reform of teacher pensions, pay, and working conditions.

The majority of the stress and workload involved in managing and diffusing this ill-feeling is carried single-handedly by head teachers. Once the school achieves greater autonomy, the exercise of the additional freedoms, it is assumed, will rest with the head and governing body – which in many contexts means in practice largely with the head. This will mean further-reaching decision making about curriculum matters, about teacher pay and rewards, future strategic planning, marketing, finance, and the purchase of services, than ever before.

Meanwhile, it is clear that despite the promise to simplify accountability and behave less "technocratically" than the last government, schools' examination outcomes are still very prominently in the public domain. Moreover, they are a key determinant for many parents in school choice and a driver for the operation of the marketplace in school choice and competition, all of which in turn has the potential to decide the future of individual schools.

The final factor, and in some ways the most significant one of all, is that the 5 years from 2010 to 2015 are a time of intense budget pressure. There has been a commitment to hold education spending at 2010 levels, thereby protecting it from

sharp spending reductions elsewhere. However, it is becoming clear that "frontline" expenditure is only one part of school funding and in any case applied only to pre-age-16 funding. Other funding sources are being strongly curbed, including post-16 funding, and the net effect for many schools is a real terms funding decrease of at least 5 % over 2 years 2011–2013.

7.3.4   The New "Internationalism"?

A new development in national education policy, and perhaps particularly interesting from the point of view of the LISA project, is the sudden emergence of international benchmarking as a motivator in policy development. Until recently, PISA testing and outcomes were relatively little known in England, outside academic or specialist circles. Ignorance or indifference was probably the cause of the failure of England even to meet the minimum sample size in the 2003 PISA survey.

Unlike in some other participating countries, for example, Germany, PISA outcomes have scarcely been mentioned by the British media until after 2010 and certainly had not underpinned policy development. All this changed dramatically when the first Gove legislation proposals were published in late 2010. The pre-legislative white paper, entitled, tellingly, "The Importance of Teaching," contains numerous references to international comparators. The Prime Minister's introduction, for example, sets the tone, when he makes reference to the most recent OECD PISA survey in 2006; we fell from 4th in the world in the 2000 survey to 14th in science, 7th to 17th in literacy, and 8th to 24th in mathematics. As he mentions, the only way we can catch up and have the world-class schools our children deserve is by learning the lessons of other countries' successes. The first and most important lesson is that no education system can be better than the quality of its teachers. The most successful countries, from the Far East to Scandinavia, are those where teaching has the highest status as a profession. South Korea recruits from their top 5 % of graduates and Finland from the top 10 % (The Importance of Teaching, 2010).

Subsequent political rhetoric continues this suddenly outward-looking perspective: we need to improve because indicators seem to show we are not the best. How appropriate policy response is to the desired areas for improvement remains to be seen. The effects of policy changes take time to work through the system and for their effect to be apparent. As Tim Oates perceptively noted in a report on international comparators in education (2010), "we should be looking at the things in each system which correspond to the period about which we have evidence – for Finland, it may be far more profitable to look at the nature of the reforms which they introduced in the 1960s rather than assume that the current relaxation of requirement would automatically result, in another national context, in elevation of educational attainment – indeed, it may ultimately not work for them; the jury must, by necessity, be out" (Oates, 2010, p. 15–16). The extent to which the current new focus on international comparisons will result in what Oates calls "crude 'policy borrowing'" rather than a use of international comparisons to "understand how

different aspects of the system are subject to control and development" remains to be seen, as does its possible long-term implications for school leadership styles in England.

The use of the international data is not uncontroversial, not least because another international study, TIMSS, appeared recently to show the opposite. For example, Jerrim in his 2011 paper *England's "plummeting" PISA test scores between 2000 and 2009* concludes:

- Both PISA and TIMSS are problematic for studying change in average test performance in England over time.
- Statements … by the policymakers … are based upon flawed interpretations of the underlying data.
- England's movement in the international achievement league tables neither supports nor refutes policymakers' calls for change (Jerrim, 2011).

The very far-reaching and radical character of the policy changes being implemented currently, justified in part at least on the basis of the need to "catch up" with countries apparently overtaking England's performance, makes the questionable robustness of the data concerned a highly controversial issue.

7.4   A Synthesis of the Context of the Case Study School

We propose shortly to work through the leadership styles used as the basis for the LISA project and comment on each one in the author's own context, as well as consider how each style may be affected by the new demands on school leaders. To put these comments in context, it may be helpful to understand the case study school's leadership context.

The case study school, one of the four English participants in the LISA project, is an 11–18 coeducational Church of England comprehensive school with 1,500 students. The area is favored in terms of social and economic conditions, although it is in an area also where there are numbers of academically selective grammar schools.

The leadership team consists of a head teacher, two deputy head teachers, three assistant head teachers, a business manager, and a human resources and logistics manager – a total leadership team of eight persons. The school's annual fully delegated budget is in the region of £7 million. Broadly speaking, the responsibilities of the head teacher are strategic and center on defining and articulating the school's ethos and character, working with governors on strategic direction, and ensuring public accountability and internal quality control mechanisms are in place.

The responsibilities of the deputy head teachers are to assist the head teacher in his role and to assume direct control over major whole school areas (e.g., student welfare, behavior management, use of data, quality of teaching and learning). The assistant head teachers' roles are distinguished from the deputies' by being more specific in focus, for example, overseeing internationalism, managing

student attendance, coordinating educational visits or extracurricular activities, and so on. The role of the business manager in the new autonomous academy context is growing in importance. The human resources manager oversees day-to-day staff deployment and liaison and coordinates recruitment.

7.5 The LISA Findings and Leadership Styles in England

7.5.1 The Structuring Leadership Style

The *structuring leadership style* is a leadership approach which places particular emphasis on the careful allocation of roles and functions to employees in the school. In a landscape of much greater school autonomy, it is likely that this style will become more prevalent in English schools. Currently, we have inherited and widely accepted roles which have a significant degree of transferability and mutually understood currency between schools. A shift over time to greater school autonomy will make it more likely that schools will start to behave more innovatively in this area, which means that the determination of roles and rewards will become a stronger priority in the working life of school leaders. If this happens, it will not be a revolution.

Given comparatively high levels of autonomy, especially over staff employment, and a relatively hierarchical approach to school leadership, English school leaders have tended to be strong in the structuring style already. Innovative school models over the past 10–20 years have encouraged this in some pilot schools. But it is likely to become a more generalized feature as the new reforms progress. Business managers and bursars are already a normal part of most secondary school leadership teams – their role in determining new roles and associated remuneration packages in a freer environment is likely to strengthen as well.

7.5.2 The Instructional Leadership Style

The *instructional leadership style* prioritizes direct leadership of and intervention in classroom teaching and learning. Again, this has tended, unlike in some other European countries, to be a dominant style among English school leaders. This is taken to be a consequence of the high-stakes inspection and accountability framework which has, as summarized in the earlier part of this chapter, evolved in English education and which informs the market- and choice-based approach to maintaining and raising school standards. Head teachers have had a tendency to be very directive and detailed in leadership of what happens in lessons, for example, undertaking regular lesson observations, intensifying these where there are concerns, checking students' work for marking and feedback, and setting targets and putting in place close monitoring for teachers whose examination outcomes fall below expectations.

In the new educational landscape, there will be no relaxation of these approaches, as we have seen, and publication of results will continue, as will the emphasis on parental choice of school. In the post-2010 world, the marketplace approach is stronger and more overt even than before. However, the inspection framework will be more targeted and less generalized, and accountability is likely to be focused more specifically on outcomes rather than processes, for demonstrably successful schools. It is likely that the instructional style will continue to be a dominant leadership style into the future.

In the author's school, currently all teaching members of the leadership team undertake lesson observations on a regular basis, both whole lessons (60 min) and "drop-in" sampling (15 min). There is a standard set of guidelines and a feedback format following lesson observations, close to that used by Ofsted, and all lessons observed are graded from 1 (outstanding) to 4 (inadequate). Lessons graded 3 (satisfactory) or 4 have, according to school policy, to be reobserved within 4 weeks and have to be at least 2 (good) to avoid triggering capability processes against the "underperforming" teacher (which can ultimately lead to dismissal, although normally solutions short of dismissal are found and agreed). Every teacher is observed on average three times per school year, unless their teaching gives cause for concern, in which case there are more frequent observations. Every lesson observation contains points for action. So the instructional leadership style among school leaders is strong in this, as in many other, secondary schools.

7.5.3   The Participative Leadership Style

The *participative leadership style* focuses on involving staff (and students, perhaps) in decision making and the formulation of corporate approaches over which a maximal proportion of employees have ownership. Since the rise of high-stakes accountability culminating within schools on head teachers and governing bodies, this style seems to have become weaker among English school leaders than in many other models. Unsurprisingly, this was evident in the LISA research outcomes (Brauckmann & Pashiardis, 2009).

There is continued strong emphasis in the new government's program for education on the leadership of the head teacher, whose style, ability, and vision are still seen as principle determinant factors in a school's success. There is very little mention of achieving consensus among staff in schools – the subtext to this is the unspoken assumption that "consensus" has to mean "compromising on standards." Thus far, from one perspective at least, there seems little prospect that participative leadership styles will grow among school leaders in the new landscape.

However, perhaps there is another way of seeing this: schools with greater independence encouraged to build their own distinctive ethos may well be more secure in that ethos if they can achieve employee agreement and endorsement. Furthermore, as many have argued, a policy of investing in staff at a time of potential contraction and budget pressures may well prove more far sighted than reducing investment in

staff development. A key dimension of staff development is building a high-trust culture. In more successful and dynamic newly independent schools, paradoxically, more participative cultures may well emerge.

It is interesting to note the points made in the 2010 McKinsey report (Mourshed, Chichioke, & Barber, 2010) in this connection. In systems which have moved beyond a basic level of performance and are engaged in the "great to excellent" improvement phase, the report notes that interventions are less prescriptive and centralized than typically at an earlier improvement phase: "the interventions of this stage move the locus of improvement from the center to the schools themselves; the focus is on introducing peer-based learning through school based and system-wide interaction, as well as supporting system-sponsored innovation and experimentation" (Mourshed et al., p. 20).

The author's own experience, at this early stage, is precisely of that starting to happen: once immediate inspection pressures have eased, following, for example, a successful inspection, and mindful of the need to build up a trust culture after a period of intense pressure and control, new ways are beginning to emerge of creating debating and decision-making opportunities for key staff and empowering them to use these opportunities through high quality and personalized leadership development, particularly at middle leader level. National policy can still seem quite schizophrenic, however, on the one hand recognizing the need for the top levels of improvement to be based in schools and involve high levels of personal responsibility and engagement, while on the other hand the high-stakes accountability culture tends to pull school leaders to shallower or "quick-fix" strategies and more hierarchical leadership approaches.

7.5.4   The Personnel Development Leadership Style

On the *personnel development leadership style*, much of what was said above under the participative style applies equally. A further dimension is this: in an educational culture more tightly constrained and regulated by external accountability measures, professional development seems, at a superficial level, a relatively simple matter. Teachers' responsibilities were clear and tightly defined, so professional development requirements were also relatively straightforward.

It is probably for this reason that this style showed in the LISA study as being quite weak among English school leaders in comparison with some other contexts. In a context where greater diversity, freedom, and distinctiveness are encouraged, strong professional development becomes a deeper medium- and long-term strategic issue. Developing a workforce which is able to participate in distinctive autonomous development, and lead teams and projects in a context where old support structures (for example local education authorities) no longer exist, needs strong investment in career-long learning for teachers.

Seeing the changing role of personnel training and development in the author's school, 3 years ago, a Master's degree program in Teaching and Learning was

introduced, offered in collaboration with the University of London, Institute of Education. Participation by any teacher who wished to take part was encouraged. The majority of the sessions are offered at school in twilight time, and to date about 20 teachers (of a total workforce of about 90 teachers) are established on the degree program, which is intended to take 3 years to complete. These and similar "customized" programs in many other schools are seen as attempts to respond to the need to build deep capacity in school and help develop a workforce which is better prepared to support an autonomous school with reduced external support into the future.

7.5.5   The Entrepreneurial Leadership Style

The *entrepreneurial leadership style* refers to the emphasis placed by school leaders on forming alliances and working relationships with bodies and individuals outside the school, whether these are with other schools or non-educational organizations. In English schools, this has been an essential element of the role of head teachers, albeit not a dominant one (until recently, perhaps). Pressure to collaborate in the Labour years from 1997 to 2010 years was strong. However, it is easy to see how, in the new autonomous landscape and in the likely near absence of local authorities, new alliances and networks will be formed. These are likely to be more flexible and possibly more dynamic or purpose-focused groupings which are not necessarily as tightly geographically defined as local education authorities.

   The economies of scale and the enhanced buying power of alliances or "chains" of schools will be advantageous to member schools, in particular at a time of extreme budget pressure. This kind of movement, if it takes off, is going to impact on head teachers' leadership styles and is likely to bring the entrepreneurial leadership style to the fore more dynamically than in the past.

7.5.6   Synthesis of the Impact of School Context on Leadership Style in England in the LISA Research

As part of the preparation for the primary LISA research, three hypotheses were identified in relation to leadership context and style:

- Greater school autonomy will draw the mix of leadership emphases in the direction of the entrepreneurial style.
- Rigorous test-based accountability will draw the mix of leadership emphases in the direction of a structuring and instructional style.
- Free school choice will stimulate entrepreneurial leadership.

   It will immediately be obvious that in the English system, as it has evolved and continues to evolve, greater school autonomy, test-based accountability, and free (marketplace) school choice are all strong, recurring leitmotifs. As a result of this,

Table 7.1 Actual LISA findings for England in comparison with other participants

	Entrepreneurial	Structuring	Participative	Personnel	Instructional
Netherlands	3.7 (1)	3.6 (2)			
Norway		3.6 (2)	3.6 (1)		
Italy	3.8 (1)	3.6 (2)			
Germany	3.7 (1)			3.4 (2)	
Hungary	4.0 (1)	4.0 (2)			
Slovenia	3.9 (1)	3.9 (2)			
England	**3.7 (2)**				**3.8 (1)**

we expected to see comparative weakness in the personnel development and participative styles in comparison with the entrepreneurial, structuring, and instructional styles.

This is perhaps important in a wider European context, as it also emerged from the research that there is, in the majority of participating countries, a tendency to move in the direction of single-school autonomy. In very broad terms, this policy direction is vindicated by 2009 PISA findings, which identify a tendency for higher performance in systems with greater school level autonomy. This gives us some idea about the future direction of leadership and the challenges facing it across Europe in the years ahead (Table 7.1).

It is interesting to note as far as England is concerned that, completely in line with expectations, the instructional and entrepreneurial styles feature most strongly, and it is equally noteworthy that the instructional style features nowhere else in the top two styles among the participating countries. The hypothesis concerning the rigorous test- and inspection-based accountability and, one could add, the increasing market orientation of English schools, as well as the rise of the "technocracy" discussed above, have led to this phenomenon. It is an important finding for Europe because it may presage developments elsewhere. It may also of course be construed as a warning to other systems in their move towards more individual school autonomy and public accountability for outcomes.

Drilling down a little further into the results data for England and bearing in mind the small size of the sample (and therefore the caution with which the findings must be treated), it is interesting to note that the participative style did feature more strongly in higher-performing English schools. As noted elsewhere, securing teacher ownership and "buy-in" seems to be associated with increasing levels of performance. Much more research would be needed to corroborate this apparent tendency.

7.6 Concluding Remarks

General conclusions of the LISA research were that the instructional style tends to correlate, in a pan-European context, with school leadership effectiveness. From an English perspective, this is a highly complex, ambiguous, and potentially controversial provisional conclusion. The questions it generates seem as many as the possible

answers it might begin to provide. The strength of the instructional style in the English context is clearly associated with the political and social recent history of the English school system, in turn a product of social and political developments in the UK through the twentieth century, and this history and the assumptions it carries with it continue to inform education policy now.

Would it be valid to seek to replicate the English context elsewhere in order to make school leadership more "instructional" in its focus? It is at least possible that the English system and the leadership styles it has produced are highly history and context dependent. LISA worked on the assumption that leadership has an indirect influence on student achievement through a range of intermediary variables (Pashiardis & Brauckmann, 2008). What other variables are there apart from leadership, which impact on student achievement? Oates' (2010) short analysis of Finnish education history indicates that historical and contemporary influences beyond individual school leadership were prime shapers of that system's contemporary success. The current coalition government's determination to "learn from other countries' successes," as the white paper puts it, particularly as far as school leadership is concerned, is a far more complex matter than it might seem at first sight. To quote the LISA conclusions, "the concept of Leadership is a complex mixture of the five styles explored in the LISA research project, but the sum of the component styles does not really constitute the essence of leadership as a construct" (Brauckmann & Pashiardis, 2009). The rich variations in context, history, school leadership style, and success in terms of student outcomes across Europe which LISA points towards are certainly good reasons to keep international perspectives open but also should perhaps encourage us to proceed with caution, subtlety, and context sensitivity on the path of policy development and reform.

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Chapter 8
Exploring a New Cocktail Mix in Cyprus: School Principals' Epistemological Beliefs and Leadership Styles

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8.1   Introduction

In this chapter, the research team is describing another project, through which we wanted to explore some questions that surfaced as a result of the interviews with school leaders in the LISA project. Specifically, while discussing with school leaders in the seven participating countries, the leaders kept reiterating that they would use one or the other leadership style because they believe that teachers could be influenced to learn better in this way. In fact, what school leaders were telling us was that the leadership style they would choose to utilize depended on their beliefs about how their teachers learnt best. Through the Pro-LEAD project, which began in Cyprus just before the LISA project was completed (in 2009), an attempt was made to fill the identified gaps in research by exploring the relationship between the leadership styles school principals adopt when leading their schools, their epistemological worldviews, and their beliefs about the contextual and governance structures

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in which they operate. At the same time, we wished to find out whether the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework could be validated in the context of Cyprus, since this country was not part of the initial LISA project through which the framework was validated in the seven EU countries. Moreover, we wished to examine in more depth and detail the sensemaking of the various leadership styles by the school leaders in order to further enrich our understanding of the various cocktail leadership mixes that school leaders employ based on their epistemological beliefs.

Understanding the relations among school principals' leadership styles, their epistemological worldviews, and their beliefs about the contextual and educational governance structures in which they operate is important because it can provide insight into *why* principals adopt certain styles in leading their schools. In the previous chapters, the main object of study was the relationships between leadership styles and school climate variables in order to find out the effect they have on student achievement. However, the emphasis placed by the Pro-LEAD research project is not on the effects particular leadership styles bring about, but instead on the factors which influence the adoption of specific leadership styles by school principals in the first place. Thus, through the Pro-LEAD study, we wanted to extend the research on the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework by examining the factors that influence the adoption of one or another leadership style based on the school leaders' epistemological beliefs. In this way, two objectives would be accomplished: (a) the validation of the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework in the Cyprus context and (b) the exploration of school leaders' epistemological beliefs while adopting specific leadership styles. In order to achieve the research aims, a mixed methods approach was used whereby quantitative questionnaire data was combined with qualitative data collection, as described in Chap. 3. Before proceeding any further, it is useful, at this stage, to discuss the relations of governance structures, beliefs, and leadership in the context of the present study, as well as epistemological belief research within the education arena.

8.2   Governance Structures Within Cyprus

School principals' leadership styles likely influence, and are being influenced by, their beliefs about the contextual and governance structures in which they operate. The Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework (Pashiardis & Brauckmann, 2008) acknowledges that school leaders do not operate in a vacuum and takes into account the contextual factors at play. However, little research has been undertaken to explore the relation between leadership style and principals' perceptions of contextual governance structures. Contextual and educational governance structures, such as steering patterns, evaluation, and accountability provisions, can have important implications for principals' leadership styles (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). Investigating the relationship between contextual governance beliefs and leadership style can provide insight into the reasons why school leaders

adopt certain leadership styles in their work and shed light on the complex interactions at play between principals' beliefs and their practices.

The case of Cyprus represents a very good example of a system which resists any efforts of restructuring in any domain. On the whole, power within the education system of Cyprus emanates mainly from the Ministry of Education (through the Inspectorate), while schools and principals are obliged to obey without really questioning the system. Personnel and administrative management, curriculum issues, and money allocation are mostly exercised by the Ministry without any significant deviation. As the UNESCO auditors (Drake, Pair, Ross, Postlethwaite, & Ziogas, 1997) argued in their report on the Cyprus Educational System, the system is very centralized and everything needs to go through the Director of Primary or Secondary Education respectively within the Ministry of Education. School principals can generally handle only small sums of money (most of the time, up to 3,000 Euros per year). Furthermore, the principals have no control or involvement in the appointment of personnel to their school. Whatever the specialization of a teacher and whomever are sent to them by the Education Service Commission and the Ministry of Education, they have to work with. Moreover, the centralized nature of transfers of teachers in the various schools as well as the (almost) yearly redistribution of personnel constitutes a major obstacle in achieving any meaningful feeling of being a cohesive group or creating a distinct school culture and ethos at the school level. On the whole, it is clear that the power lies in the hands of the Ministry of Education and not in the hands of the principal at the school level. Furthermore, within the education system of Cyprus, as described above, the notion that there is a fixed core body of knowledge which only evaluators or experts hold best describes the epistemological belief of Realism. The epistemological belief of Relativism on the other hand is based on the notion that each person, expert or not, constructs their own unique knowledge base which is as equal to and as valid as any other person's.

Within this centralized context, the research team wanted to explore and further extent the notion that school leaders utilize certain leadership styles when exercising their leadership duties. However, we wanted to introduce a new concept that of epistemological beliefs and find out how (if at all) these beliefs influence the way these leadership styles are enacted in specific situations.

8.3   Educators' Epistemological Beliefs

According to Pajares (1992), educators' beliefs can be deeply personal, unaffected by persuasion, and either implicitly or explicitly expressed in daily routines. Their beliefs can be formed by chance, an intense experience or a succession of events, and may include beliefs about different facets of teaching, learning, or knowledge in general. Most research up to now has focused on the epistemological beliefs of students and teachers, while scarce attention has been paid to the epistemological beliefs of school leaders. In the absence of research on school leaders, we will thus focus on the available research into the epistemological beliefs of teachers.

Epistemological beliefs serve to establish a psychological context for teaching (Pajares, 1992) and learning (Schoenfeld, 1988). Within this line of research, several studies have focused on teachers' views about the disciplines they teach (Blanco & Niaz, 1997; Brickhouse, 1990), while others examine teachers' beliefs about how students acquire knowledge (Johnston, Woodside-Jiron, & Day, 2001; Maor & Taylor, 1995). Some teachers conceptualize learning as students receiving knowledge that is passively handed down to them by the expert (in this case, the teacher). Others, in contrast, view learning as an actively constructed understanding of the world.

As expected, research has shown that teachers' epistemological beliefs are often correlated with a variety of their instructional practices (e.g., Brownlee, 2001; Hashweh, 1996; Johnston et al., 2001; Kang & Wallace, 2004). More specifically, teachers' epistemological beliefs have been shown to affect teachers' use of teaching strategies and methods (Chan & Elliot, 2000; Hashweh, 1996), their use of problem-solving approaches (Martens, 1992), their efforts in curriculum adaptation (Prawat, 1992), their use of textbooks (Freeman & Porter, 1989), their openness to student alternative conceptions (Hashweh, 1996), their preservice training needs (Many, Howard, & Hoge, 1998), their students' reading practices (Anders & Evans, 1994), their students' use of higher-level thinking skills (Maor & Taylor, 1995), as well as their class management and learning focus (Chan & Elliot, 2000).

For example, Arredondo and Rucinski (1996a) found that teachers with relativistic epistemological beliefs were more innovative, democratic, and empathetic compared to teachers with naïve epistemological beliefs who adopted a more transmissive approach to teaching characterized by the tendency to assume that children learn from the direction of knowledgeable others and that knowledge is absolute. Similarly, Brownlee (2001) in a piece of research exploring the epistemological beliefs of preservice teacher education students found that student teachers holding relativistic (mature) epistemological beliefs were more reflective about their own thinking, were more likely to employ teaching practices that helped children construct their own meanings, and were more aware of how they and others construct meaning. Moreover, these teachers viewed teaching as a method of facilitation and therefore, tried to develop active teaching and learning partnerships with their students (Sinatra & Kardash, 2004; Yadav & Koehler, 2007).

8.4 Linking Educators' Epistemological Beliefs with Contextual Factors

Although a number of studies have proposed direct links among teachers' epistemological beliefs, teaching and learning beliefs, and their instructional practices, not all studies have provided empirical support for such a link (e.g., Bolden & Newton, 2008; Schraw & Olafson, 2002; White, 2000; Wilcox-Herzog, 2002). Consequently, based on research indicating that there may not be a direct link between teachers'

beliefs and teaching practices (White; Wilcox-Herzog, 2002), the question inevitably arises as to *why* teachers do not practice what they believe. The lack of alignment may be taken to be a sign of epistemological uncertainty, but it may also be taken to be an indication that external constraints may be at play which prevent teachers to teach in accordance to their beliefs (Wilcox-Herzog).

Studies which did not find a direct causal relation between epistemological beliefs and teachers' practices have reported several constraints that affected the coherence between beliefs and practice such as social factors (Duschl & Wright, 1989); situational constraints (Benson, 1989); teachers' level of experience, intentions, and perceptions of students (Lederman, 1999); and a reliance on district-mandated curriculum and teaching strategies (Schraw & Olafson, 2002). Maggioni and Parkinson (2008), in a review of the literature on teachers' epistemological cognitions, epistemological beliefs and calibration, suggest that one of the reasons that the majority of studies cannot claim a causal relation between epistemological beliefs and teaching practices, while at the same time a few studies do report a consistent relation between the two factors, is due to the role played by contextual factors. In particular, Maggioni and Parkinson point out that the relationship between epistemological beliefs and teaching practices is rendered complicated in part by the school context in which teachers operate. As they explain, teachers often feel they need to consider not only the nature of learning and knowledge but also the curricular and institutional constraints they may face as well as their own students' contributions (or lack thereof) to the classroom exchange.

Further, Schraw and Olafson (2002) identified a number of external barriers stemming from the teacher preparation program, the school district, and the culture of teaching that constrained teachers from acting upon their beliefs. Therefore, it seems that even though teachers may indicate that they believe in the effectiveness of student-centered teaching approaches (thus developing a relativist worldview), in practice, in their everyday teaching, they may still use district-wide mandated curriculum and expository teaching practices (Schraw & Olafson).

Therefore, a possible answer to the question of why teachers do not practice what they preach is that other factors mediate or moderate the relation between epistemological beliefs and teaching practices. A possible factor which may be a mediator or moderator to this relationship is the context in which the educator is operating. Louca, Elby, Hammer, and Kagey (2004) propose that consistent and conscious epistemological beliefs evolve from cognitive resources that, activated by the context, enable individuals to understand knowledge. In particular, the influence of context in activating different resources, as Maggioni and Parkinson (2008) suggest, is used to explain differences between the views of knowledge that the teachers verbalize and the beliefs that one would infer by observing their classroom interactions. Based on findings indicating that epistemological beliefs may change depending on the context (e.g., Olafson & Schraw, 2006; White, 2000; Yadav & Koehler, 2007), the need to take into account school-related contextual and governance factors, when researching teachers' epistemological beliefs, seems vital.

8.5   School Leaders' Epistemological Beliefs

Evidence in support for a hypothesized link between school leaders' epistemological beliefs and leadership styles is mainly based on the existing recent research on teachers' epistemological beliefs. In the same way it has been demonstrated by recent research that epistemological beliefs influence the practices of teachers within the classroom, it can be postulated that it is also likely that epistemological beliefs influence the practices of school leaders in their respective way of "teaching" the teachers of their schools. As mentioned elsewhere in this book, this hypothesized connection came out of the interviews with school leaders who kept mentioning that they would utilize certain styles based on their own thinking about how the teachers in their schools learn best or are better influenced. Therefore, it seemed to us that these school leaders' beliefs would probably influence their leadership styles in use. Thus, the need arose to investigate this issue further.

For example, Ellinger, Watkins, and Bostrom (1999) proposed a model by which they suggest that a manager's belief system influences the manager's role identity as a facilitator of learning for their employees, which in turn influences the behavior of the manager in the setting of the learning organization. Indeed, a qualitative study carried out by the researchers with 12 managers indicated that the managers' belief systems do in fact guide the adoption of roles which facilitate learning and development of their employees as initially expected. Further, as the researchers pointed out, the beliefs may even be considered a *critical factor* for the managers of their study and their adoption of roles to facilitate learning and development (Ellinger et al., p. 121).

Dirkx (1999) commenting on the aforementioned research by Ellinger and her colleagues (1999) points out that the researchers did not take into account the context and suggests investigating *how* and *why* some beliefs become valued and adopted while others do not, by specifically looking at the contextual factors at play. In effect, as Dirkx notes: "…*managers' beliefs and behaviors are shaped and influenced by the particular social, cultural and political factors present*…" (p. 132). Indeed, Ellinger, Watkins, and Bostrom (2000) concur with Dirkx (1999) that examining these questions would be beneficial for future research in the area. Therefore, as in the research on the relationship of teachers' epistemological beliefs and their teaching practices, similarly, in the case of leaders (or managers), it seems that the need to take into account the contextual factors at play is again stressed.

As previously discussed, research on the epistemological beliefs of school leaders is very limited, and the little evidence that exists has significant methodological limitations. Because there is evidence that the epistemological beliefs of teachers and school principals do not significantly differ, parallels can be drawn from the research on the epistemological beliefs of teachers to inform research on the epistemological beliefs of school leaders. For instance, there is evidence suggesting that epistemological beliefs of teachers influence their teaching practices. Similarly, epistemological beliefs of leaders may influence their leadership practices since leaders in most educational systems are ex-teachers. Thus, identifying

the epistemological worldviews of school principals will inform our knowledge of principals' epistemological beliefs but will also particularly aid in exploring the possible effects of epistemological beliefs on school leadership styles, as it is likely that principals' epistemological beliefs either constrain or facilitate their decision-making and practices about which leadership style is best suited to use, depending on the circumstances they are in. With this type of investigation, the hope arose among the research team that our previous exploration about the best leadership cocktail mix during the LISA project would be further illuminated with the findings of what else influences the creation of this leadership mix, that is, epistemological beliefs.

8.6   The Aim: A New Cocktail Mix

The new cocktail mix brings together the exploration of the relation between school principals' leadership styles and epistemological worldviews in conjunction with their beliefs about the contextual and governance structures in which school principals operate. Even though a great deal of attention has been given to school principals' leadership styles and even though there is evidence that epistemological beliefs are influenced by the context in which teachers and students operate, little attention has been given to the effects of contextual and educational governance structures on school leaders' perceptions, beliefs, and practices. It is likely that contextual and educational governance structures, as interpreted by school leaders and the epistemological beliefs held by school leaders, influence the leadership styles adopted in their work. Patterns of centralization or decentralization as well as evaluation and accountability arrangements set the backdrop for each school leader to lead, as presented previously within the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework.

8.7   Sources of Data: Validation of the Questionnaires

As mentioned in Chap. 3, three structured questionnaires were developed and validated to assess principals' leadership styles, epistemological beliefs, and beliefs about the contextual and educational governance structures for the implementation of the Pro-LEAD study. The School Leadership Questionnaire and the Contextual Governance Questionnaire were constructed in Greek, based on the same instruments utilized in the LISA project (Brauckmann & Pashiardis, 2011; Pashiardis & Brauckmann, 2008); these questionnaires were enriched with more questionnaire items based on the particular context of Cyprus, where the Pro-LEAD study was carried out. The *School Leadership Questionnaire* included 48 items tapping on each of the five leadership styles in the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework. The *Epistemological Beliefs Questionnaire* was developed based on a

Table 8.1 Reliability
analyses of the five
leadership styles

Leadership style	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha
Instructional	7	.91
Participative	7	.86
Personnel development	7	.84
Entrepreneurial	4	.85
Structuring	4	.82

similar instrument developed by Olafson and Schraw (2006) and included eight items and three vignettes which were designed to correspond to three epistemological beliefs: Relativism, Realism, and constructivism. The *Contextual Governance Questionnaire* included 93 items touching on issues related to decentralization measures as well as evaluation and accountability.

The instruments were all translated into Greek to enable the school leaders to complete them in their own language and were adapted (as mentioned above) to the particular education system of Cyprus. Thus, in this project, the respondents were school principals who worked within the public school system of Cyprus. The data for each of the quantitative questionnaires was analyzed using reliability analyses, correlations, and Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) to identify their underlying structures. Then, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) within Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to test different theoretical models depicting various relationships between the identified constructs of the questionnaires.

8.7.1   Validation of the School Leadership Questionnaire in the Cypriot Context

The first thing we needed to do was to validate the School Leadership Questionnaire, which was used for the LISA project, in the context of the Cyprus educational system. In order to do this, Exploratory Factor Analysis was carried out on the participants' responses to the School Leadership Questionnaire. It should be reminded that the respondents in the Pro-LEAD study were primary and secondary school principals in the public schools of Cyprus. In accordance to the results of the pilot study and in accordance to the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework, the factor analysis revealed five factors which corresponded to the following leadership styles: Entrepreneurial, Instructional, Structuring, Participative, and Personnel Development. Numbers of items per factor and reliability indices are presented in Table 8.1.

To examine the fit of the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was performed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM; EQS version 6.1). We tested a second-order factor model in which we hypothesized that the leadership radius is a second-order factor indicated by five first-order factors that corresponded to each one of the leadership styles extracted from the Exploratory Factor Analysis. The model (Fig. 8.1) had a fairly good fit to the data: χ^2 (370, $N = 283$) $= 588.6$, $p < .01$; *CFI* $= .94$; *NNFI* $= .94$; *RMSEA* $= .048$.
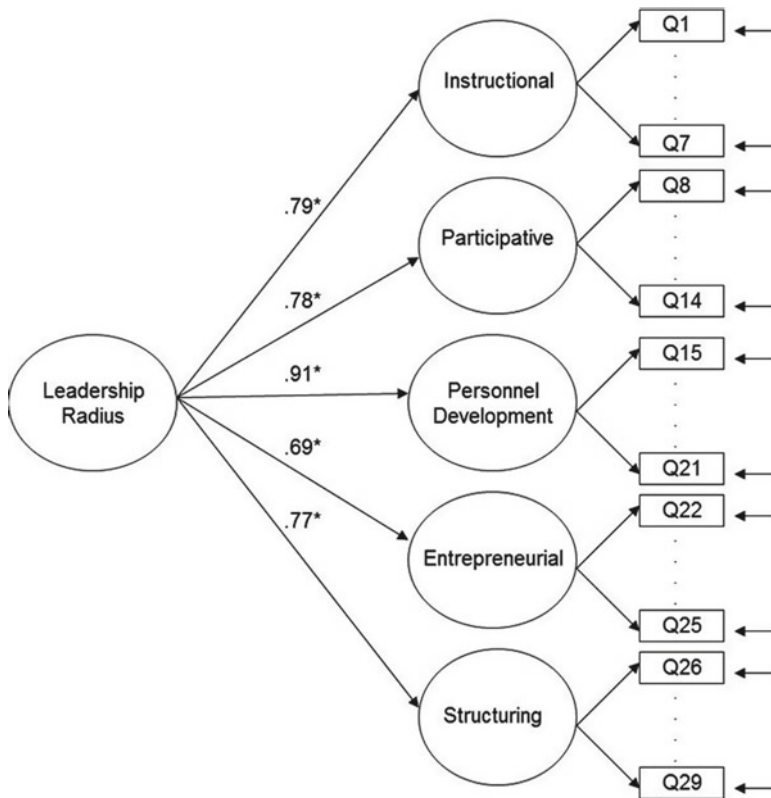
Fig. 8.1 Confirmation of the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework in the context of Cyprus

Therefore, the School Leadership Questionnaire was validated and can be considered reliable in Cyprus as well as in the other seven EU countries which participated in the LISA project, namely, Germany (North Rhine-Westphalia), England, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, and Slovenia (Brauckmann & Pashiardis, 2011; Pashiardis & Brauckmann, 2008).

8.7.2 Validation of the Epistemological Beliefs Questionnaire in the Cypriot Context

Next, we decided that we needed a valid instrument in order to assess the epistemological beliefs of Cypriot school leaders. In order to construct scales corresponding to each type of epistemological beliefs, reliability analyses (Cronbach's alpha) and correlations were run on participants' responses to the eight items and to the three vignettes used in the Epistemological Beliefs Questionnaire (please see Appendix 3).

Table 8.2 Reliability analysis and descriptions of realism and relativism

Epistemological worldview	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha/correlation
Instructional	2	.24
Participative	3	.54
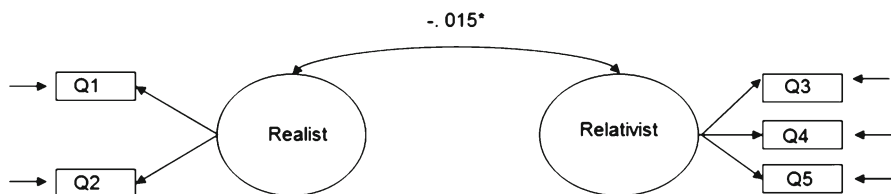
Fig. 8.2 The two-factor structure of the epistemological beliefs questionnaire

Reliability of the items related to constructivism was very low and thus those items were not used in further analyses. Table 8.2 presents the results of the reliability analyses and correlations of the items which were used to construct the scales of *Realism* and *Relativism*. As can be seen from Table 8.2, the reliabilities of the items related to *Realism* and *Relativism* were also quite low. Low reliability or low correlation between the items of epistemological beliefs is typical and has been observed in other pieces of research (Muis, 2007; Muis, Kendeou, & Franco, 2011). Figure 8.2 depicts the weak, albeit significant negative relationship between these two types of epistemological beliefs. The model had a fairly good fit to the data: χ^2 (5, $N=283$)$=7.65$, $p=.17$; *CFI*$=.98$; *NNFI*$=.95$; *RMSEA*$=.046$.

8.8 Building the Bigger Picture: Linking School Leadership and Epistemological Beliefs

After constructing the scales and determining factor scores from the questionnaire items, the relationships between the five leadership styles and the two epistemological beliefs were explored with the use of Correlation Analysis. From the correlations which were carried out (Tables 8.3 and 8.4), it appeared that *school level awareness*, as a result of external evaluation and accountability, was related to the *Instructional Leadership Style*, the *Personnel Development Style*, and the *Structuring Style*. In other words, it seems that school principals, during the utilization of various leadership styles, agree that the more external agents show an interest in the school (through the processes of external evaluation and accountability), the more interest will be created within the school unit.

Furthermore, the *Entrepreneurial Style* was found to be associated with beliefs that the external evaluation and accountability practices could lead to the improvement of the school climate (including greater job satisfaction of teachers and greater commitment of teachers to their school) as well as to more school level awareness

Table 8.3 Correlations between the variables of school leadership, epistemological beliefs, and contextual governance

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Instructional	—	.586**	.564**	.591**	.528**	.018	.108	.071	.051	-.017	-.033	.077	-.047	-.061	.203**
Participative		—	.635**	.424**	.535**	-.084	.087	.019	.040	-.036	.018	.107	-.033	.010	.079
Personnel Development			—	.564**	.656**	.045	.050	.052	.031	.026	-.113	.055	.059	-.083	.113
Entrepreneurial				—	.479**	-.047	.135*	.139*	.036	.004	-.011	.036	.183**	-.038	.193**
Structuring					—	-.052	.110	.087	.061	.014	-.046	.097	.022	-.165*	.146*
Realist						—	.009	.029	-.070	-.027	.049	-.075	.056	.001	.060
Relativist							—	.098	.143*	.045	-.025	-.024	.049	-.019	.132
Better school climate								—	.000	.000	.000	-.083	.391**	-.031	.047
Daily improvement in administration									—	.000	.000	.090	.026	.020	.166*
Involvement of external agents										—	.000	.074	.062	.090	.417**
Conflicts											—	.038	-.023	.299**	.026
Assessment overload (competition for grades)												—	.000	.000	.000
Better school climate													—	.000	.000
Fraud and deception mechanisms														—	.000
School level awareness (benefits)															—

Note: **p<.01, *p<.05

Table 8.4 Correlations between the variables of school leadership, epistemological beliefs, and contextual governance

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Instructional	–	.586**	.564**	.591**	.528**	.018	.108	.149*	.004	.038	.085	.042
Participative		–	.635**	.424**	.535**	-.084	.087	.108	.009	-.014	.015	.011
Personnel development			–	.564**	.656**	.045	.050	.086	-.004	-.077	-.027	-.083
Entrepreneurial				–	.479**	-.047	.135*	.294**	.114	.172**	.213**	.136*
Structuring					–	-.052	.110	.078	-.012	-.014	.015	.000
Realist						–	.009	.032	.156*	.118	.135*	.129*
Relativist							–	.135*	.010	.102	.071	.036
Instructional domain of decision-making								–	.594**	.358**	.323**	.289**
Personnel domain of decision-making									–	.348**	.345**	.321**
Pedagogy-related support for decentralization										–	.809**	.728**
Personnel-related support for decentralization											–	.840**
Budget-related support for decentralization												–

Note: ** $p<.01$, * $p<.05$

(including greater parental involvement, accountability of schools for their results, and identification of the strengths and weaknesses of the school). These relations suggest that school principals who are more entrepreneurial in their leadership, that is, those who are more outward-looking in their leadership style, view the involvement of external agents in a positive light, as they probably consider that these external agents will monitor but also support the school, thus helping to improve feelings of commitment and satisfaction on behalf of the teachers.

Relationships also were found between the epistemological beliefs and the Entrepreneurial Leadership Style. Specifically, the *Entrepreneurial Style* was weakly, albeit significantly related to the *Relativism* epistemological belief type. This relation suggests that the more entrepreneurial a school principal is, the more he/she will have the view that knowledge is constructed with people inside and outside the school. Accordingly, the more relativist a school principal is, the more "outward" he/she will tend to be and the less he/she will perceive the school to be the "private domain" of teachers alone. *Relativism* was also related to *Pedagogy-related decision-making*. This relation suggests that the more relativist the views of the respondents are, the higher their engagement in decision-making on pedagogically related aspects of the curriculum.

In short, what the above results tell us is that the Instructional, Structuring, and Entrepreneurial Leadership Styles are significantly related with the epistemological beliefs as well as the context in which school leaders operate. In fact, when these leaders build their perceptions about the possible effects that contextual factors will have on their schools and their related actions, they are influenced by their epistemological beliefs as to which leadership styles seem to be more suitable for them to use in a particular situation. Thus, the quantitative results from the Pro-LEAD project provide some support to our hypothesized link between leadership styles and epistemological beliefs of school leaders, albeit weak. Moving on to the qualitative phase of the results, a similar picture appears to emerge.

As was mentioned in Chap. 3, the qualitative data collection involved a think-aloud task during which school principals were asked to read and think-aloud about a complex problem in a school context (the think-aloud scenario appears in Appendix 4). Participants were asked to read the scenario and spontaneously say out loud whatever came to mind at specific points with regard to the actions that probably need to be taken. The same case study was used in primary and secondary education principals with the only difference being that one scenario described a complex situation involving teachers, students, and the community in a primary school, whereas the second described the same situation taking place in a secondary school.

Specifically, both primary and secondary school principals read a scenario in which they had to make a controversial decision regarding the safety of their school, deal with the potential objections of the teachers and parents to their decision, and also make decisions regarding the resources needed to effectuate their plans. The aim of the think-aloud scenario was to assess participants' views on the issues which were touched upon in the questionnaire, that is, on the five leadership styles, the epistemological beliefs, and on contextual governance structures. However, it should be noted that even though an effort was made to evoke as many

of the constructs used in the questionnaire, it was not possible for a single think-aloud scenario to tap onto all of these constructs.

Principals' responses to the think-aloud tasks were coded based on a coding scheme developed from the main ideas extracted from the quantitative analysis. Thus, the qualitative analysis was conducted on identified quantitative themes. In addition, three new themes/main ideas emerged from the participants' responses to the think-aloud scenarios. These referred to the following: (a) taking initiatives and risks for the good of the school even against the wishes of the Ministry, (b) being in support of overly strict security measures (e.g., involving the use of private police in schools, asking police to interrogate and take statements and fingerprints from students), and (c) feelings of responsibility towards the school (e.g., involving visiting the school at nights or on weekends to ensure everything is in order). The frequency of responses for each think-aloud category was analyzed using Correlation Analysis, independent samples t-tests, and chi-squared tests to explore relations, as well as group differences among primary and secondary school principals.

Correlations were performed in order to explore primarily whether there would be significant relations between the identified constructs in the think-alouds that referred to leadership styles and epistemological worldviews. This analysis showed that there was a negative significant relation between *Realism* and *Relativism*. This negative relationship between the two types of epistemological beliefs was also demonstrated in the quantitative phase of the study and increases the converging validity of the study. Moreover, significant relationships were found between the two types of epistemological beliefs and the *Participative Style*; *Participative Style* correlated negatively with *Realism* and positively with *Relativism*. On the one hand, this finding suggests that the more participative a school leader is in his/her leadership style, meaning the more he/she encourages the active participation of staff members in decision-making, the more he/she believes that each individual can construct his/her own knowledge base which may be different from that of others but will be equally valid and equally valued. Thus, school leaders who exhibit more of a Participative Leadership Style tend to be more relativists in their epistemological beliefs. On the other hand, the more participative a school leader is, the less he/she is likely to consider that there is a preestablished knowledge base which needs to be transmitted from themselves as the experts to the teachers who will passively take it in. Thus, school leaders who exhibit more of a Participative Leadership Style tend to be less realists in their epistemological beliefs.

For example, the relationship between the *Participative Style* and *Relativism* can be clearly demonstrated through the case of Principal 46. This school leader explained that problems faced by the school are resolved through discussions with the teachers, the student board, and the parents association. As she mentioned, together, they seek to find appropriate ways to resolve their problems. Further, the school leader explains that even if she holds a particular opinion on the subject, she will not insist on her view as it is her conviction that "*dialogue resolves any problem*." Therefore, as the school leader involves stakeholders in decision-making through a Participative Leadership Style, she values and respects the opinions of the others and considers them equal to her own.

Table 8.5 Significant correlations between epistemological beliefs, leadership styles, and strong measures

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Realism	–	−.735[**]	−.096	−.522[**]	.206
2. Relativism		–	.346	.727[**]	−.229
3. Entrepreneurial			–	.543[**]	−.087
4. Participative				–	−.322[*]
5. In favor of strong measures					–

Notes: **$p < .01$, *$p < .05$

Furthermore, the *Participative Style* correlated negatively with the use of overly strict security measures in school (measures involving the use of private police in schools, security cameras, asking the police to interrogate and to take statements and fingerprints from students, etc., based on the scenario given to school principals during the think-aloud activity). Moreover, the *Participative Style* correlated positively with the *Entrepreneurial Style*. The relation was also identified in the quantitative phase of the study. These converging findings suggest that these two leadership styles are strongly correlated indicating that school principals in our sample tend to combine these two styles in their work. It is interesting to note that in the quantitative phase, a positive correlation was identified between the *Entrepreneurial Style* and *Relativism*. However, in the qualitative phase, the *Participative Style* correlated positively with *Relativism*. Even though these findings may appear inconsistent at first, they can be explained by the relation between these two leadership styles. It is possible that one of these leadership styles is actually acting as a mediator to the relationship between the other and *Relativism*. In other words, it may be that the relativist epistemological worldview manifests itself in practices consistent with the *Participative Style* which, in turn, encourages school leaders to use practices consistent with the *Entrepreneurial Style*, or vice versa.

The relationship between *Relativism* and the *Participative* and *Entrepreneurial Styles* can be best discussed through the case of Principal 14. As this school leader explained, the decisions at the school are taken not only by himself but through cooperation with members of staff and parents. He stated that he arranges meetings with staff and parents "*not to convince them of my opinion, but because undoubtedly they will have something to suggest, something even more useful that I would have suggested, that we could do for our school.*" It is thus apparent that he considers the opinions of parents and teachers as equal and as valid as his own. Placing value on stakeholders' opinions, he naturally seeks to involve them in school life and in decision-making. Further and in parallel, this school leader not only seeks the opinions and the active involvement of parents in school life but he also uses the links he creates with the parents to seek funding from private companies which the parents may own or work in order to raise money for school activities (Table 8.5).

In short, it seems that school leaders who employ participation of their staff inside the school (Participative Style) as well as those who employ participation of outside stakeholders such as parents (Entrepreneurial Style) tend to be more relativist in their epistemological beliefs. At the same time, it seems that relativist

principals are more prone to utilize an Entrepreneurial and a more Participative Style when exercising leadership in their schools. It is interesting to note that the Participative Style could be seen as the Entrepreneurial Style inside the school. Thus, relativist types of principals tend to be more inclusive in their leadership approach both inside as well as outside their school.

8.9   Conclusions

The main objective of the discussions of the findings in the Pro-LEAD study in the context of this book was to explore the relationship between the leadership styles school principals adopt when leading their schools and their epistemological beliefs within the contextual governance structures in which they operate. The Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework was used once more as the guiding model. To address these relationships, we followed a mixed methods approach combining quantitative and qualitative data. It should be reminded that the research team embarked into this project within the context of Cyprus in order to make connections about leadership styles and epistemological beliefs of school principals, that is, explore further and connect the findings of the LISA project with regard to the influences school leaders received when adopting their leadership cocktail mix; at the same time in an effort to be consistent, the same theoretical framework was utilized in this project as with the LISA project, i.e., the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework.

To summarize the main findings, the quantitative analyses revealed a significant positive relationship between the Entrepreneurial Style and Relativism while the qualitative analyses pointed to a positive relationship between the Participative Style and Relativism. Furthermore, the findings from both phases revealed several relations between leadership styles and epistemological beliefs with the variables related to the contextual governance structures. The leading roles in these relationships were mainly played by the Entrepreneurial and the Participative Styles. The important linkage between the Entrepreneurial Style and the Participative Style was strong in both phases, suggesting the need for future research to explore in more detail the exact relationship between both these two leadership styles and Relativism.

The results of this research have contributed to our understanding of how principals' leadership styles relate to their epistemological worldviews and to their beliefs about contextual factors and organizational arrangements. However, unearthing such complex relationships with little past research in the field to rely on is a difficult task. Even though care was taken to incorporate into the research the epistemological belief of constructivism, and despite the fact that the reliability of the items concerning constructivism was strong when pilot tested, in the main study, these exact same items failed to reach a satisfactory degree of reliability and were thus excluded from further analysis. Moreover, even though great effort was made to incorporate all the constructs identified from the questionnaire data into the think-aloud scenario, practically this was problematic which meant that some constructs had to be left out of the qualitative data collection.

Building on these limitations, but concurrently using the results of this research as a stepping stone, future research could assist in clarifying these relationships. Considering that past research in the field is very limited, additional research will undoubtedly help broaden our understanding of the relationship between school leadership styles and epistemological beliefs while exploring the mediating or moderating role of the context in which school leaders operate on a daily basis. Furthermore, through this piece of research the School Leadership Questionnaire, the Epistemological Beliefs Questionnaire, and the Contextual Governance Questionnaire were validated in the Greek language in Cyprus, while the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework was validated in Cyprus in addition to the other seven EU countries which took part in the LISA project (Brauckmann & Pashiardis, 2011; Pashiardis & Brauckmann, 2008).

Further to the important theoretical applications, these findings also have considerable practical applications. In effect, these results can be used to design and implement appropriate evidence-based training programs which will guide school principals into enhancing their epistemological development but also assist them in putting their epistemological beliefs into practice. Previous research on the epistemological beliefs of teachers has suggested that the design of suitable teacher training programs based on evidence from recent epistemological beliefs research can, in some cases, prove effective in improving the epistemological beliefs of teachers (e.g., Brownlee, Purdie, & Boulton-Lewis, 2001). In fact, Howard, McGree, Schwartz, and Purcell (2000) noted changes in the epistemological beliefs of teachers after only 4 weeks of exposure to suitable training. These findings suggest that suitably designed training programs may be effective in changing the epistemological beliefs of school principals in the same way as those of teachers. Such training programs could guide principals to develop more sophisticated epistemological beliefs but also assist them in practically applying these more sophisticated beliefs in their everyday practice in the particular context in which they operate. Perhaps more training towards exploring and developing a more relativist epistemological point of view could be offered, in conjunction with training on how to become more Entrepreneurial and Participative as a leader.

Based on this part of our research, it could be ascertained that modern school leaders should increasingly become more *Entrepreneurial* and *Participative* in their approaches and become proponents of *Relativist* views towards education. That way, they would be better equipped in utilizing more problem-solving techniques both for their students and for their teachers, thus providing more creative solutions to the everyday and persistent problems and dilemmas that schools nowadays face. Future research could target on the design of such effective evidence-based school leadership programs which would take into account not only the existing epistemological beliefs of school principals but also the particular contextual and governance factors at play in the principals' individual schools. What is also interesting is that the Entrepreneurial Leadership Style was found to be one of the main styles utilized by school leaders in the seven countries which took part in the LISA project. Therefore, it seems that the Entrepreneurial Leadership Style is increasingly becoming one of the main vehicles through which school leaders can help improve student achievement but, at the same time, help reconstruct their own epistemological beliefs.

In summary, it is our hope that the results of this piece of research will encourage more research attention to this neglected area. Only through a sound and solid base of research evidence will school leaders be effectively assisted in both developing sophisticated epistemological beliefs as well as identifying practical ways of putting those beliefs into practice. The research team believes that this discussion will not only provide the scientific community with an interdisciplinary view of the impact of beliefs, leadership, and context factors on practices but also inspire future work studying these, and related, topics, in an effort to create a new leadership cocktail mix which incorporates leadership styles with epistemological beliefs and context.

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Chapter 9
In Search of the Right Leadership Cocktail Mix: Being Locally Responsive to Global Issues

Petros Pashiardis

9.1   Introduction: Examining the Macro-level

In this chapter, the effort will be on bringing everything together in order to find out the net contributions of both the LISA and the Pro-LEAD projects to policy, research, and practice. In an era which is becoming increasingly more turbulent and uncertainty is becoming the norm, the making of a world economy, the absence of a different socio-politico-cultural content, and the ever-increasing power of multinational corporations have, as a result, contributed to the creation of more paradox and a new web of relationships both locally and globally (Murphy, 2012; National Center on Education and the Economy, 2006; Pashiardis, 2012; UNESCO, 2012a, 2012b, 2012c).

Within this context, educational leaders need to think globally, but, at the same time, they need to act locally in an ever-increasing tension between these two tendencies which operate in a continuum. Education is increasingly relying on the theory of human capital which considers it as an investment that can contribute to the economic development of a society, if people have the right skills. Therefore, an education system is increasingly becoming more of a technocratic and utilitarian instrument which needs to contribute to the macroeconomic development of a country or society at large. Thus, increasingly, education is not considered a "common public good" anymore, but instead it tends to be seen as a transactional activity for more economic prosperity. The situation described above need not be a dichotomy between local and global, but instead there should be interactive synergy between the two, as there are many benefits that can emanate from globalization.

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Within this context, which is increasingly becoming more situational, we need to reexamine the move from the individual (and local) to the collective (and global or systems thinking at the macro-level) and try to find out what is the main aim of education during our era. Is the aim to create a democratic society (from a global as well as a local perspective)? Is it to provide equal opportunities for all (from a global as well as a local perspective)? And then, what is the role of school leaders within the context as described above? Is it to create a more socially, just society (from a global as well as a local perspective)? It is the author's contention that we have moved far too much to the collective side (in the sense of "one-size fits-all" mentality) of the pendulum (globalization in its dark sense) and to the detriment of the individual (localization in its bright sense) and the local. Thus, this chapter's goal is not to provide answers to these questions and concerns. Rather, the aim here is to attempt to provide some answers as to the kind of school leaders(hip) we need in order to proceed forward in our attempts to educate the future citizens for the world, once the goals for education have been redefined. Therefore, the quest about the best school leadership mix and its effects on student achievement, which began with the LISA project, is still the main focus of this chapter. Alongside, we try to tie together the Pro-LEAD project in order to help explain some of the findings as they relate to the epistemological beliefs of school leaders as well.

9.2 Why Does School Leadership Matter (Even More) During Our Times?

As was mentioned in the previous chapters, in view of the complex and changing context of education, school leadership has gained growing attention by educational policy makers. This is why various stakeholders have increased their expectations from school principals demanding, for instance, higher academic results and performance standards. There is a wide agreement about the need to have school leaders who exhibit the capacity to improve the quality of teaching and learning that takes place in their schools. School effectiveness as well as school improvement research has demonstrated the importance of the role of the leader in school life. This is mainly due to research evidence produced so far that the principal's role is indeed crucial for improving students' academic achievement (e.g., Kythreotis, Pashiardis, & Kyriakides, 2010; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005).

Furthermore, as mentioned previously, in the current era of globalization, school leadership issues are increasingly debated and also need to be further explored in an international and comparative context. Thus, within the LISA and Pro-LEAD projects, particularly interesting was our effort to link school leadership and research at a European level through the development of transversal instruments and techniques in order to improve quality and effectiveness of the schools in terms of teachers' job satisfaction and students' achievement. The core question of LISA was concerned with the role that principals' leadership styles (attitudes, behaviors, and practices) can play in contributing to the improvement and effectiveness of the school, especially with regard to educational outcomes.

As was mentioned in the previous chapters, based on a literature review on school leadership, educational governance, and school effectiveness over the last few decades and according to the heuristic theoretical framework developed by Pashiardis and Brauckmann (2008), five leadership styles were extracted and labeled. Each leadership style consists of specific behaviors and practices which are likely to be exhibited by school principals, as described below. Thus, the *Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework* comprised of the following leadership styles:

Instructional Style, representing leadership practices that enable achievement of instructional objectives (i.e., providing instructional resources, encouraging higher-order forms of teaching and learning, promoting the implementation and use of knowledge in a variety of forms, monitoring standards of teaching and learning, providing concrete feedback to staff, utilizing evaluation data in order to improve personnel)

Participative Style, representing leadership practices that promote cooperation and commitment (i.e., promoting open communication with the staff, leaving instructional autonomy to teachers, creating a common vision for school improvement, actively involving staff in planning and implementing this vision, solving problems in cooperation with the teachers, implementing participative decision-making processes, facilitating decision making by consensus, discussing school affairs with the teachers)

Personnel Development Style, representing leadership practices that promote training and development of teachers (i.e., providing recognition for excellence and achievement; rewarding teachers for their special contributions; encouraging the professional development of teachers; registering outstanding performance of teachers; making informed recommendations to personnel placement, transfer, retention, and dismissal; complimenting teachers who contribute exceptionally to school activities; informing teachers about possibilities for updating their knowledge and skills)

Entrepreneurial Style, representing leadership practices that promote the involvement of external actors (i.e., encouraging relations between the school and the community and parents, promoting cooperation with other organizations and businesses, discussing school goals with relevant stakeholders, utilizing appropriate and effective techniques for community and parental involvement, promoting two-way communication between the school and the community, projecting a positive image to the community, building trust within the local community, communicating the school vision to the external community)

Structuring Style, representing leadership practices that promote establishment and implementation of clear rules (i.e., ensuring clarity about the roles and activities of staff, ensuring clarity about work priorities, providing clarity in relation to student behavior rules, ensuring that school rules and consequences of misconduct are uniformly applied to all students, working on the creation of an orderly atmosphere, providing clarity regarding policies and procedures to be implemented)

The above leadership styles were the main components of the conceptual model which Pashiardis and Brauckmann (2008) utilized throughout the research for both projects (LISA and Pro-LEAD). This became the guiding framework through which all analyses and interpretations were conducted, in order to find out how leadership styles relate with student achievement, school improvement, and epistemological beliefs.

9.3 How Do Styles of School Leaders(hip) Contribute to School Improvement and Effectiveness of Their Schools Anyway?

School leaders have a measurable, mostly indirect influence on learning outcomes, as was mentioned in previous chapters in this book. The impact of school leaders on student learning is generally mediated by other people, events, and organizational factors. School leaders, through the practicing of different leadership styles and based on their epistemological beliefs, can influence directly the motivations, capacities, and working conditions of teachers who, in turn, shape classroom practice and student learning. The following intermediary school climate variables (meaning that each of those variables is reloaded by one or more of the abovementioned leadership styles and its implicit leadership activities) have been found through our research that they are most responsible for creating the conditions under which teachers can perform well and therefore can lead to improved student achievement.

In a sense, we are describing a direct effect from the school leader which has an effect on other variables that are more directly related with teaching and learning and classroom behaviors. After the validation process of the *Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework* was finished, it became evident (from the results and analyses) that the following seven school climate factors act as the intermediary variables between leadership styles and student achievement in these two research projects.

9.3.1 Professional Development Opportunities

Professional development opportunities represent practices that promote a climate for teacher professional development. The items included in this factor concern the provision of sufficient opportunities for professional training, the provision of necessary information and useful feedback to teachers in order to perform their duties, free discussion of issues regarding teacher continuous improvement, and teachers finding their job at the school motivating, undertaking initiatives and responsibilities, and participating in decision-making processes. Overall, this variable concerns the intellectual stimulation and empowerment of teachers as reflective practitioners. In sum, it seems that the more professional development

opportunities are offered to teachers, the more influence there is on student achievement. These development opportunities though need to be targeted towards the specific needs of a particular school and its teachers in order to be more successful.

9.3.2   Evaluation and Feedback Practices

With regard to the *Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework*, *evaluation and feedback practices* are used to denote the two purposes of evaluation (evaluation can be defined as the process through which information and data are collected in order to reach decisions concerning purposes of improvement or accountability). This variable entails items such as whether concrete feedback is given to staff with regard to teaching and learning and whether observations and evaluations of teaching are used for improvement and change or in order to meet external requirements. Thus, it seems that one of the most important activities which school leaders need to do is to create opportunities for classroom observations and then providing feedback to teachers in their schools regarding the quality of the teaching and learning that takes place in their classrooms.

9.3.3   Teacher Commitment

Teacher commitment constitutes an important aspect of the performance and quality of school personnel. Teachers face a great deal of complexity and tension in schools, and therefore, it is important to keep them engaged and enthusiastic about what they do. Commitment is defined here as the loyalty and dedication which teachers exhibit when fulfilling the aims and goals of their school. The items of this variable comprise of the teachers' clear understanding of what is expected of them in their work, a clear perception of the school's direction, their commitment to achieving the school goals and maintaining high standards of discipline, and teachers feeling responsible for the quality of their work and trying to perform to the maximum extent possible as well as placing a strong emphasis on student learning. Indeed there is ample research (which has been presented elsewhere in this book) that indicates the importance of commitment in order to be more productive. Teachers need to feel that they belong, that it is "their school," and thus commit themselves to producing higher-quality results in terms of their students' learning.

9.3.4   Parental Involvement

Within the *Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework*, *parental involvement* mostly concerns aspects entailed in involvement in school decision-making processes; constructive and frequent two-way communication between the

family and school regarding school programs and their children's progress; volunteerism in programs, events, and activities organized by the school; and collaborating with the community. It seems that school leaders and teachers need to reexamine their perceptions of parents as adversaries and to look at them as partners. A lot of research which was presented in previous chapters and our own analyses suggest that parents could become an important motivating force in order to push a school into higher accomplishments.

9.3.5   Teaching and Learning Practices

The variable *teaching and learning practices* mainly comprises items representing efforts to improve teaching practices and student outcomes, a close alignment between content taught and content tested, the provision of explanations and precise answers to students' questions, the prompt return of the graded tests and explanation of the expected answers, and a step-by-step procedure in teaching. The variable *teaching and learning practices* is basically defined at the school level rather than at the classroom level. This is because individual practices are aggregated at the school level, thus providing an indication of the general school practices with regard to teaching and learning approaches. As was repeatedly mentioned in the previous chapters, there is no substitute for excellence in teaching as a catalyst for excellence in learning. Thus, it goes without saying that through the influencing of teaching and learning practices, school leaders can indirectly have an effect on students' achievement.

9.3.6   Student-Teacher Interactions

Student-teacher interactions constitute an important dimension of the social climate of the school. This variable is defined as the communication patterns and the relationship in general between teachers and students regarding their progress or other personal issues. The items comprising this variable include the monitoring of the student progress, the effective communication between students and staff, students feeling comfortable to express their emotions, problems or concerns to their teachers, and teachers discussing on one-to-one basis with their students about issues concerning their progress. Thus, the quality of these human interactions can provide a sound basis through which school leaders can exert indirect influences on the quality of these relationships between teachers and students and, therefore, influence student achievements not just academically, but as citizens as well.

9.3.7   Student Expectations

Student expectations represent practices that promote student personal achievement orientation. Within the *Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework*, student expectations are interpreted as teacher expectations about students since it

is the teachers' perceptions that are provided on how students are mobilized towards the enhancement of their performance. Specifically, the items of this variable include the teachers' expectations about their students' interest in improving their academic performance, their participation in various European educational programs and competitions, and the conduct of a noble competition which enhances their performance.

As per the preceding discussion, it seems that we know enough about the school climate variables which can positively contribute to enhanced student achievement. In order to succeed, school leaders need to "trigger" these intermediate variables and operationalize them at the school level. Thus, in the following sections of this chapter, we try to revisit the main ways or styles through which school leaders can trigger these policies at their school level. Having said that, in order for school leaders to be more successful, they need to be well aware of their context (local and global) so that they can employ the best possible mix of styles and epistemological belief systems.

Thus, in such an international and comparative context, as described at the beginning of this chapter, where the perception of differently practiced leadership styles as well as different school climate variables is very much evident, it is important to contextualize school leadership policies. Those contextual factors could be located at the system level or at the school level (for instance, total degree of autonomy which lies within the hands of the individual school) and can influence the leadership action radius, the array of tasks, and the prioritizing of tasks that school leaders perform. Moreover, the context (factors) within which schools and school leaders operate can vary markedly across countries depending upon their historical traditions, social structures, and economic conditions. Then, in such an environment, the questions need to be answered: what are the common elements in these various contexts with regard to leadership styles and what are the differences? In essence, which of the leadership styles seemed to be more influential in contributing towards student achievement?

9.4   Unity in Diversity: The Most Influential Leadership Styles Across the EU Countries Participating in the LISA and Pro-LEAD Projects

In five out of the seven LISA countries, the *Entrepreneurial Leadership* Style surfaced as the most predominant of the five leadership styles both from the teachers' (in the LISA project) and from the principals' (in the Pro-LEAD project) perspective. Further, in five out of the seven LISA countries, the Structuring Style came second. More variation was evident across the LISA countries with regard to other leadership styles, e.g., the Personnel Development Style and the Participative Style. Apparently, there is a general trend for school leaders towards the Entrepreneurial Style which could be interpreted as one strategic approach (among others) in order to respond to potential budget cuts or generally limited resources in terms of money, time, and personnel. In essence, school leaders probably feel the pressure

to do more with less and, therefore, are acting more entrepreneurial in their leadership style during times of economic and political uncertainty. Moreover, the predominance of the Entrepreneurial Leadership Style could be seen as a strategic buildup of support in order to create other support systems which were originally situated at other governance levels. In reality, the discussion here is about privately organized systems (by the school leader) in order to close the gap of the support systems which are organized and provided by the state to an increasingly lesser degree. What is evident here are the efforts of school leaders to create their own support systems and subsystems which they can nurture to a degree where they can rely on them, in view of the fact that state-supported systems are becoming fewer and more scarce and, hence, unreliable. In this way, they are enhancing their radius of influence with regard to areas of decision making where the school cannot decide autonomously. In the current international environment, it is foreseen that we will be seeing more of the Entrepreneurial Leadership Style being exhibited by school leaders for all the reasons explained previously. Moreover, as explained before, the Entrepreneurial Style is very much related to relativist epistemological beliefs, and thus, there will probably be more school leaders who are characterized by such beliefs and who are more inclined to employ this style of leadership. The rationale for this tendency is the fact that relativist types are more prone to construct and reconstruct meanings and ideas, they are more open to other persons' viewpoints, and thus, they are more inclined to be inclusive and participatory in their approaches for action both inside and outside their schools.

Furthermore, there is also a general trend towards the *Structuring Leadership* Style, which could be regarded as a response by the school leader to the expanded roles and responsibilities of the school. In short, school leaders are trying harder to mark unmarked territory through a clearer division of tasks and responsibilities among school personnel, thus hoping to turn the school into a more productive organization with less conflict which might arise as a result of fuzzy or grey areas of responsibilities and duties. Therefore, the increased attention on the Structuring Leadership Style acts as a measure to enable the restructuring of the school through the establishment of clear roles, responsibilities, and goals for staff and students. Persons within the schools (such as teachers, students, parents) need to have more clarity of roles and visions. Therefore, this demarcation of boundaries will probably become increasingly a necessity so that these different groups of school actors can collaborate with less conflict and power struggle. This can be facilitated through the Structuring Style of leadership.

Thus, the Entrepreneurial and Structuring Styles are perceived as the predominant leadership styles, and this could be further interpreted as an increased level of awareness with regard to the expanded responsibility of the individual school in our times, as opposed to the educational system taken as a whole. It could further be construed as an effort to maintaining internal organizational stability in order to cooperate with leaders outside the school on an equal footing. Moreover, the Entrepreneurial and Structuring Styles acting together could be seen as further stimulation of the school development and improvement process by creating a community of shared responsibility between the internal and external stakeholders of the school, thus

creating their own educational landscape within the region and the community. Moreover, these styles could be regarded as a means of reference to show leadership, competence, and authority by inviting important "outsiders" (such as the Mayor or the Police Chief, as was mentioned by school leaders during the interviews) into the school in order to see firsthand efficiency and effectiveness of the leadership practices in the school.

Having mentioned all of the above, one should still bear in mind that more evidence of one type of a leadership style (out of the five in the framework), which might be positively associated with school performance in one school, can have the opposite effect in another school of a participating country because of differences in the context as perceived. This means that school leaders are responsive to the general context in which they operate, but they do not depend on it; apparently, they can adapt to the context of their individual school, sometimes irrespective of the national (system) context in which they operate. For instance, at the European level, in some cases more of one leadership style (e.g., Participative) related positively with a school climate variable (for instance, student-teacher interactions) in one or more countries but related negatively to the same variable in another country. In one country, the Entrepreneurial Style predicted one school climate variable in a positive way (professional development) and another school climate variable (student expectations) in a negative way.

Finally, although the *Instructional Leadership* Style was not found as one of the predominant leadership styles in the participating countries, it proved to be powerful in predicting each of the school climate variables. More specifically, the *Instructional Leadership Style* significantly predicted each individual climate variable as well as the composite of the school climate variables (i.e., teacher commitment, teaching and learning practices, student-teacher interactions, and student expectations, taken all together) which has a positive influence on creating conditions under which teachers can perform well. One explanation why the *Instructional Leadership* Style did not come out as the predominant style in the participating seven European countries is that (probably) Instructional Leadership is not perceived as such by the teachers who responded to the questionnaires. What is being contemplated here is the fact that school leaders indicated that teachers (in general) do not like direct classroom observation. Therefore, it is probable that school leaders have found "subtle" and "discreet" ways through which they can provide the necessary instructional feedback without being seen as "intruding" on teacher autonomy. Thus, they practice the Instructional Style, but it is not perceived as such by teachers.

In fact, for some school teachers, one needs to exhibit more of the structuring and for other teachers one needs to show more of the Instructional Style. Therefore, it is possible that the stage of maturity or readiness of the teacher, in order to accept this kind of observation and feedback, should be taken into account by the school leader when providing his/her instructional expertise and when the school leader decides on the appropriate mix for a particular teacher at a very concrete level. This means that leaders ought to be able to diagnose what the specific teacher requires and be flexible enough to provide it.

In general, in almost all of the countries participating in the project, the *Instructional Style* also predicted in a positive way the school climate variable *evaluation and feedback*. What is even more important is that the *school climate variables composite* was found to be predicted mainly by the three aforementioned leadership styles: the *Instructional*, the *Structuring*, and the *Entrepreneurial*. Thus, it can be asserted that the *Instructional Style* forms the baseline of effective school leadership across the participating European countries. What also seems to be true is that the *Instructional*, *Structuring*, and *Entrepreneurial Styles* of leadership are essential components of the leadership cocktail mix irrespective of context and that the other two remaining leadership styles from the *Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework* (*Participative* and *Personnel Development Styles*) are more situational and contextual in nature.

9.5 Leadership Styles and Epistemological Beliefs Reconnected

9.5.1 Entrepreneurial Leadership Style and Epistemological Beliefs

With regard to the results from the Pro-LEAD project, it seems that a higher level of the *Entrepreneurial Leadership* Style is associated with beliefs that the evaluation and accountability practices could lead to (1) better school climate (including greater job satisfaction of teachers and greater commitment of teachers to their school) and (2) more school-level awareness (including greater parental involvement and accountability of schools for their results). The claim here is that school principals' perception seems to be that an Entrepreneurial Leadership Style, that is, an outward-looking style, entails more involvement of external forces and agents who will monitor and support the work of the school, and thus, they welcome it.

Furthermore, the Entrepreneurial Leadership Style is correlated with relativist epistemological beliefs which means that the more relativist a principal is, the more "outward" he/she will tend to be, as he/she will probably have the view that knowledge is constructed with people inside and outside the school. In short, relativist school leaders believe that knowledge is not the "private domain" of educators alone. At the same time, the more entrepreneurial a school leader is, the more relativist he/she will tend to be. When schools become more autonomous in various places around the world, probably there will be a greater need for school leaders who exhibit more of the Entrepreneurial Leadership Style and, hence, more of the "relativist types" with regard to their epistemological beliefs. This tendency means that we will have school leaders who are relativist and entrepreneurial in their approaches both within the school (more participative approaches) and outside the school (more inclusive approaches). This has some important implications on the training of school leaders.

At the same time, it should be noted that higher levels of Entrepreneurial Leadership Style also relate positively to the Instructional Domain of Decision Making, as was presented in the Pro-LEAD research findings. The school principal, through an Entrepreneurial Leadership Style, including forces within and outside the school, contributes to their (the teachers) being more empowered with regard to decision making about how to construct the pedagogical and instructional aspects of the daily operation of the school. In this way, teachers are afforded greater pedagogical freedoms and autonomy, as can be seen through other associations where higher levels of relativist epistemological beliefs relate with enhanced decision making with respect to pedagogical and instructional issues.

Moreover, it seems that school-level awareness (as a result of evaluation and accountability) is also related with higher levels of the Instructional Leadership Style, the Personnel Development Leadership Style, and the Structuring Leadership Style. Put otherwise, the more interest about the school that comes from the "outside," the more interest is created in the "inside." These statements resonate well with what was mentioned in the section above with regard to the Entrepreneurial Leadership Style of the participating school leaders in the LISA project.

9.5.2   Participative Leadership Style and Epistemological Beliefs

Additionally, higher levels of the Participative Leadership Style relate to higher levels of assessment overload, as was found in the Pro-LEAD project. This means that the more a school principal encourages participation in school life of all teachers, the more he/she feels that evaluation and accountability may lead to an assessment overload through an increase of competition among teachers. If we phrase it differently, the more assessment overloads, the more teacher participation, probably in fear that they (the teachers) will be left out of the "game." This finding provides us with a different perspective as to why teachers and school leaders are sometimes enthused by a more participatory form of leadership; it is probably the fear of being left out.

The aforementioned results were further enhanced and corroborated by the results from the qualitative data sets (think-aloud protocols). First of all, in the qualitative results, there was a negative association between Realism and Relativism (in line with the quantitative results). More important is that significant relationships were found between the two types of epistemological beliefs and the *Participative Leadership Style* whereby the *Participative Leadership Style* correlated negatively with *Realism* and positively with *Relativism*. On the one hand, this means that the more participative a school leader is in his/her leadership style, that is, the more he/she encourages the active participation of staff members in decision making, the more he/she believes that each individual can construct his/her own knowledge base which may be different from that of others but will be equally valid and equally valued. On the other hand, the more participative a school leader is,

encouraging the active involvement and cooperation among staff in school issues, the less he/she is likely to consider that there is a preestablished knowledge base which needs to be transmitted from themselves (as the experts) to the teachers who will passively take it in.

It should be further noted that the *Participative Leadership Style* correlated positively with the *Entrepreneurial Leadership Style*. The significant positive correlation between the *Participative Leadership Style* and the *Entrepreneurial Leadership Style* also appeared through the quantitative data analyses. It seems therefore that both the quantitative and the qualitative results of this part of the Pro-LEAD research project confirm that these two leadership styles are strongly correlated indicating that school principals tend to combine these two styles in their work, thus being "inclusive" both within and outside the school. At this point, it should be reminded that a positive correlation appeared between the *Entrepreneurial Leadership Style* and *Relativism*. However, from the qualitative results, it is the *Participative Leadership Style* which correlates positively with *Relativism*. Given the strong linkage between these two leadership styles, this apparent inconsistency may be an indication that one of these two leadership styles is actually acting as a mediator to the relationship between the other and *Relativism*. At the same time, this apparent close relationship between the Participative and the Entrepreneurial Leadership Styles can be interpreted as the leaders' attempt in becoming more inclusive in their leadership both within the school grounds (Participative Style) and outside the school (Entrepreneurial Style).

It is suggested that the results of this part of the Pro-LEAD research project have contributed to a great extent to our understanding of how principals' leadership styles relate to their epistemological worldviews and to their beliefs about contextual factors and other organizational arrangements. Both data sets (qualitative and quantitative) indicated a relationship between the various leadership styles and epistemological beliefs. Specifically, the quantitative data analyses indicated a significant positive relationship between the Entrepreneurial Leadership Style and Relativism, while the qualitative data analyses pointed to a positive relationship between the Participative Leadership Style and Relativism. The important linkage between the Entrepreneurial Leadership Style and the Participative Leadership Style was also emphasized in both data sets, thus giving grounds for future research to explore in more detail the exact relationship between both these two leadership styles and Relativism. It should be taken into consideration that, probably, as educational systems move towards more school autonomy, school leaders will need to exhibit more of the Entrepreneurial Style which resonates with more external involvement as well as increased accountability, or doing more with less.

9.6 What Are the Most Important Insights from These Two Pieces of Research?

One of the most important gains from both research projects is the finding that school leaders should be cognizant and able to utilize more and varied leadership styles from the *Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework* in order to

cope with different situations arising from the multiple contexts in which they operate. Indeed, through the LISA and Pro-LEAD projects, school leaders have a holistic leadership framework which they can use both as a personal and a school improvement guide. Further, there is a validated leadership instrument in eight European languages (English, Dutch, German, Greek, Slovene, Italian, Hungarian, and Norwegian) which can be used as a professional growth tool for school leaders in these countries (and probably elsewhere through proper validation).

Moreover, through these two projects, school leaders were able to critically review their self-understanding about what school leadership means in their own context as well as in other settings and what leadership actually means to them with regard to their own individual school. It seems that, although the concept of *leadership* is a complex mixture of the five styles explored in these two pieces of research, the sum of the component styles nevertheless does not really constitute the essence of *leadership* as a construct. On the contrary, it seems that the concept of *leadership* is more than the sum of its constituent parts and should be investigated further bearing this fact in mind.

9.6.1   The Importance of the Entrepreneurial Leadership Style

However, the *Entrepreneurial Leadership* Style in the Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership Framework seems to be in the center for both research projects. At this point, it would be useful to be reminded that a first element of the Entrepreneurial Style of leadership concerns the involvement of the community and especially parents in schools' affairs. Taking into account the complex nature of a school's mission, it seems imperative that schools activate the parents to their support. When schools, families, and communities work collaboratively as partners, the students receive most of the benefits. These partnerships may create a safe school environment, enhance parenting skills, encourage the provision of welfare services, improve academic achievement, as well as contribute to the accomplishment of a number of other school goals (Sanders 1996, 2001). The results from these two projects resonate with those of Harris and Chapman (2002) who conclude that schools which have strong ties to the local community are more likely to gain their support in difficult times. Also, Dinham's (2005) detailed analysis of the case studies of secondary schools in Australia revealed that one of the components of effective leadership is the external awareness and engagement of the wider environment of the school. The external environment includes other schools and systems, the community, society, business, and government. Principals utilize external networks and resources to facilitate change. These links range from the local community to the international level. Their positive approach induces motivation for others and keeps the school improving.

Furthermore, acquiring resources for the improvement of personnel and student performance constitutes another area of Entrepreneurial Leadership. Indeed, Dinham's (2005) findings show that effective principals utilize external resources to

initiate change and improvement at the school place. Moreover, Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003) found, in their well-known meta-analysis, that the provision of teachers with the necessary material is one area of leadership related to improved student achievement. In another meta-analysis of various studies, strategic resourcing was identified as having a moderate indirect effect on students (Robinson, 2007). Strategic resourcing in this case involved acquiring and allocating material and staff resources in alignment to priority teaching goals. Finally, within the framework of the Cooperative Research Project in Victoria, Australia, Caldwell (1998) reports that school principals showed concern about the overall levels of resources acquired for their schools.

9.6.2   The Importance of Context

Another important gain from these two pieces of research is the finding that the contextual variables did not really matter as much as was initially anticipated, since school leaders seem to believe that they already have enough contextual freedoms but not the power or the resources to act on. In a sense, school leaders believe that they have enough autonomy to act at the school level (either overt or covert), but these beliefs are not warranted in reality by the legal framework in which they actually operate. In sum, school leaders are responsive to the context in which they operate, but they do not depend on it; apparently, they can adapt to the context of their individual school, which is (oftentimes) considered more important than the national context.

An additional important finding with regard to context is that decentralization for itself and in itself doesn't necessarily mean the delegation of power, but the delegation of conflicts as well. In other words, the possible conflicts that previously existed between the school leaders and the school supervisory authorities are now transferred to the individual school level, meaning that the conflict now is between the school leader and his/her teachers. Thus, again an explanation can be provided for the utilization of the Participative and the Entrepreneurial Leadership Styles by school leaders, who feel the need to be as inclusive as possible in order to be accepted as the (Instructional) leader within (and outside) the school and in order to reduce the possibility of conflict within the school by being more inclusive and participatory.

9.6.3   The Importance of Situational Leadership

However, the most discouraging finding from the two research projects is that there is no perfect mix of leadership styles guided by a specific set of epistemological beliefs. Thus, maybe one should not be talking about the most effective leadership styles but rather about the most useful leadership styles. Then, are the leadership styles, as presented in the *Pashiardis-Brauckmann Holistic Leadership*

Framework, the core minimum of what should be utilized in order to enable school leaders to function within the schools as "useful leaders" as opposed to being the most "effective leaders"? Not an easy question. It seems however that there is no "perfect" leadership style, but there is an "optimum" solution under certain circumstances.

Moreover, it was surprising to find out that the Instructional Leadership Style did not come out as strongly as anticipated in the LISA study. One interpretation given by school leaders, as was previously mentioned, is that teachers do not like the fact that school leaders interfere in their classroom, as it might reduce their pedagogical degrees of freedom. Apparently, exercising the Instructional Leadership Style is perceived as an interference of their own autonomy in the class; therefore, there is what we could term as the "clashes of autonomy" or the "clash of evaluations" (Brauckmann & Pashiardis, 2010). In essence, the Instructional leadership Style is closely related to classroom teaching and management. Primarily teachers are probably stating, in an indirect way, that school leaders should deal with the challenges outside the classroom level.

This position taken by the teachers is reflected by the predominance of the two leadership styles, i.e., the Entrepreneurial and the Structuring Styles. These styles do not have much connection with the classroom level. The Structuring Style might be the style with which you can come as close as it probably gets to the classroom. The "absent" Instructional Leadership Style seems to refer to the "autonomy-parity" dilemma. In essence, what is being said is that, in order for the teachers to get better, they need to give up some of their autonomy and they are just not ready to do that yet.

Moreover, in the in-depth chapters of England and Italy, the school leaders are describing how they acted on, through, and with the new governance arrangements. Basically those chapters give precious insights into the organization (formal legal framing) as well as the implementation of those new governance arrangements (informal chain of action/reaction). Moreover, these chapters provide answers about the way through which school leaders make sense of those new governance arrangements for their personal school leadership style, what they emphasize, and what they leave out. Furthermore, these chapters provide answers about the ways through which the national governance arrangements supported the introduction of new leadership styles or how these arrangements strengthened already used leadership styles, how was new light shed on an already exercised style, and about how did those governance arrangements create new complementarities or new inconsistencies which lead to a dilemma of roles.

9.6.4 Implications for Policy Makers, Practitioners, and Researchers

The fact remains that Situational Leadership exists within Situational Governance in a world where we need to learn to live with each other in a shared interdependency through the respect of cultural diversity in education. In sum:

- The *Instructional Style* forms the baseline of effective or "useful" school leadership across our seven European countries which participated in the LISA project.

- There is *no best cocktail of school leadership* styles mix for all school leaders – one size does not fit all; but all styles are necessary.
- A significant positive relationship between the *Entrepreneurial Leadership Style* and *Relativism* exists. That is, Entrepreneurial school leaders tend to be more receptive and accepting of others' ideas and views, thus exhibiting a more inclusive and embracing leadership behavior.
- A positive relationship between the *Participative Leadership Style* and *Relativism* exists as well. This probably means that Relativism exists both within and outside the school through these two leadership styles (Entrepreneurial and Participative).
- In most of the European countries, the *Entrepreneurial Leadership* Style (as described in both pieces of research) has acquired the highest score – it is the most dominant leadership style.
- *School leadership is contextualized* not only at the system level but also (and particularly) at the school level. Therefore, a school leader would be wise to look at what the situation of his/her particular and immediate school context calls for and then act on it.
- *Instructional*, *Structuring*, and *Entrepreneurial Styles* of leadership seem to be essential components of a useful school leadership mix irrespective of context.
- Especially the *Participative* and *Personnel Development Styles* turned out to be more situational and contextual in nature.

The above summary of the main findings has important implications for policy makers, practitioners, and researchers. For instance, policy makers should become aware that there will probably be an increased need for entrepreneurial and relativist types of school leaders as the educational systems around the world become more decentralized and schools acquire more autonomy. Moreover, policy makers should also create the conditions where parents and other external stakeholders are provided with productive ways in order to have a more meaningful (but not intrusive) involvement of these stakeholders into the school.

Practitioners on the other hand should realize that the one-size-fits-all approach cannot work in today's environment. They must increase their knowledge, skills, and capabilities especially in becoming more entrepreneurial and relativists in their approaches to resolving the complex problems that schools nowadays face. The reality is that school leaders need to learn how to do more with less and with more people involved in the process.

Finally, researchers need to further investigate the relationships between the Participative and Entrepreneurial Leadership Styles as they interact with relativist epistemological beliefs. Moreover, researchers should try to reach a common understanding about the construct of leadership as a complex and multivariate phenomenon in order to make research results more meaningful to policy makers and practitioners.

What remains to be seen is if we will ever reach a formula about what the best leadership styles mix looks like or if it will remain a secret recipe for every individual principal who should be made aware of the necessary ingredients, but, in

the end, the creation is unique and only his/her own. There is no real pattern about which leadership style is more important because the situation of the leader is so contextualized that school leaders should go their own way using their own recipe and expertise. But the recipe should be constructed by the school acting as a learning organization. In a sense, it could be what is called distributed leadership and forming alliances among different subgroups within the school and recreating a school community of shared responsibility outside the school.

9.7   Where Do We Go from Here?

In lieu of a conclusion, what is becoming increasingly more evident is that there is no best cocktail of leadership styles mix for all school leaders and within the various spaces in which they operate. School leadership is highly contextualized not only at the system level but also (and particularly) at the school level. This, by itself, constitutes a major finding of these two pieces of research. A school leader would be wise to look at just what the situation of his/her particular school context calls for and then attend to the actions needed. Whether a school is rural or urban or high or low performing, a different mix of all those five leadership styles is needed. Larger quantities of one style probably assume less of another as individual leaders function within a limited set of time and other resources. It really depends on the situation. There is no clear pattern with regard to which leadership style is more important (or useful) because the local situation of the leader is so contextualized that school leaders are probably better off going their own way and using their own recipe and expertise.

Certainly through these projects, we were able to critically review our self-understanding about what school leadership means and what leadership actually means to school principals with regard to their own individual schools. This is the point where school leaders ought to be thinking about the "glue" that brings together the five leadership styles with their epistemological belief systems and thus creating what others have called "moral purpose" (Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, & Hopkins, 2006).

Finally, from the analyses of the results and the in-depth examination that was presented, it seems that the *Instructional*, the *Structuring*, and the *Entrepreneurial* Leadership Styles are necessary ingredients when school principals decide what leadership mix to use when trying to influence students' achievement in their respective schools. Moreover, it seems that a higher level of the *Entrepreneurial Leadership* Style is associated with beliefs that the evaluation and accountability practices could lead to better school climate and a heightened school-level awareness. In addition, school principals' perception seems to be that an Entrepreneurial Leadership Style, that is, an outward-looking style, entails more involvement of external forces and agents who will monitor and support the work of the school, and thus, they welcome it.

In the end, the school principal can be seen as a single actor and at the same time as the organization itself. The school principal is somehow his or her school and the key player when it comes not only to introduce, explain, and integrate the goals of new system management inside the school but also to cope with undesired negative side effects stemming from this new system management. He/she can become the main factor of stability in an environment where the only constant is change and in which he or she needs to provide leadership responses to external leadership demands as well as internal leadership demands. As a consequence he/she needs to make sure that his/her space of educational leadership remains stable (moral purpose) and flexible at the same time (different leadership styles in use) and that the space of educational leadership of the school is also perceived as stable and flexible. In order to reach the flexibility of his/her space of educational leadership, he/she can make use of a wide array of leadership styles. In order to reach the flexibility of the space of educational leadership of the school, he/she needs to make sure that teachers are willing to take on leadership responsibilities and therefore create the feeling of a shared responsibility which goes beyond formal rules and regulations. It reaches the realm of *trust*. Those responsibilities evolve primarily around instructional responsibilities and task areas which help to improve the working conditions of teachers and students. This is important to understand and to implement, because teachers' working conditions are students' learning conditions. In order to improve the working conditions of teachers and students, a special emphasis needs to be placed on leadership styles and activities which constitute enabling factors for effective educational teaching and management factors especially in the classroom, where most of the instructional processes take place. *Thus, the school leader acting as an entrepreneurial, relativist, structuralist, and, of course, as an instructional leader can help provide just that.*

In closing, we should be reminded that education is a cultural institution and a national affair of every country and, at the same time, a global activity. Thus, the relevant political decisions which concern education first and foremost should take into consideration the specific cultural, historical, and economic context of the country concerned. Increasing the attention on merely student achievement distracts from community well-being as well as other important "moral purposes" of education. We should always remember that education as a concept includes "social justice" principles. Therefore, education should be an inclusive institution which embraces the "average" person as well as the "outliers" of society in the process. We should also be reminded of the fact that society continues to exist and reproduce itself through its "average" members around the "mean" but can only improve through its "outliers" in both ends of the spectrum, i.e., the negative and the positive.

The leadership characteristic necessary for school leaders to function as described above is to possess a realistic optimism and, at the same time, a positive outlook towards life. Additionally, they must be aware that what matters most are the people who rely on them as well as their own self, and, therefore, mutuality should be the "modus operandi." Moreover, they should know their limitations and they must understand that they cannot do everything – thus, they need to learn to live with

each other and involve others in their daily routines. They also know that they need to be accountable to the people they lead, even before such accountability is demanded of them (being humble), and thus, they should not force their ideas onto anyone. In the end, they know that they are human and therefore vulnerable. Situational Leadership (Instructional, Entrepreneurial, Structuring, Participative, and Personnel Development Leadership Styles) can only exist within Situational Governance in a world where we need to learn to live with each other in a shared interdependency through the respect of biological as well as cultural diversity. *Therefore*, *it all depends on finding the right mix between the local and the global*, among all leadership styles.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: School Leadership Questionnaire

(Questionnaire to Be Administered to Teachers)

Petros Pashiardis & Stefan Brauckmann

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Below you can find statements about aspects of your principal's leadership behavior. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements in each leadership domain.

The numbers correspond to the following:

1 = Strongly disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Neither agree nor disagree
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly agree

The school principal	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. Provides instructional resources and materials to support teaching staff in accomplishing instructional goals	1	2	3	4	5
2. Encourages the implementation of such teaching methods where "higher order form of learning" is facilitated	1	2	3	4	5
3. Promotes such practices so as to help implement and use knowledge in a variety of forms	1	2	3	4	5
4. Monitors standards of teaching and learning throughout the school	1	2	3	4	5
5. Provides concrete feedback to staff on teaching and learning	1	2	3	4	5
6. Uses information which accrues from school inspections and teacher appraisal in order to improve personnel	1	2	3	4	5
7. Promotes open communication and flexibility in relations with the staff	1	2	3	4	5
8. Leaves enough autonomy to teachers in order to organize and schedule their teaching	1	2	3	4	5
9. Creates a common vision for school improvement with the staff's cooperation	1	2	3	4	5
10. Encourages staff to be actively involved in the planning and implementation of this vision	1	2	3	4	5
11. Solves problems in a cooperative way with teachers	1	2	3	4	5
12. Implements participative decision-making processes	1	2	3	4	5
13. Facilitates decision-making by consensus among staff	1	2	3	4	5
14. Discusses school affairs with teachers	1	2	3	4	5
15. Provides recognition for excellence and achievement	1	2	3	4	5
16. Rewards teachers for their special contributions to the school	1	2	3	4	5
17. Encourages teachers to develop themselves professionally	1	2	3	4	5
18. Registers outstanding performance of teachers in their personal files	1	2	3	4	5
19. Makes informed recommendations to personnel placement, transfer, retention, and dismissal	1	2	3	4	5
20. Compliments teachers who contribute exceptionally to school activities	1	2	3	4	5
21. Informs teachers about possibilities for updating their knowledge and skills	1	2	3	4	5
22. Encourages relations between the school on one hand and the community and parents on the other	1	2	3	4	5
23. Promotes cooperation with other organizations and businesses from the community so that students' needs are addressed	1	2	3	4	5

(continued)

The school principal	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
24. Discusses school goals with relevant stakeholders (school board, parents, municipality, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
25. Demonstrates the use of appropriate and effective techniques for community and parent involvement	1	2	3	4	5
26. Emphasizes and nurtures two-way communication between the school and community	1	2	3	4	5
27. Projects a positive image to the community	1	2	3	4	5
28. Builds trust within the local community	1	2	3	4	5
29. Articulates, discusses, and communicates the school vision to all in the external community	1	2	3	4	5
30. Ensures that there is clarity about the roles and core activities of the staff	1	2	3	4	5
31. Ensures that there is clarity about work priorities	1	2	3	4	5
32. Provides clarity in relation to student behavior rules	1	2	3	4	5
33. Ensures that school rules are uniformly observed and that consequences of misconduct are applied equitably to all students	1	2	3	4	5
34. Works on creating an orderly atmosphere	1	2	3	4	5
35. Takes care of the fact that there is clarity regarding policies and procedures to be implemented	1	2	3	4	5

Gender: Male   Female

Number of years at present school: ………………..…………….

Number of years of total experience as a teacher: …………..…………

Age: ……………..……………

Appendix 2: School Climate Variables Questionnaire

(Questionnaire to Be Administered to Teachers)

Petros Pashiardis & Stefan Brauckmann

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School Variables That Affect Achievement

The purpose of this questionnaire is to examine some variables that have an impact on the smooth operation of your school. Please write down your true opinion in each statement.

To what degree does each statement apply to the school you work for? Use the scale 1–5 to assess each statement. Use the scale:

To a low degree   To a high degree

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Statement	Low degree				High degree
1. The teachers have a clear understanding of what is expected from them in their work	1	2	3	4	5
2. There are sufficient opportunities for professional training at school	1	2	3	4	5
3. Teachers are committed to achieving the school goals	1	2	3	4	5
4. Teachers are committed to maintaining high standards of discipline during classes	1	2	3	4	5
5. Parents are actively involved in school affairs.	1	2	3	4	5
6. The school provides to me the necessary information to perform my duties	1	2	3	4	5
7. The school encourages teachers to discuss freely issues concerning their continuous improvement	1	2	3	4	5
8. The teachers feel that they bear responsibility for the quality of their work	1	2	3	4	5
9. I make considerable efforts to improve my teaching practices	1	2	3	4	5
10. Teachers have a clear perception of the school's direction	1	2	3	4	5
11. I find my overall job at the school motivating	1	2	3	4	5
12. Student progress is regularly monitored	1	2	3	4	5
13. There is close alignment between content taught and content tested	1	2	3	4	5
14. There is a strong emphasis on student learning in my school	1	2	3	4	5
15. The feedback I receive from my immediate supervisor is useful for my work	1	2	3	4	5
16. There are opportunities for undertaking initiatives and responsibilities in the school	1	2	3	4	5

(continued)

(continued)

Statement	Low degree				High degree
17. I have the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes	1	2	3	4	5
18. The teachers try to perform to the maximum extent possible	1	2	3	4	5
19. The students communicate effectively with the school staff	1	2	3	4	5
20. The students feel comfortable to express their feelings, problems, or concerns to their teachers	1	2	3	4	5
21. Teachers discuss on one to one basis with their students about issues concerning their progress	1	2	3	4	5
22. The school has frequent communication and cooperation with students' parents	1	2	3	4	5
23. I make considerable efforts to improve the outcomes of my students	1	2	3	4	5
24. I explain and answer precisely to students' questions	1	2	3	4	5
25. I return promptly the graded tests and explain the expected answers	1	2	3	4	5
26. Most students are interested in improving their academic performance	1	2	3	4	5
27. Students willingly participate in various European educational programs and competitions	1	2	3	4	5
28. Among students a noble competition is developed that contributes in enhancing their performance	1	2	3	4	5
29. I follow a step by step procedure in my teaching	1	2	3	4	5
30. Parents are actively involved in the governance of the school	1	2	3	4	5
31. Parents are actively involved in the day-to-day operations of the school	1	2	3	4	5
32. Concrete feedback is given to staff on teaching and learning	1	2	3	4	5
33. Evaluations of teaching are used for improvement and change	1	2	3	4	5
34. Evaluations of teaching meet external requirements	1	2	3	4	5

Gender: Male   Female

Number of years at present school: ………………..….……………

Number of years of total experience as a teacher: ……….…………..

Age: ………………

Appendix 3: Epistemological Beliefs Questionnaire

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following three vignettes:

Vignette A

There is a core body of knowledge in instructional leadership that each teacher must learn. Some of it is factual, but some of it is based on broad concepts and principles that everyone agrees on. This knowledge does not change much over time and represents the accumulation of important truths and understanding in teaching and learning. It is important for teachers to acquire this knowledge exactly as it is. The best way to acquire this knowledge is through an expert like me because I have a much better sense than they do of what is important to learn. It is unlikely that teachers could really create this knowledge on their own, so learning it from me is quicker and more efficient. For this reason, it is important to me to assume a take-charge attitude so teachers can learn as much as possible. It is important to me that everyone gains insight to the big picture with regards to teaching and learning under my guidance. It is my job to present the big picture clearly.

1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*
Strongly disagree				*Strongly agree*

Vignette B

Teachers are encouraged to develop their own understanding under my guidance so knowledge is personally useful to them. However, the fact that teachers are expected to construct their own understanding does not mean that all understandings are equally valid. While I believe that knowledge is subject to interpretation, I also believe that some conclusions are better than others. Teachers need to understand how to gather and evaluate evidence so they can distinguish good from poor arguments. I can teach them some of these skills, but some they will have to learn by working with colleagues, or in their own classrooms with their students. I believe that each teacher will bring a unique and valuable perspective with them. I try to shape my guidance so that teachers will pool their resources and come to the best understanding possible.

1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*
Strongly disagree				*Strongly agree*

Vignette C

Teachers in my school need to understand that there are a variety of different ways to understand things. Knowledge comes and goes, and what the so-called experts consider the truth today will be viewed with suspicion tomorrow. Even people who spend years studying a topic disagree about what things mean, and in the long run, one opinion is as good as another. This means that teachers have to learn to think for themselves, question the knowledge and authority of others, and evaluate how what they know affects their life. Knowledge has to be used wisely so no one is left out or exploited by society. For these reasons, I do not believe that I can really teach my teachers what is important, since they all need to know different things. They have to figure it out on their own, taking into account the events that shape their lives, even if the uncertainty of living in a world with conflicting views of truth bothers them. What I know and believe should not really influence my teachers. My job is to create an instructional environment where teachers can learn to think independently and take nothing for granted.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree				*Strongly agree*

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

1. Knowledge is subjective and highly changeable.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree				*Strongly agree*

2. There is an objective body of knowledge that is best acquired through experts via transmission.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree				*Strongly agree*

3. Each learner constructs a unique knowledge base that is different but equal to other learners.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree				*Strongly agree*

4. Knowledge is relatively unchanging.

1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*

Strongly disagree   ***Strongly agree***

5. Knowledge has authentic applications to the context that it is learned in.

1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*

Strongly disagree   ***Strongly agree***

6. Learners are passive recipients of a preestablished knowledge base.

1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*

Strongly disagree   ***Strongly agree***

7. Knowledge changes over time.

1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*

Strongly disagree   ***Strongly agree***

8. Learners construct shared understanding in collaborative contexts in which educators serve as facilitators.

1	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*

Strongly disagree   ***Strongly agree***

Appendix 4: Think Aloud Scenario

As principal you are responsible for the safety of your staff and students. Although no major events have happened in your school, other schools in the area have occasionally experienced situations in which students or others have broken into the school at night and destroyed school property. (*)

You are considering the possibility of implementing security measures. Possibilities are having security guards, security cameras, and so on. Another option is to do nothing. After all, nothing has happened yet. What would be your considerations for these various options? (*)

What would you propose? (*)

Once you propose something, parents and teachers react strongly. Some say that these sorts of measures infringe on the privacy of individual (students and teachers), but others are of the opinion that it is important to not take any risks. How will you discuss this matter with teachers and with parents, and how will your own view influence the debate? (*)

It is pointed out to you that the cost of any security measures will have to be covered by the school board, taking away funds from other activities. How will this affect your view and your approach? (*)

About the Editor

Professor Petros Pashiardis Dr. Petros Pashiardis is a professor of educational leadership and the academic coordinator of the "Studies in Education" Program with the Open University of Cyprus. He has also worked at the University of Cyprus from 1992 to 2006 as an associate professor of Educational Administration. Petros studied Educational Administration at the University of Texas at Austin as a Fulbright Scholar from 1987 to1990. Before joining the University of Cyprus, he worked as a school teacher, an education consultant with the Texas Association of School Boards, and an assistant professor with the University of Texas of the Permian Basin where he was heavily involved in research and teaching on the school principalship, on strategic planning in education, as well as other educational leadership issues. He has also worked or lectured in many countries including Malta, Great Britain, India, New Zealand, Greece, Germany, South Africa, Australia, and the USA. Furthermore, during the periods of January–August 1999 and summers of 2000, 2001, and 2002, he was invited as a visiting associate research scientist with the Texas A&M University. He has also been a visiting professor with the University of Pretoria, South Africa, in 2004 and a visiting scholar at the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa. On his own or with others, he has authored well over 100 articles in scholarly and professional journals, many of them on aspects of leaders and leadership. Within Cyprus, this has included research into the role of the principal. He has published a book in Greek on teacher evaluation and papers on the role of the principal in Cyprus. He has also published a book in Greek on the Effective Schools Movement together with his wife, Dr. Georgia Pashiardis. However, his interests in this area have become increasingly international, stretching to the USA where it all began, the UK, New Zealand, Malta, India, and Greece. He is currently a member of the Editorial Advisory Board of various journals such as, *Management in Education, International Studies in Educational Administration, Educational Management Administration and Leadership, International Journal of Educational Management,* and *Leadership and Policy in Schools*. In his role as vice president for publications for the Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration and Management, he edited a book entitled *International*

Perspectives in Educational Leadership, which has been published by the University of Hong Kong – Institute for Education in 2001. In 2008, he coedited the *International Handbook on the Preparation and Development of School Leaders*, together with Jacky Lumby and Gary Crow. For the period 2004–2008, Professor Pashiardis has been the president of the Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration and Management. He is now on the Board of Governors of the Commonwealth Foundation. During the academic year 2013–2014, Professor Pashiardis has been invited as a visiting professor at the Center for Principal Development, Department of Political Science at Umeå University in Sweden.

About the Contributors

Ian Bauckham   Having been born and grown up near London and attended a newly established comprehensive school in the 1970s, Ian Bauckham took his first degree at Cambridge University in Modern Languages, followed by teacher training at the University of Nottingham in1984–1985. He taught in comprehensive schools in Brighton, inner London, and Spain before moving to Kent in 1996. He earned a master's degree in Education at University of London in1993–1995 and a master's degree in Philosophy at University of London 1996–1998. He became a deputy head teacher in 2002 and a head teacher in 2004. An active member of the Association of School and College Leaders, he chaired its international committee from 2007 to 2011 and then its professional committee from 2011. He has a strong interest in international research and the use of international comparators in education and was a participant and country coordinator for LISA project. The author is currently the head teacher of an 11–18 church comprehensive school in southeast England. The school's roll is 1,500, and there is a teaching staff of 92 teachers. In addition, the school directly employs in part- or full-time capacities about 60 non-teaching staff. The author participated in the LISA project, using his own school as a basis for research, and coordinated the other English participating schools.

Stefan Brauckmann   Dr. Stefan Brauckmann is a research scientist at the Center for Research on Educational Governance of the German Institute for International Educational Research (DIPF), belonging to the Humanities and Educational Research Section of the Leibniz Association, in Berlin. His main academic interests are investigating framework conditions of education systems and understanding the different governing mechanisms in educational administration affecting the development of quality assurance in education. He has participated as a researcher in several international comparative studies including the "Comparison of the Education Systems of Germany and Canada" and "Leadership Improvement for Student achievement" (LISA). Currently, he is principal investigator of the study "School Leaders' Activities between More Responsibility and More Power" (SHaRP), which is attempting to identify task structures and workload of school leaders in three federal states of Germany differing in their degree of school

autonomy. He has published numerous articles and chapters in international book series and peer-reviewed journals and has given keynote presentations at international symposia and congresses. He has been a visiting scholar at the PACE Institute of UC Berkeley and Stanford University, the Open University of Cyprus (Educational Studies), and the University of Stellenbosch (Master of Education Policy Study Program). He has worked and lectured in many countries including Germany, Greece, Cyprus, and Croatia.

Antonello Giannelli   Antonello Giannelli was born in Bari, Italy. He received his master's degree in Physics "cum laude" from the State University of Bari in 1983. He then received a master's degree in Operational Research and Decision Strategy "cum laude" from the La Sapienza University in Rome in 1999. After serving in the Italian Army from January 1984 till April 1985, he was hired by the Italian National Agency for Nuclear Energy (ENEA) and worked in the National Laboratory of Frascati (near Rome) as a researcher within the field of plasma physics from May 1985 to August 1987. He was subsequently hired as a teacher of Mathematics and Physics by the Italian Ministry of Education and was assigned to the Scientific High School "Talete" in Rome from September 1987 to August 1995. He became vice principal in the same school from September 1995 to August 2003. He has been engaged in pre-service instruction of new teachers, at the University of Roma from 1999 to 2007. He was subsequently appointed as principal by the Italian Ministry of Education in 2003 and has been assigned to High School "Carlo Urbani" in Rome from September 2003 till August 2006, to High School "Enrico Fermi" in Rome from September 2006 till August 2007, and then to High School "Giuseppe Armellini" in Rome from September 2007 till August 2008. He was seconded at the "ESHA-Italy" association from September 2008 till present. He is currently the national representative of ANP (Italian National Association of Principals) in ESHA.

Panayiota Kendeou   Dr. Kendeou is an associate professor in the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Minnesota. Dr. Kendeou received her Ph.D. in Educational Psychology with expertise in Learning and Research Methods/ Statistics from the University of Minnesota in 2005. Her primary research interests are in the cognitive processes that support learning and memory in the context of reading comprehension, and she pursues two highly productive lines of inquiry in this area. In the first line of inquiry, she conducts cross-sectional and longitudinal investigations to better understand the development of various language and cognitive skills across the lifespan and across languages. In the second line of inquiry, she conducts experimental investigations to better understand the complex *reader by text by task* interactions during reading and how those interactions impact the acquisition and application of new knowledge. Dr. Kendeou serves as an associate editor of the *Journal of Research in Reading* and in the editorial boards of *Scientific Studies of Reading*, *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *Learning and Instruction*, and *Reading Psychology*.

Eleni Lytras   Eleni Lytras has a bachelor's degree in Psychology as well as a master's degree in Counseling Psychology. She is also a holder of a Ph.D. in Social Psychology from Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences in Athens. She has worked in medical centers and schools as a counselor as well as in higher educational institutions as a social psychology lecturer and researcher. During the past few years, she has been conducting postdoctoral research at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the Open University of Cyprus, where she studied the relation between school leadership, epistemological beliefs, and contextual factors. Eleni Lytras is currently working as a school counselor and researcher in Cyprus. Her research interests include intergroup contact and intergroup relations, minority and majority social influence, stereotype and prejudice reduction, epistemological beliefs, and educational leadership.

Athena Michaelidou   Dr. Michaelidou is the director of the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute. She is a graduate of the Cyprus Pedagogical Academy and holds a master's degree (MED) from the University of Manchester and a Ph.D. from the University of London, Institute of Education. She has been an in-service teacher trainer and a researcher, as a staff of the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute for the last years. She has been the head of the Research and Evaluation Department of the Institute and also of the Center for Educational Research and Evaluation of the Cyprus Ministry of Education and Culture. She has taught in many in-service training program for teachers from different levels of the educational system and different posts. She teaches "Educational Research Methodology," "Statistical analysis of data," "Action Research," etc. She is the coordinator of several research and European projects carried out by the Ministry of Education and Culture, and she is a member of working groups at the EU. Her research interests combine the teachers' role in research efforts and the action research within the school, in the effort to promote teachers' professional development. She has presented her work in several conferences and has several publications.

Antonino Petrolino   Antonino Petrolino was born in Messina, Italy. He earned a master's degree (M.A.) in Humanities with honors from La Sapienza University in Rome in 1966. He then worked as a teacher of History and then became a school principal. For the last fifteen years, he has been working with ANP, the largest professional association of school principals in Italy. He has been General Secretary and then European President of ESHA – European School Heads Association – between 1999 and 2005. He lives and works in Rome, Italy. He has been very active as a trainer for teachers and principals, both in initial and in continuous professional training, and as a consultant for several educational agencies, both private and public. More recently, he has been working, during the last 2 years, as external expert in an experimental project about teachers' evaluation in the Italian school system, promoted by the Italian Ministry of Education. He has been the author of several books about school leadership and other educational issues between 1994 and 2010.