The Leadership Roles of a Principal in Improving School Effectiveness

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to investigate the leadership roles and practices of the principal in improving school effectiveness. This descriptive study involved the principal, counselor, and 11 teachers from the Tonsley Park Primary School in South Australia. The findings showed that all respondents generally regarded team leader as the most important role, while supervisor was rated as the least important. Of the 20 tasks observed, generally revealed that a principal should work cooperatively with staff to ensure more effective use of their skills. While, the task of a principal in making decisions on staff development programs was not necessarily expected by the practicing teachers. All respondents considered organization/ coordination as the most important area within which a principal should provide more leadership, while curriculum or instructional improvement and innovation was regarded as the least important.

Key words: leadership role, principal, teachers, school effectiveness.

New dimensions for the principal leadership roles came from the impact of recent changes in education. These changes also happened in Australia and the United States, (Heck, 1991). They encourage the expansion of the roles of school principals in scope and complexity. In the United

States, for instance, the concept of principalship has evolved from 'principal teacher' in the early New England Schools (Boyer, 1983; Blank, 1987) through an increased concern with managing the school (Glasman & Nevo, 1988), to today's diverse set of role descriptions (Heck, 1991). This emphasis has occurred in Australia where principals are expected to play key roles in operating a self managing school (Caldwell, 1992; Macpherson, 1993). Changes in the roles of school principals in Australia are profound (Caldwell, 1992) and meeting these changed and changing roles is significant in improving school effectiveness. The development and expansion of such a concept may describe a new set of expectations for school principals (Blank, 1987:70), who are expected to be able to deal with a variety of educational demands, and to establish appropriate priorities in improving school effectiveness.

Reflection on the democratization of school administration in the Australian context has also resulted in a new perspective of the principal's role. They are now expected to have the ability to respect and facilitate the collaborative, participatory decision making processes involving and unfolding from the communicative interaction of the school community. Sergiovanni (1987, cited in Watkins, 1991) addressed such a perspective to the Victorian Association of Principals of Secondary Schools, emphasizing the transformational leadership that can be equated with facilitating leadership, in which the principals are more concerned with the concept of *power to* than *power over* in order to help people (school staff) more successful. Such strategies are required for the successful transition to a system of self managing schools (Caldwell and Spinks, 1992: 50) by gathering and using the constructive forces and gaining a high commitment from people involved in the system.

Further supports for such challenging phenomenon come from many investigations, studies or research works conducted by researchers and experts in educational leadership settings. In recent years, for instance, the principalship has been the focus of considerable discussions in the context of initiatives designed to increase school effectiveness. Many perspectives and a growing body of literature support the view that the principals are the key actors in improving the quality of schools (Barth, 1990; Bossert, et al., 1982; Braun, 1989; Sergiovanni, 1987). Although the specific connections between principals, leadership and educational outcomes remain unclear and produce various conclusions, there is con-

tinuing support for such a relationship and for further research on principalship (Davies, 1987; Heck, et al., 1990). Researchers are interested in studying such a relationship. Dow and Oakley (1992), for instance, said that to date, the research on school effectiveness has established a number of factors that appear important in identifying effective schools. One factor that appears consistently in all the studies is principal leadership. The principal is perceived as the most powerful fulcrum for improving school effectiveness (Finn 1987).

Harber (1992) summarized the research in this field and presented a complete list of the main factors in school effectiveness. Among those factors, the leadership roles of the principal and senior management team are perceived as vital. It is helpful to view principal leadership as manifested in several roles, each of which contributes both uniquely and interdependently to building and maintaining successful schools (Sergiovanni, 1987).

A complete description of principal leadership roles is introduced by Sergiovanni (1987) based on the observed behaviour of principals in successful schools. He identified those interdependent roles which develop and be expressed in the modern principalship. The first role is states person. Principals are primarily concerned with their school's overall mission, philosophy, working assumptions, educational program and the school design, values and beliefs as well as with the quality and relevance of the school's broad goals and objectives. They also communicate the school direction and emphasis to outside forces, seeking support and obtain necessary resources, and accepting responsibility for developing policy and practices within the school. The second role is educational leadership. A school principal is also responsible for the development and articulation of educational programs including teaching objectives, subject content organizations, methods, classroom climates, and evaluation. The third role is supervisory leadership. This refers to the principal's work with teachers which seeks to obtain their commitment to school goals and motivate them towards the achievement of these goals. Such a role encompasses staff development and clinical supervision. The 4th is organizational leadership. Principals are expected to ensure that school purposes, objectives, and work requirements are reflected in organizational structure pattern. The fifth role is administrative leadership. Although this is admitted to be the least glamorous of the six, it is

nonetheless important to provide the systems and organizational arrangement for efficiency and effectiveness. The sixth is team leadership. As a team leader, the principal helps teachers to develop mutual support and trust as they work together to establish an effective school.

A school principal occupies a key position in the schooling system. He/she undertakes numerous functions within the diverse roles as a school executive (Davies, 1987). The duties and responsibilities he/she exercises in each role determine the success of school improvement endeavour.

Among the various roles and functions, much literature on school effectiveness suggest that 'principal leadership is an essential ingredient in creating and maintaining an effective school' (Dow and Oakley, 1992). Wright and Renihan (1985) also note that leadership is critical in influencing how effective a school will be. Leadership has been identified as a significant role in managing organizational activities, and has prompted current research into the leadership roles principals play (Baskett and Miklos, 1992). It can be observed in such school activities as curriculum or instructional improvement, staff development, community relations, and school planning and management.

For the intensive observation, this study highlighted leadership areas from a recent study of Blank (1987) in the U.S. that was designed to provide a systematic analysis of the leadership activities and behaviour of the principal: (1) instructional improvement and innovation, including instructional innovation led by the principal; the principal's role in decision making on curriculum design and change; and the principal's efforts to increase academic learning time during the school day; (2) educational goal consensus, or the extent to which the principal develops consensus among staff on annual goals for the school; (3) staff development, including the principal's role in staff development programs and the proportion of time in faculty meetings spent on curriculum and instructional matters; (4) seeking district or community support/resources. This includes interaction with district administrators or community in seeking support for school improvement; (5) involving staff in planning, especially in planning school policy and program changes; and (6) exercising authority in school policy and organization, including the principal's role in selecting staff, deciding rules for students, and scheduling and assigning teachers.

These areas emerge from Glasman's (1984) typology of principal roles, and the measures of leadership behaviour by principals. Of the six areas, the first three are identified by Blank (1987) as the indicators of the principal leadership as an 'educator' and the last three tend to indicate leadership as an 'administrator'. Blank (1987) found that most principals differed considerably in perceiving the importance of each of these areas, but in general principals tend to be leaders with specific aspects of school organization and with issues that are related to district policies and priorities. Meanwhile, Bossert and his colleagues (1982) also summarized recent studies of effective principals and successful schools in the following areas: (1) goals and production emphasis, (2) power and decision making, (3) Organization/Coordination, and (4) Human Relation/School and Community Relations.

For the purpose of concept clarification, the terms of leadership, role, and effectiveness should be explained. Leadership is defined as influence, the art or process of influencing people so that they will strive willingly and enthusiastically toward the achievement of group goals (Koontz, et al., 1984:506). In terms of managerial purposes, leadership is defined as the process of directing and influencing the task-related activities of group members (Stoner, et al., 1985:569). The term role refers to the structural or normative elements defining the behaviour expected of the incumbents or actors, that is, their mutual rights and obligations. In this sense, it is what is supposed to be done in order to carry out the purpose of the system rather than what is actually done that defines the institutional role (Getzels, et al., 1968:60). Effectiveness in this study was defined as the degree to which desired effects are produced or the level of goal achievement attributable to teaching (Power, 1989:47)

The leadership roles played by principals provide a framework for all of their major tasks and functions in improving school effectiveness. Sergiovanni (1987) contends that the forces of leadership are articulated within each role, and together they provide the context for reflective practice within the principalship.

To clarify the leadership roles which are perceived by the school staff as significant for school improvement, the existing demands on the changing and expanding roles of school principals, particularly in South Australia, were examined. The main purpose of this study was then to

investigate the leadership roles of the school principal, and to examine the role of leadership in a principal improving school effectiveness. The leadership roles of the principal were based on an examination of relevant literature, as tested against the opinions of the staff of a local primary school focussing on the general areas: (1) curriculum or instructional improvement and innovation; (2) staff development; (3) organization/co-ordination; and (4) school and community relations. There were four research questions to answer: What are the important leadership roles of the school principal in improving school effectiveness? How do practicing teachers and their principal view these leadership roles? What are the important leadership practices a principal might adopt in improving school effectiveness? In which areas do the leadership practices of principals have the greatest effect ?

Although the Principal fills many roles in achieving school effectiveness, this study focused attention only on the leadership role. The emphasis was on the leadership roles of a primary school principal in improving school effectiveness based on the perceptions or opinions of the principal and his practicing teachers. These will limit the scope of investigations and discussions of the study. The overall findings cannot be generalized to the wider population, but rather they will be used as to discuss school leadership and to provide some direction for future research.

Such a study in South Australia was considered important due to the lack of research in this area, especially in primary schools. The importance of this study lies then in the fact that it contributes to clarification of the changing roles of school principals in South Australia in carrying out educational development, and, as a consequence, in enhancing their efficiency and effectiveness. Furthermore, the findings bring a clearer understanding of the leadership roles of the school principal and provide a basis for other studies that might focus on such issues at different levels of the school system.

METHOD

Generally, this study can be categorized as descriptive in nature for it tried to describe a given state of affairs as fully and carefully as possible (Fraenkel and Wallen, 1990), involving an intensive investigation

of a 'social unit' (Mason and Bramble, 1989). In this case, the researcher examined the perceptions and opinions of staff at the Tonsley Park Primary School in South Australia in terms of the leadership roles of a school principal in school improvement. Such an approach was chosen as it enabled the researcher to focus on one aspect of the problem (Bell, 1989) within the context of principalship, namely the perceived leadership roles of the principal in improving school effectiveness. The study also included a literature review which provided the understanding and insights necessary for the development of a logical framework related to the researched problems (Gay, 1987) used as a basis for designing the research and analyzing the results.

The study involved the principal, counselor, and 11 teachers from the Tonsley Park Primary School (TPPS). No sampling was undertaken (Salisbury, 1993) because there was no intention to draw general conclusions for the larger population.

To gather the data systematically, a questionnaire that consists of two sections of items was developed and used to measure perceptions of principal leadership roles in general. This was administered to the principal of the Tonsley Park Primary School, a school counselor and 11 teachers. Items in the first section were based on the observations and descriptions of leadership roles made by Sergiovanni (1987), that were designed to identify the perceived importance of various leadership roles of a principal in improving school effectiveness. From the research literature review, ten leadership roles were adapted as the structured items: exerciser of authority, decision maker, manager, strategist, educational leader, supervisor, organizer, administrator, team leader, and initiator (Gay, 1987). Respondents were required to indicate their perceptions on the importance of each role by ranking them in order of significance, with a 1 indicating the most important and a 10 the least important. The second section and a set of interview questions were based on aspects of principal leadership applied in the U.S. in observations made by Blank (1987). Items in the second section of the questionnaire consisted of 20 structured questions or statements. Each respondent was asked to indicate their opinion on the importance of these tasks of the principal for school improvement by rating them using the Likert scale (Tuckman, 1978) as: very important, important, useful, minor value, no value. This section attempted to identify the specific tasks in which a

principal might be expected to provide leadership. As well as completion of the questionnaires, interviews were held with the principal and school counselor to obtain information on leadership from the school principal.

This study did not use any statistical tests for it did not include any observations of two related samples (Fraenkel and Wallen, 1990) or testing hypotheses (Gay, 1987). Since the number of respondents were small, the analysis of responses in the questionnaire used tabulation in the presentation and identified some differences of opinions among the group of respondents in accordance with the procedure suggested by Bell (1989). The responses of the interviews were used primarily to complement responses to the questionnaire. The researcher has summarized the results of the interviews with the principal and the counselor, highlighting some important points as additional information for analysis and comparison of the questionnaire findings. All the data were then analyzed, initially to identify the perceived importance of the leadership roles of the school principal, and to establish the perceived importance of those roles in improving school effectiveness. The opinions of the principal and the school staff in this study were identified and then compared with the information from the literature review.

RESULTS

The analysis of the important leadership roles were conducted by ranking the mean values obtained by each role, or from 10 leadership roles adapted as the structured items or indicators in this study. It then follows that the closer the mean value of each role (item) to 1 the more important the role as perceived by respondents, and the closer the value is to 10 the less important the perceived role. Thus it can be stated that the mean values of each role were: exerciser of authority (7.0), decision maker (5.15), manager (5.38), strategist (5.38), educational leader (4.92), supervisor (8.84), organizer (6.69), administrator (3.15), team leader (2.8) and initiator (5.61).

The data shows that respondents clearly regarded the category of team leader as the most important, while supervisor was the least important. For further analysis, the mean values of the perceived leadership roles can be discussed by considering the following scale (table 1).

Table 1 Rating Scale and Its Category

Rating Scale	Category
2.8—4.8	high
4.9—6.9	medium
7.0—9.0	low

It is clear that two leadership roles were highly rated by all respondents: team leader and administrator. Six leadership roles received medium leadership ratings: decision maker, manager, strategist, educational leader, initiator, and organizer. The two roles of exerciser of authority and supervisor received low ratings.

A comparison within the responses of the principal was made through the rank ordering of mean values obtained by the principal and the practicing teachers. In this case, except for the role 'exerciser of authority', all the other roles were ranked differently by the principal and all respondents. All respondents, for instance, ranked 'team leader' as 1st, while the principal ranked it as 5th. 'Administrator' was ranked by all respondents as 2nd, whereas the principal regarded it as the most important. Finally, 'Supervisor' was ranked by all respondents as 10th or the least important, while the principal ranked it as 6th.

Additional comments regarding the leadership roles of a principal were received from the principal. He wrote, in general, that: '... this order will vary according to the skills of people to whom some of these roles can be delegated in a particular school. A good principal will be flexible about this'.

The data analyzed also shows that the principal ranked the decision maker as the 7th, while the group regarded it as 4th. However, he commented that this role depends on the kind of decision. Major decisions should be made with wide consultation with staff, parents, students. Very minor decisions should be made quickly by the person best fitted to make them. Principals should ensure effective communication of all decisions actually happens. Hard to rate this one.

With regard to the important leadership practices a principal might adopt in improving school effectiveness, there were four major leadership

areas examined in this study within which a principal is expected to provide leadership. They are instructional improvement and innovation, staff development, organization and coordination, and school and community relations. The Likert scale used in the questionnaire showed that a value of 1 indicated great importance and 5 no value. Respondents were asked to rate each task in order of importance by assigning such a scale. Thus, the greater the importance of a given task category the lower the mean value obtained.

To analyze the results, the data were summarized and discussed separately according to each leadership area. Based on the weighted scores obtained by each item, the mean values of each category were calculated. Finally, the degree of importance obtained by a certain task was revealed within the main areas of leadership. To do this, the researcher simply rounded off the figures of each mean value (for instance, the main value 1.6 becomes 2 and 2.4 becomes 2) then converted to the rating scale attached in the questionnaire.

In the area of instructional improvement and innovation, the findings indicate that four categories were regarded as the important tasks of a principal with the mean value 2, within which he or she is expected to have a leadership role: (1) increase educational goal consensus among staff; (2) initiate curriculum innovation in the school; (3) modify the curriculum to meet community and student expectations; and (4) utilize community resources in implementing the curriculum. The remaining two tasks were seen as useful (with the mean value 2.77), namely: (1) the conducting of workshops with staff to improve teaching skills; and (2) making decisions on curriculum or instructional design changes.

In staff development, the data analyzed suggested that four tasks were regarded as important (with the mean value 1.85—2.23). Those were: (1) contributing to the selection of new staff; (2) making decisions on staff placement and scheduling; (3) using staff meeting to deal with curriculum and instructional matters; and (4) Encouraging and give direction to teacher's professional growth. While one task: 'make decisions on staff development programmes', was rated as useful with the mean value 2.85.

In the area of organization and coordination, the important of principal leadership can be summarized that all respondents rated the

task 'work cooperatively with staff to ensure more effective use of their skills', as the most important with the mean value of 1.46.

The other categories obtained the mean value of 2, rated by respondents as important tasks of a principal, namely: (1) organizing school activities so as to achieve overall purpose; (2) solving problems and make decisions relating to school purpose; (3) promoting health and stability of staff and students; (4) representing the interests and expectations of staff to the department (5); and providing systems and organizational arrangements for efficiency and effectiveness.

In the area of school and community relations, all the categories observed were rated as important tasks with the mean values (1.77—2.17). They were: (1) encouragement of parents participation in solving school problems; (2) encouragement and facilitate parent visits to the school; and (3) development of regular and systematic methods of reporting to parents on school activities.

The separate rank ordering of each item from the 20 leadership tasks revealed that all respondents (the principal, teachers, and counselor) agree that the principal should 'work cooperatively with staff to ensure more effective use of their skills'. Such a task had a mean value of 1.46. On another hand, the respondents did not necessarily expect a principal to make decisions on staff development programs (with the mean value of 2.85). To simplify analysis of the overall results, the mean values obtained by each item were converted to the following scale (Table 2).

Table 2 Converted Scale and Its Category

Rating Scale	Category
1.4—1.9	high
2.0—2.5	medium
2.6—3.1	low

Based on this scale, the following leadership practices or tasks with a mean value of 1.4—1.9, were seen as most important: (1) promote health and stability of staff and students; (2) work cooperatively with

staff to ensure more effective use of their skills; (3) encourage parent participation in solving school problems; (4) provide systems and organizational arrangements for efficiency and effectiveness; (5) encourage and facilitate parent visits to the school; and (6) encourage and give direction to teacher's professional growth.

The following leadership practices with a mean value of 2—2.5 (medium) were considered to show moderate importance: (1) increase educational goal consensus among staff; (2) contribute to the selection of new staff; (3) make decisions of staff placement and scheduling; (4) organize school activities so as to achieve overall purpose; (5) solve problems and make decisions relating to school purpose; (6) represent the interests and expectations of staff to department; (7) initiate curriculum innovation in the school; (8) modify the curriculum to meet community and student expectations; (9) use staff meeting to deal with curriculum and instructional matters; (10) utilize community resources in implementing the curriculum; and (11) develop regular and systematic methods of reporting to parents on school activities.

Only three tasks received relatively low ratings within the mean value of 2.6—3.1. Those were (1) conduct workshops with staff to improve teaching skills; (2) make decisions on staff development programs; and (3) make decisions on curriculum or instructional design changes.

The areas where the leadership practices of principals have the greatest effect were revealed by analyzing the concerns by the principal and all respondents. From the four leadership areas observed, it can be concluded that the principal regard 'school and community relations' as the most important or as the first priority of his leadership endeavours ask, ranked it as 1st, whereas the others (practicing teachers) ranked it as 2nd. Surprisingly, 'curriculum or instructional improvement and innovation' was ranked by the principal and all another respondents as the last priority of concern, and ranked it as 4 th. The data indicated that, except in curriculum or instructional improvement and innovation, the principal and all respondents differed as to the importance of the principal leadership.

Since the questionnaire were constructed in two sections of items, a comparison of the results of each should be analyzed in order to shows whether there significant differences. The findings of section 1 indicates

that the team leader role was selected by all respondents as the most important role a principal should provide in improving school effectiveness. It was suggested that a principal use a team approach, providing support and facilitate the team decisions. This is in accord with the findings of section 2, where the most important task of a principal was to work cooperatively with staff as a team. This is also related with the overall ranking of the leadership areas, that organization and coordination were regarded as the highest priority within which a principal must provide more leadership. The achievement of such a responsibility is facilitated through the role of a principal as a team leader.

The leadership role of 'supervisor' observed in section 1 was considered by respondents as the least important. This was also supported by the findings of section 2 where the use of principal influences in making decisions on staff development received a low rating. This was also supported by the findings of the observation of leadership areas, where most respondents did not expect a high degree of principal involvement in instructional improvement and innovation as a part of supervisory function in the school setting.

The principal, however, wrote that some decisions might be made quickly by the person best fitted to make them. In other words, it depends on the kind of decisions. Major decisions should be made with the involvement of the whole staff, parent, and community.

DISCUSSION

The analysis of the data on leadership roles of the principal revealed that 'team leader' was identified by all respondents as the most important role, and 'supervisor' as the least important. The trends highlighted in the literature review supported this finding, where democratization of school administration in the Australian context has prompted the necessity of a team leadership approach by which a principal and his/her staff members work together to establish an effective school (Sergiovanni, 1987; Watkins, 1991).

The differing perceptions of teachers and the principal revealed in this study were congruent with the views expressed in the literature review, especially with respect to the complexity of the role (Heck,

1991), its ambiguity (Duignan, 1987) and different definitions of leadership (Bass, 1990).

On the other hand, whereas the responses of all respondents as a group produced the ranking of the above-mentioned two roles, the principal rated the category 'administrator' as the most important and 'organizer' as the least important. Although none of the research works or professional literature reviewed considered a model of the rank ordering of the leadership roles, such a finding significantly contradicts the new dimensions for principal leadership in Australia (Caldwell, 1992) that moved from the principal as an 'administrator' to the principal as a 'leader' (Blank, 1987; Berry and Ginsberg, 1990; Heck, 1991).

The concern of this study is not to exclude either administration or leadership, but rather to examine the concern as to whether the emphases are in balance and support each other (Sergiovanni, 1987). Moreover, it was clearly suggested that leadership should be emphasized over administration in terms of better performance of the schooling system (Sergiovanni, 1990). Some different opinions were expressed in the principal's responses in the questionnaire and the interview. He considered that he might differ from other principals, in that, while others may emphasize curriculum and leadership changes, he put priority and emphasis on the basic administrative functions. The most important role of a principal is to make sure that the basic running of the school is good, and that administrative functions must work well.

Discussing the overall ranking with the literature review, nevertheless, indicated that none of the observed roles were found to be unnecessary, even though two roles (supervisor and exerciser of authority) received low ratings. This suggests that all 10 leadership roles examined in this study have some effects on improving school effectiveness.

The analysis of leadership practices and principal leadership areas showed that all respondents strongly supported the view that a principal should work cooperatively with staff to ensure more effective use of their skills. They regarded this as the most important role and expected the principal to provide leadership in this category. This finding appears to be consistent with the concept of 'team leadership' and with the perceptions expressed in the literature review that successful schools tend to be better organized, and coordinated (Michigan State Department of Education, 1974) with school staff members working together to provide a support mechanism for a principal (Sergiovanni, 1987; Hord,

et al., 1983). It was also supported by a changed view of principals as endorsed by Sergiovanni (1987, cited in Watkins, 1991:31) in a recent address to the Victorian Association of Principals of Secondary Schools, that as transformative leaders, the principals 'are more concerned with the concept of *power to* than *power over*. They are concerned with how the power of leadership can help people become more successful...'

Of the 20 tasks investigated, all respondents regarded the task 'making decisions on staff development' as the least important. This suggests a low priority for this role. This, however, differs from the role expectations revealed in the literature review where the decision making process as being an essential area for an effective principal where he/she should have more power (Bossert, et al., 1982) particularly in making decisions impacting on the school organization and the improvement of teaching and learning (Glasman, 1984; Pashiardis, 1993). Although there might be strong involvement of School Councils and the Education Department in producing school policies as examined in this study, Chapman (1987) suggested that the principals' decision making responsibility has expanded to meet new situational demands. In the context of school improvement, this study may suggests that a principal should have more influences in the school policy and decision making process.

A further discussion based on the overall ranking of the 20 tasks indicated that all respondents considered the certain categories as the most important tasks which relate to the issue of school organization, community, and staff development. They include: (1) to promote health and stability of staff and students, (2) to work cooperatively with staff; (3) to encourage parent participation in solving problems; (4) to provide systems and organizational arrangements for efficiency and effectiveness; (5) to encourage and facilitate parent visits; and (6) to encourage and give direction to teacher's professional growth. But, none of the instructional tasks received a high rating from respondents. This is also consistent with the rank ordering of concerns made by the principal and his staff who perceived this concern as the last priority. Of the other tasks, most are related to the issues of instructional and staff development and received medium and low ratings.

Since there was no intention to compare all the tasks with a particular preference, the researcher focused only on the significant issue: the instructional task. Most of the opinions expressed in the literature review contradicted the above finding, suggesting that a principal should be

more involved in dealing with the curriculum and instructional matters (Lipham and Hoeh, 1974; Smyth, 1980; Bossert, et al., 1982; Jordan, 1986). The most crucial issue is to focus leadership roles on instructional issues (Berry & Ginsberg, 1990) or as pointed by Heck (1991) 'providing strong educational leadership'. Based on the observations made by Caldwell (1992), this emerged as a new dimension that involves 'the nurturing of a learning community' including students, teachers, parents and others with stakes and interest in the school. It was also suggested that since this aspect directly related to improved teaching and learning, a principal should provide increased leadership in this area in order to achieve the overall school goals successfully.

However, as revealed in the interview, the principal emphasized administrative responsibility as more important than curriculum and leadership because the situation needed it. For example, the need to deal with the emerging and the diverse needs of the students and staff, the Department policies, and community, more administrative activity was required in order to provide better arrangements. This is in accordance with the findings of Blank (1987:72) that 'principals tend to be leaders with specific aspects of school organization and with issues that are related to district policies and priorities'.

It was found that a principal tends to be expected to provide leadership in terms of school organization/coordination, staff development, and school and community relations. Similar views were also revealed in the observations made by Blank (1987). While the areas of instructional leadership is considered less important, it is still considered to be part of the leadership role of the principal, and once again, this reflects the findings of the literature review (Blank, 1987).

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS
Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions may be drawn: (1) The most important leadership role in school improvement is 'team leader', in which a principal is strongly expected to use a team approach, providing support and backing to team decisions. While other roles were also found to have some effect on improving school effectiveness, the roles of exerciser of authority and supervisor received low ratings; (2) Principals and their staff may have significantly different

opinions on perceptions of the 'team leader' role. The principal ranked it as 5th, while all respondents regarded it as 1st in importance. Except for the role 'exerciser of authority', all the other roles were also ranked differently by the principal and all respondents; (3) All identified leadership tasks were found to be important. However, the overall ranking indicated that all respondents most strongly agreed that a principal should work cooperatively with staff to ensure more effective use of their skills. On the other hand, they did not necessarily expect a principal to make decisions on staff development programmes; (4) The category of tasks known as 'organization/coordination' is the most important area in which the leadership practices of principals are likely have the greatest effect; and (5) The category of 'curriculum or instructional improvement and innovation' is the least important area in which a principal might provide strong leadership.

Suggestions

This study sought the opinions of the principal and his practicing teachers in a school setting regarding leadership roles of a principal in improving school effectiveness. Although there was not any intention to draw general conclusions for all schools or a wider population, however, the findings remind us (teachers, principals, and educational experts in Indonesia) to highly participate in the development programs of educational management. In the future, the principals will find some challenges as resulted from the new trends and educational reform movements all over the world, or especially Asia. They are supposed to play key roles in operating a modern school successfully, which need special skills in educational leadership that fit with the existing situations. In this concern, there is no other choice that a principal should be able to apply an effective management system in a school system or a college, reflecting the emerging conditions of the society.

To clarify the leadership roles of a principal, it is also suggested that: (1) a similar study should be carried out involving other respondents such as parents, students, school clerical assistants and Education Department officers; (2) a comparative study of leadership roles should be carried out between different school settings; (3) a further study should be held to reveal the factors affecting principal leadership behaviours;

and (4) a correlational study regarding the perceived leadership roles and their effects on school effectiveness should be conducted.

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