EMSSA Leadership Development USA

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Leadership Development

The most important articles are those that depict the situation in the USA (where in the last decennia there has been much criticism on the relevance of the training of principals at universities), the situation in the UK (focusing on the role of the National College for School Leaders) in Europe (a recent OECD study) and in Southeast Asia (focussing on the different needs of head teachers because of the differences in culture compared to the global Western ideas).

The situation in the USA

In the last three decades major investigations and studies have been held about the training of principals[2]. It is amazing to see how over and over again the same problems are mentioned.

The major organisations involved in the discussions are:
*   American Educational Research Association (AERA) – Division A (Administration, Organization & Leadership) and the Teaching Educational Administration Special Interest Group (TEA-SIG)
*   University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA)
*   National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA)
*   National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP)
*   National Association of Elementary School Principals (NASSP)
*   National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE)
*   Stanford Educational Leadership Institute (SELI)
*   Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC)
*   National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)

Special Taskforce that were involved were/are
*   National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration (NCEEA – UCEA)
*   National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA)
*   National Commission for the Advancement of Educational Leadership Preparation (NCAELP)
*   Taskforce on Evaluating Leadership Preparation Programs (UCEA/TEA-SIG)

Major supporting foundations
*   Broad Foundation
*   Danforth Foundation
*   Fordham Foundation
*   Wallace Foundation

Major publications from the last years are:

Title	Author or organisation	Year
Leaders for America's Schools	NCEEA	1987
Study Group on School Leadership	NASBE	1999

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[1] This paper is written to support LEAD-link in the development of new training courses on educational leadership and management. LEAD-link is a Sub-Saharan African network of organisations each having a leading role in the field of Educational Management Development in their respective countries (Sudan, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia, Malawi, South Africa, Swaziland, Mozambique). The complete set of papers can be found on the website of LEAD-link. (http://lead-linknetwork.org/) and on the site of Jan Arend Brands (www.freeman.nl).
EMSSA is short for Educational Management Sub-Saharan Africa.

[2] There have been many efforts to reform leadership preparation over the past 30 years, ranging from sharply critical reports from within the field and outside to policy mandates and foundation interventio. (Orr TEA-SIG Eye on Education 2006, vol 14, 1, p2).

Ensuring the Capacity of University-Based Educational Leadership Preparation	NCAELP	2002
Better Leaders for America's Schools: A Manifesto	Fordham	2003
Innovative Pathways to School Leadership USA		2004
Educating School Leaders	Levine	2005
An Educative Look at "Educating School Leaders"	UCEA, AERA-Div. A, TEA-SIG and NCPEA	2005
Schools Can't Wait	SREB	2005
Unpacking the Foundations of ISLLC Standards and Addressing Concerns in the Academic Community	Murphy	2005
Non-university based preparation programs	Barbour	2006
Educational Leadership Preparation Programs	Fossey	2006
Evaluation of Educational Leadership Programs UCEA	Orr	2006
Preparing School Leaders for a Changing World	Darling-Hammond	2007
Research Educational Leadership Preparation UCEA	Preis	2007
Educational Leadership Policy Standards ISLLC	NASSP	2008
Becoming a Leader: Preparing Principals for Today's Schools	Wallace Foundation	2008

Dissatisfaction and alternatives
The training of future principals in the USA is mainly taken care of in Schools of Education in colleges and universities. That has changed in the last decennia because of the dissatisfaction with the training.

Already in the early eighties, in a reaction on the dissatisfaction, the National Network of Principals' Centers was founded by Roland Barth. His philosophy was that principals could and should take responsibility for their own professional development. The NNPC (later International NPC) at the top of its success in the nineties counted some 100 centers in the USA and some 20 abroad.

Recently Barbour 2006 categorised the alternatives for Non-University Based Preparation Programs as:
1) For Profit Preparation Programs
2) State-based Alternative Preparation Programs
3) Foundations Driven Preparation Programs
4) Partnership Preparation Programs
5) Out-sourced Preparation Programs the School Leaders Licensure Assessment
(for TEA-SIG).
See also the overview in the report of Levine 2005 'An Array of Alternatives' (p 50)

Still the majority of the training takes place in colleges and universities. And the dissatisfaction with what is offered is high.

A special issue of Educational Administration Quarterly (2002, Vol 38(2)) was dedicated to: Ensuring the Capacity of University-Based Educational Leadership Preparation. 6 articles were solicited by the NCAELP. It was a reaction on earlier urgent calls for change.
The dissatisfaction is seen throughout the 6 articles.

The dissatisfaction was also very clear from the report of Levine 'Educating School Leaders' 2005. "The findings of this report were very disappointing. Collectively, educational administration programs are the weakest of all the programs at the nation's education schools' (p13) and 'This study found the overall quality of educational administration programs in the United States to be poor. The majority of programs range from inadequate to appalling, even at some of the country's leading universities' (p 23)

Soon UCEA, AERA-Div. A, TEA-SIG and NCPEA published a common defense.
'It is unclear why Levine felt compelled to frame his findings only in negative terms, misrepresenting in many cases both his own data and the results of other research projects' (p 3). The reaction states that 'the report overlooks the aggressive and complex changes underway in leadership preparation programs.' The report points to the important role of ISLLC and ongoing and current initiatives to change programs. The reaction also states that there are a number of high quality programs (but it does not mention the names of those programs).

Two years later however not much seems to have changed:
"Yet study after study has shown that the training principals typically receive in university programs and from their own districts doesn't do nearly enough to prepare them for their roles as leaders of learning. A staggering 80 percent of superintendents and 69 percent of principals think that leadership training in schools of education is out of touch with the realities of today's districts, according to a recent Public Agenda survey." (DeVita in the introduction to Darling-Hammond 2007).

The recent Wallace report 'Becoming a Leader: Preparing School Principals for Today's Schools' (2008) summarizes the situation.
'Indeed a wide body of research has cited persistent weaknesses in many university-based school leadership preparation programs, including:
• Admission standards that allow leadership preparation participants to essentially "self-select" themselves without having to demonstrate either the potential or the intention to assume school leadership positions;
• Curricula and knowledge base that may not adequately take into account the needs of schools, districts and increasingly diverse student bodies;
• Weak connections between theory and practice;
• Faculty who may have little field experience as leaders; and
• Shallow or poorly designed internships and field-based experiences that are not sufficiently connected to the rest of the program.

Finding good examples of training programs
Researchers had difficulty to find good examples of training programs. Where they found such examples it is interesting to see is that the examples change over the years.

The Taskforce on the Principalship in 2000 identified one Promising Practice:
• The Principals' Executive Program (PEP) of the University of North Carolina's Center for School Leadership Development. (p 14)

The sample of NCAELP report (2002) was presented by Jackson and Kelley: Exceptional and Innovative Programs in Educational Leadership. These programs were (from):
• University of Washington Danforth Education Leadership Program
• East Tennessee State University
• California State University, Fresno
• University of Louisville IDEAS program
• Wichita State University
• San Antonio Region 20 Service Center

The small number of strong programs Levine was able to identify (he did not find an exemplary one) was:
• University of Wisconsin
• Peabody College of Vanderbilt University
(Levine reports very positively about the NCSL in the UK that will be dealt with in the next chapter).

The sample of the report from Darling-Hammond (2007) was
Pre-Service Programs:
• Delta State University
• University of Connecticut's Administrator Preparation Program (UCAPP)
• The Principal's Institute at Bank Street College (NY)

- Jefferson County (KY) Public Schools
- Educational Leadership Development Academy (ELDA) at the University of San Diego

In-service programs:
- Hartford (CT) Public School District
- Region 1 of the NYC Public Schools
- Jefferson County (KY) Public Schools
- San Diego (CA) Unified School District (SDUSD)

A reason for this changing picture might be that the criteria for selecting the examples were different (Darling-Hammond used recommendations and outcomes but also wished to present a sample of cases that represented variation along the key dimensions 'type of program' (pre-service, in-service, or both) and 'type of institution' (district, university, or third-party) .

Another reason however might be that only under very specific conditions (that are difficult to realise or to maintain) it is possible to have an innovative or successful program. That would be in line with the continuing character of the complaints throughout the decades although many solutions to deal with the problem were presented.

Maybe the context (although changing in itself) is such that there is hardly a chance to change. (And it could be an indication that the same might be true for schools. That will be dealt with in a later chapter)

Lessons from the good examples
- Lesson one: Successful principal training programs are significantly different from the majority of programs in existence. They are more selective, more focused on improvement of instruction, more closely tied to the needs of districts, and provide more relevant internships with hands-on leadership experience.
- Lesson two: Leadership training should not end when principals are hired. It should continue with high-quality mentoring for new principals and with professional development for all principals to promote career-long growth in line with the evolving needs of schools and districts.
- Lesson three: High-quality leader development can make a real difference, but providing it can involve added costs. Resources therefore should be directed at quality programs with proven benefits.
- Lesson four: Fixing what's wrong with leadership preparation is essential, but not enough. Addressing the leadership challenge also requires remedying the difficult working conditions that can undermine even the best-trained principals.

 (Wallace 2008)

Content in the good examples of training programs
By identifying good examples of training organisations (and the training they offered) it was hoped to be able to conclude about common elements that other less successful organisations could learn from. And indeed such common elements were presented.

Surprisingly in these publications there is not that much focus on the content of the programs. Some exceptions are that content should be focused on roles to foster student learning and that the content in the perception of the trainees should be consistently related. A major problem however is that sometimes these were two of the criteria to choose the exemplary programs. So one can't conclude that having these elements (having a focus on learning and having consistency) contribute to be successful.

Levine has more to say about the content: 'The typical course of study for the principalship has little to do with the job of being a principal. In fact, it appears to be a nearly random collection of courses.' (p 27).
'The Principals Survey asked school heads, who had graduated from or were currently attending a university-based degree or certification program, what courses they had taken. More than 80 percent of them reported the same nine courses—instructional leadership (92 percent), school law (91 percent), educational psychology (91 percent), curriculum development (90 percent), research methods (89 percent), historical and philosophical

foundations of education (88 percent), teaching and learning (87 percent), child and adolescent development (85 percent), and the school principalship (84 percent)' (p 27)

Apart from the content the publications mainly focus on conditions needed to create relevant learning opportunities for students and on conditions needed after the training.

Jackson 2002 (p 196) mentions:
• Sequence and coherence of courses
• Problem-based learning (PBL)
• The use of cohorts
• Collaborative partnerships
• Field experiences
• Technology

The study of Darling-Hammond 2007 states (p 6):
All of the pre-service programs in our sample shared the following elements:
• A comprehensive and coherent curriculum aligned with state and professional codes, in particular the ISSLC standards, which emphasize instructional leadership;
• A philosophy and curriculum emphasizing instructional leadership and school improvement;
• Active, student-centered instruction that integrates theory and practice and stimulates reflection. Instructional strategies include problem-based learning; action research; field-based projects; journal writing; and portfolios that feature substantial use of feedback and assessment by peers, faculty, and the candidates themselves;
• Faculty who are knowledgeable in their subject areas, including both university professors and practitioners experienced in school administration;
• Social and professional support in the form of a cohort structure and formalized mentoring and advising by expert principals;
• Vigorous, targeted recruitment and selection to seek out expert teachers with leadership potential; and
• Well-designed and supervised administrative internships that allow candidates to engage in leadership responsibilities for substantial periods of time under the tutelage of expert veterans.

The major step that was taken with the study of Darling-Hammond was that not only the characteristics of exemplary training were highlighted or the conditions for such training. The research also looked into the results and outcomes. ('…determine how the preparedness, reported practices, and demographics of graduates of our selected programs compare with those of a national sample' (p 16)).

In measuring the satisfaction of principals who were trained their judgement was asked about:
q6a: The program content emphasized instructional leadership
q6b: The program content emphasized leadership for school improvement
q6c: The program content emphasized managing school operations efficiently
q6d: The program content emphasized working with the school community and stakeholders (p 164)
These questions highlight what the researchers found relevant about content.

In general compared to Jackson new in Darling-Hammond are the focus on standards, instructional leadership and school improvement, feedback and assessment and targeted recruitment.

So it seems to be the case that regarding the content the ISLLC standards are leading, standards that include instructional leadership and school improvement. (For ISLLC see a later chapter).

Questions for the curriculum development of the Sub-Saharan African head teacher course
• Should a training in your country be university-based or being based elsewhere? Why?

- Which aspects of or elements in the context will foster or hinder the success of a new head teacher training in your country
- What is the relative attention that should be given to content and those other conditions that together with content influence the effect of the training?
- How important should standards like ISLLC be in leading curriculum development for head teachers?