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Identifying Patterns in the Crucial Educational Leadership Constructs Used by
the Most Cited Authors and Published Works of 1990–2010

Sitalaiti Lotulelei

A dissertation submitted to the faculty of
Brigham Young University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

Identifying Patterns in the Crucial Educational Leadership Constructs Used by the Most Cited Authors and Published Works of 1990–2010

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Doctor of Philosophy

This study conducted a bibliometric analysis for the purpose of identifying the crucial leadership constructs that best explain and/or define effective educational leadership in two decades (1990–2000 and 2001–2010). The study reviewed top authors in educational leadership and analyzed their top cited works to identify leadership constructs which were (a) unique to leadership works within the 1990–2000 decade, (b) unique to the 2001–2010 decade, and c) similar or different between the two decades. The study found that the leadership constructs did evolve and shift during the study period and addressed the changing demands of individuals, educational organizations, and the external environment. Crucial educational leadership constructs were the product of the efforts of researchers in educational leadership to promote effective school leadership, improve learning outcomes and student performance, and create beneficial organizational results. The findings of the study highlight the potential impact and benefit of the continually upgrading and refreshing the understanding, training, and preparation of current and future school leaders.

Keywords: Educational leadership, leadership, leadership constructs, effective leadership, bibliometric research, citation analysis, content analysis.

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DESCRIPTION OF STRUCTURE AND CONTENT

This manuscript is presented in the format of the hybrid dissertation. The hybrid format focuses on producing a journal-ready manuscript which is considered by the dissertation committee to be ready for submission. Therefore, this dissertation has fewer chapters than the traditional format, and the manuscript focuses on the presentation of the scholarly article. This hybrid dissertation includes appended materials such as an extended review of literature and a methods section with elaborated detail on the research approach used in this dissertation project.

The targeted journal for this dissertation is the *International Journal of Urban Educational Leadership (IJUEL)*. The *IJUEL* is sponsored and published by the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA), which is the primary professional organization for educational leadership in the USA. The Department of Educational Leadership & Foundations (EDLF) at Brigham Young University is a full institutional member of UCEA, and EDLF faculty members attend the national conference annually to present research and participate in plenary and business meetings of the organization.

Articles submitted to the *IJUEL* are double-blind reviewed by three external reviewers, as well as one in-house reviewer. The manuscript length for submission is either 5,000 or 7,000 words. The manuscript in this hybrid dissertation targeted the 7,000 word length submission. The target audience for the *IJUEL* is composed of both academics and practitioners in educational leadership.

Background

Leadership is a subject that has generated interest and speculation among people for centuries. Researchers have included several common components in their explanations of leadership in different contexts, including that leadership involves a leader, a follower, an organization, and an environment (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Fleishman, 1973; Northouse, 2009; Stogdill, 1974). From this foundation, researchers over the past 100 years have sought to define leadership and have formulated theories conceptualizing and explaining leadership. In 1911, Frederick Taylor published his foundational book on *Scientific Management* which marked the formal beginning of the study of leadership in organizations. Since that time, the understanding and application of leadership has evolved through different eras to address new questions and to respond to different emerging leadership contexts.

In the early eras of the study of leadership, research questions focused on how to identify and develop effective leaders. As the leadership field developed and the complexities of leadership emerged, research began to examine many additional factors that contributed to effective leadership. In the last two decades (1990–2010), as the global and external organizational environments became increasingly dynamic, leadership research and literature has evolved once again to understand how effective leaders promote and facilitate change. Leaders in many organizational contexts have been informed by this leadership literature, mostly grounded in the field of business, to improve their leadership and improve their organizations.

One of these organizational contexts is educational leadership—the leadership of educational institutions. However, given that the external environment of educational institutions has generally remained stable longer than business environments, educational leadership did not experience the challenges of or need for dynamic organizational change as

soon as leadership in the business context. Yet, beginning in about 1990, education's external environment began to shift more rapidly and create new pressures for dynamic organizational changes. These changes created the catalyst for educational leadership to specifically examine how educational leaders could be more effective in leading schools. The following sections first review four main eras of leadership research, development, and understanding in the general leadership literature and then examine how this literature relates to the experience of educational leadership.

Review of Leadership Research

The history of leadership research can be framed in terms of four key eras, each of which addressed the current issues and understanding of its time. Each era built upon the understanding developed from leadership research in previous era. The four key eras addressed identifying effective leaders, developing these leaders, understanding the complexity of leadership, and recognizing leadership as leading change.

Identifying effective leaders. In the early 1900s, the research goal was to understand how to identify, find, or recognize good leaders. Great leaders were defined by their traits (Yukl, 2010). Stogdill and Shartle (1948) analyzed the research from 1904 through 1948, synthesizing hundreds of studies, and concluded that relevant leadership traits included initiative, persistence, self-confidence, drive for responsibility, insight, integrity, sociability, and influence. Northouse's (2009) list later summarized similar traits and characteristics that were deemed central for leaders to possess. This list included intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity, and sociability. Leaders with these traits emerged as the entrepreneurs that created, managed, and lead the growing number of firms across a variety of industries.

The leadership focus of the 1920s, 1930s and early 1940s was marked by seeking to understand how these great leaders could make their organizations more efficient. Well-grounded in the principles of scientific management (Taylor, 1911), leaders sought to improve profits through the increased efficiency of workers who functioned simply as “cogs” within the organizational machinery. A series of research studies in the last 1930s and 1940s, most famously the Hawthorne studies (Roethlisberger, 1941), examined strategies to increase worker productivity and, in the process, stumbled upon the understanding that the social environment mattered to a worker’s sense of satisfaction and thus their productivity. From this research, the human relations approach to leadership sought to explain how effective leaders could best design and influence the work environment to increase worker satisfaction (and thus efficiency and productivity) (e.g. Barnard, 1938). For example, Tead (1935) explained that leadership was “the activity of influencing people to cooperate toward some goal which they have come to find desirable” (p. 20). Great leaders had specific characteristics and were able to influence workers to be happy cogs in the organizational machine. Definitions of leadership, which were beginning to be framed in terms of interpersonal influence due to interactions between leader and followers, focused on “the influence process between the leader’s power and the subordinate’s degree of acceptance and willingness to follow” (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 1999, p. 115).

Developing effective leaders. From the late 1940s, through the 1950s and 1960s, leadership research shifted in focus from finding good leaders to identifying effective leader behaviors and explaining how good leaders could be developed or trained (Stogdill, 1974; Stogdill & Shartle, 1948). Research focused on leader behaviors in different contexts (Fleishman, 1973; Northouse, 2009) and how leaders could influence followers. Tannenbaum, Weschler and Massarik (1961) defined leadership as “interpersonal influence, exercised in

situations and directed, through the communication process, toward the attainment of a specified goal or goals” (p. 24). Synthesis of this research found that good leaders clarified organizational goals (Selznick, 1957; Stogdill, 1974) and generally focused on either tasks or relationships, as reflected in Blake and Mouton’s (1964) Managerial (Leadership) Grid. The emergent question became when or in what combinations should leaders focus on tasks versus relationships.

Emergent leadership models later in this era, such as The Contingency Model of Leadership (Fiedler, 1967; Fiedler & Chemers, 1976) began to emphasize that effective leadership varied with the contingencies of the situation (e.g. Stogdill, 1974; Tannenbaum et al., 1961). Thus effective leadership still focused on effective and efficient management of the organization and began to be framed as depending on the interactions of many factors, such as the leaders’ personal traits, their behaviors, and the situational factors and organizational goals of the leadership situation (e.g. Selznick, 1957).

Understanding the complexity of leadership. In the 1970s and 1980s the leadership literature reflected many of the threads of leadership thought from the preceding decades. However, further building on the contingency approach and in search of more factors related to effective influence, the understanding of leadership expanded to include a wider range of factors. This expansion highlighted the people involved in leadership situations and focused on followers, power and influence, and the relationship between leader and follower. The research increasingly began to account for followers in explanations of leadership. For example, McGregor (1971) highlighted leadership variables related to the attitudes, needs, and other personal characteristics of the followers. Research then began to focus on how leaders motivated followers. Employee motivation was found to be related to the leader’s style and follower characteristics (such as follower readiness), and to the work setting itself (e.g. Maidment, 1984).

House and Dessler (1974) built on this research, describing that the relationship between leaders and followers helps to explain how leaders motivate subordinates to accomplish designated goals. Effective leaders created trust and exemplified integrity which instills within followers a sense of identity, purpose, and commitment to the organization (Bennis & Nanus, 1985). For example, Servant Leadership theory focused on the idea that great leaders serve their followers and meet their followers' needs (Sergiovanni, 1992). This approach advocates that the first desire of the leader should be to serve. This exemplifies a moral principle which generates *deserving authority* of a leader in such a way that followers willingly choose to follow. This type of leadership taps followers' emotions, appeals to their values, and responds to their connections with others.

A greater understanding of the complexity of leadership, particularly in terms of the mutual influence relationships between leaders and followers, highlighted the systemic nature of leadership in organizations. That is, effective leadership promoted the expansion of leadership to a wider range of people and positions within the organizational system. Robert K. Greenleaf (1977) reflects this idea, stating that leadership is “available to everyone, throughout an organization, who has competence, values, and desire for it” (p. 96).

Recognizing leadership as leading change. As in previous eras, leadership research during the most recent two decades (1990–2010) both built on and moved beyond earlier conceptions of leadership to recognize that a crucial function of effective leaders was the process of leading organizational and systemic change. This focus on leadership as leading change was greatly influenced by the emergence of the information and technology age which created challenges for many organizations as they experienced the need to adjust to a global economy and a world that was increasingly dynamic (e.g. Porter, 1986). These shifts in the external

environment of organizations required dramatic shifts in leadership from simply managing organizations to leading them through these changes (e.g. Beugré, Acar, & Braun, 2006).

In this time of rapid transition and change, transformational leadership (Burns, 1978) became the theoretical focus of much leadership research. In fact, Bryman (1996) referred to it as the “New Leadership” paradigm. Bass (1990) described the transformational leader in this way, “The transformational leader asks followers to transcend their own self-interest for the good of the group or organization, to consider their long-term needs to develop and to become more aware of what is really important” (p. 53). This transformational leadership style contrasted with the more managerial, transactional leadership style. In the most recent era, leaders encourage individuals to increase their personal engagement, which creates a personal “connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and followers, helping followers reach their fullest potential” (Northouse, 2001, p. 132).

The role of leaders in leading change has been one of the most challenging but important contributions of this era of leadership research. The shift in leadership toward leading change, rather than simply managing organizations, required leadership research to better understand how to best change organizational vision, culture and structures to create a more adaptive organization. Gary Yukl (2010) and Tichy and DeVanna (1990) explained that efforts to implement change in an organization would be more likely to be successful when a leader recognizes the need for a change, creates a vision, understands the reasons for resistance, and involves institutionalized sequential strategies in the process.

As leaders effectively communicated new directions, they created greater shared organizational vision and increased the shared meaning of the norms, values and beliefs of the organizational culture. Leaders encouraged followers to increasingly engage with each other

and, as a result, organizational structures shifted to incorporate more teams within the organizational system. Research found that the use of organizational teams led to greater productivity, more effective use of resources, better decision and problem solving, better quality products and services, and increased innovation and creativity (e.g. Katzenback & Smith, 1993; Parker, 1990).

Across these four eras, the understanding of leadership has evolved from identifying to developing leaders, to explaining the complexity of leadership contexts, to leading change in response to dynamic environmental factors. While this evolving understanding of leadership has been generated across a variety of organizational contexts, the field of business management has contributed the majority of research on leadership. One organizational context that has begun relatively recently to emerge as its own leadership field, is that of educational leadership, which studies leadership specifically within educational organizations.

Leadership in Educational Organizations

The understanding of leadership within the field of educational leadership has generally been influenced by and mirrored the general base of evolving leadership literature. The influence of the leadership literature in education was particularly clear in the earlier eras while the external environments were stable. However, when the external business environments began to change and leaders in these contexts had to respond respectively, educational leaders were generally still able to continue with the effective leadership strategies that worked in stable environments. When the educational environment began to change more rapidly, educational leaders responded by leading change through the development of learning communities.

The changing educational environment. While schools experienced environmental stability longer than many other industries, they began to experience the effects of the

increasingly dynamic environment in the early 1990s. School reform movements began to reflect the need to better understand the effective implementation of leadership for schools in a dynamic and changing external environment (e.g. Rallis & Goldring, 2000). This dynamically shifting environment was exemplified by the quest to move toward providing fair access to academic opportunities and greater accountability for student achievement and outcomes.

As educational leaders sought to respond to this shifting environment, they needed to facilitate change within their organizations. These environmental shifts required more dynamic educational change processes than ever, focusing on the improvement of systemic relationships within schools (Fullan, 2001). Educational leaders learned from and began to apply leadership theories that explained how to facilitate and lead change of both people and organizations, such as the theory of transformational leadership (Bass, 1998; Burns, 1978). Leithwood (1992) specifically identified three fundamental goals of transformational leadership that were relevant to educational leaders: (a) develop and maintain a collaborative, professional school culture, (b) foster teacher professionalism, and (c) help teachers solve problems more effectively. Given these goals, effective transformational leaders in schools began to use the following types of strategies: (a) involve the whole staff (system) in deliberating on goals, beliefs, and visions; (b) seek different opinions and interpretations (diversity) and check out assumptions; (c) use teams; (d) enlist collaboration; (e) experiment with new ideas; (f) have high expectations for students and employees; and (g) be responsible (Leithwood, 1992).

Such large-scale systemic change in educational organizations also required change in the organizational culture. Schein (1992) defines the culture of an organization as the “shared assumptions and beliefs about the world and their place in it” (p. 278). Therefore, it is imperative for change—in order to affect lasting outcomes—that beliefs and values should be consistent

with practices and experiences. These strategies, along with the relevant cultural changes, laid the groundwork for the emergence of learning communities to facilitate the adaptation of schools to the changing external educational environment.

The strategy of learning communities. The concept of learning communities in educational organizations stems from the broader development of teams, organizational learning and learning organizations from the business environment (e.g. Argote, 1999). In 1994, Sergiovanni explained that “what is new in [educational] leadership thinking is the understanding that organizations can be seen as ‘communities’ bound by social structures....The bonding together of people in a special way and the binding of them to shared values and ideas are the defining characteristics of schools as communities” (p. 4). Effective leadership for a learning organization includes valuing relationships led through empowerment and support, encouraging open communication and teamwork, and providing opportunities for personal and professional development (e.g. Berson, Nemanich, Waldman, Galvin, & Keller, 2006).

In the current dynamic educational environment, effective leaders have changed schools and their cultures through developing learning communities that focus on shared vision and meaning and by attending to the systemic relationships created by the needs and concerns of both followers and stakeholders (Fullan, 2001). Educational leaders are still learning to implement this leadership strategy. To be effective leaders in learning communities, they must account for its sustainability in times of change, the diversity and justice that reflect the social needs of society, the need for distributed leadership that allows for sharing of responsibilities, and the integrity of their leadership and the necessary organizational systems, which is essential for the sustainability of the system as a whole (Bush, 2010; Fullan, 2001; Hargreaves, 2006; Spillane, 2006).

Research Questions

The understanding of effective leadership has evolved over the years from the search for effective leaders based on traits or behaviors, to understanding that effective leadership is contingent upon the situation, to recognizing that the role of relationships and leadership is systemic within the organization. As the educational environment has become more dynamic, educational leaders have been encouraged to focus on building learning communities that can better adapt to and thrive in this new environment (e.g. DuFour, 2004; Watkins & Marsick, 1999). In response to this increasingly dynamic external environment, educational leaders looked to the leadership literature which focused, in the 1990's, on the role of leaders in leading change in their organizations. Yet, while educational leadership has been influenced by the leadership literature, most leadership research has been grounded in the study of industries other than education.

The current need for contemporary educational leaders is to determine how the evolving understanding of leadership, mostly developed in the field of business management, applies to leaders in schools. To address this need, leaders need to know how the educational leadership literature itself synthesizes this history of leadership research, what it promotes as effective leadership for schools, and how understanding of effective leadership for education has shifted in the last two decades of rapid environmental change. During this period the educational environments have become extremely dynamic and are requiring more effective leaders for school environments, demanding ever more effective instructional practices and increased student performance.

This study specifically examined the literature of educational leadership during the decades of 1990–2010 to determine how the study and construction of leadership has shifted over the past twenty years. The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are the most often cited educational leadership authors and works in educational literature during the two decades of 1990 – 2000 and 2001 – 2010?
2. What are the key constructs in the three most often cited works of each decade that are used to explain or define effective leadership?
3. What leadership constructs are uniquely representative of each decade and which are consistent across the two decades?

Methods

This study implemented a descriptive research method (Best, 2005; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). This method involved the collection of data that provided a sufficient basis to identify and describe the underlying leadership constructs that were most prevalent in the educational leadership literature during the past two decades (Fitzpatrick, Sanders, & Worthen, 2010). The data-collection phase employed a bibliometric approach (Nicholas, 2002) to measure the relative impact (measured as numbers of citations) of the texts in the field of educational leadership.

Content analysis and citation analysis are the two most commonly used bibliometric procedures in the field of library and information science (Pritchard, 1969). This study used the content analysis technique to facilitate the analysis of texts for the presence and frequency of specific terms, narratives or concepts, including their direction, intensity, and space (Fitzpatrick et al., 2010; Seale, Gobo, Gubrium, & Silverman, 2004) and to identify the most cited works and authors in the field of educational leadership. The citation analysis procedure utilized the

Scientific Information's Web of Science. These two procedures facilitated the bibliometric searches within two targeted decades, 1990–2000 and 2001–2010 (Hertzel & Frase, 2003). The final data analysis encompassed an analytic induction technique generated from the content and citation analyses as well as the descriptive data generated in the summary tables (Guba, 1985; Wilcox, 2009).

This study reviewed, identified, analyzed, archived, and generated results based on what were identified as the top ten most widely-cited educational leadership works and authors in the field of educational leadership in the U.S. spanning the twenty year period from 1900 to 2010. The study focused on leadership constructs as the unit of analysis. For this study, a *construct* was defined as a theoretical statement or entity concerning some underlying observable aspects, dimensions, types, and attributes (Suddaby, 2010).

The non-statistical comparative analysis approach in this study identified constructs across the two decades of the study and focused on the patterns over time in terms of their uniqueness, similarities and differences both within and between the authors and works. A descriptive analysis of the findings summarized the crucial leadership constructs that were deemed to be consistent and influential in explaining effective leadership during the targeted periods. The study was conducted in seven steps. Following is a brief description of each of these steps.

First, six educational leadership handbooks were reviewed for possible use in the 1990–2010 study periods to identify the ten most cited authors. The six handbooks reviewed were the following:

- *Educational leadership, A reference handbook* (Williams-Boyd, 2002).

- *International handbook of educational leadership and administration* (Leithwood, Chapman, Corson, Hallinger, & Hart, 2002).
- *International handbook on the preparation and development of school leaders* (Lumby, Crow, & Pahiardis, 2008).
- *Handbook of research on educational administration* (Murphy & Louis, 2002).
- *The Sage handbook of educational leadership* (English, 2005).
- *The Sage handbook of educational leadership* (English, 2011).

In the second step the researcher chose four of the handbooks, designating two handbooks for each decade of the study. The selection criterion used for final inclusion dealt with the completeness or comprehensive nature of the final four. While all six potential sources are considered authoritative, the four selected were clearly the most comprehensive. The two chosen for inclusion for the first decade (1990–2000) were Williams-Boyd (2002) and English (2005). The two chosen for the second decade (2001–2010) were English (2011) and Lumby, et al. (2008).

The third step applied the following process to identify the most cited authors in each of the two periods from each of the handbooks:

- First, the researcher reviewed the table of contents for each handbook to identify the section titles and chapter headings that were directly relevant to educational leadership.
- Second, within each of these sections and chapters, the researcher identified the authors and their cited works that fell within the decades of the study (1990–2000 and 2001–2010).

- Third, the researcher selected the ten most often cited authors for each decade based on the actual count of the total citations recorded for each author's name in the Authors' Indices of the two handbooks.
- Fourth, from the handbook references, the researcher verified the title of the author's published work selected for each decade of the study.
- Fifth, the researcher compiled the results.

The fourth step involved implementing the bibliometric analysis using “The Citation Databases: Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI): Web of Science” for the web interface. The “Cited Reference Search Engine” was utilized, focusing on the Boolean and operator fields to enter the information about the author's name, title of the cited work, and the cited years included in each of the decades.

In the fifth step, the results given in the “Cited Reference Search” screen of the SSCI were compiled into a preliminary table. The ten most cited works were then extracted. The last stage of this step was to extract the three most cited works for each decade for final construct analysis. The three most cited works for the first decade were, first, Senge (1990), followed by Fullan (1991), and Sergiovanni (1992). In the second decade, the most cited works were, first, Fullan (2001), followed by Spillane (2006), and Hargreaves (2006).

The sixth step was a “credibility check.” Since this study was designed to identify leadership constructs taken as positive in the practice of educational leadership rather than those that were not, it was necessary to check whether the citations of the authors in the literature were positive or negative. A 10% random sample of the citing references for each of the top cited works in the bibliometric search was reviewed to confirm whether they were primarily “positive” toward the cited work or not. An 80% minimum “positive reference” criterion was the standard

for the top cited work to be accepted for incorporation in this study. All six of the works included in Table 3 passed this criterion easily.

In the seventh step a content analysis of each of the six (three for each decade) top cited works was made to identify the crucial leadership constructs. This analysis extracted terms indicating potential leadership constructs from each work's table of contents and subject index. For example, in Senge's (1990) work, the construct of *system thinking*, was first included in the table of contents as a chapter title, and was then found at least once on 79 of 423 pages. Only terms indicating constructs with substantial coverage, such as the example provided from Senge, were included for consideration. Where obviously similar constructs were indicated by various authors with slightly different terms, the emphasis was on the construct rather than the term. For example, the terms *learning organization*, *learning community*, and *community* were referred to in four of the top cited works (Fullan, 1991; Hargreaves, 2006; Senge, 1990; Sergiovanni, 1992), but they were used by each author in ways clearly indicating the same construct, which was then identified by the researcher as *learning organization*.

Findings

The findings from the study focus on several interesting patterns. These patterns are neither statistically derived nor proven. Rather, they represent visual and intuitive patterns discernible from the tabular representations. Consequently, these patterns are not meant to be unequivocally authoritative, but rather, they are the reasonably indicative patterns and subsequent meaning available from the perspective of the author of the study.

Most Cited Authors

In Table 1 the most cited authors (represented by one or more works, depending on how many were cited) for each of the study decades (1990–2000 and 2001–2010) are presented in

rank-order from the most often cited (1) to the tenth most often cited. As described in the methods section, this list is a product of the review of four authoritative handbooks in educational leadership (English, 2005, 2011; Lumby et al., 2008; Williams-Boyd, 2002).

The most cited authors were David Tyack, Professor Emeritus of Stanford University, and Fenwick English of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Michael Fullan, Professor Emeritus of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto is the only author to be included in the lists from both decades under study. However, none of Fullan's eight works (1991, 1993, 1996, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2002, 2003) was the most cited. In fact, his work moved from being the third most cited in the first decade under study, to the ninth most cited work in the second decade.

Most Cited Works

Table 2 indicates how often the most popular single work of an author was cited. These results from the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) Web of Science Database display several interesting patterns. First, Michael Fullan is ranked in both decades in terms of single works cited. It is important to note that Fullan moves from being the second most cited in the first decade to the first most cited in the second decade (the opposite direction of his movement in terms of citation patterns when all works of an author are considered).

Another striking pattern is seen in the significant discrepancy in numbers of citations between the top-ranked single works in the two decades. The top cited work in the first decade (Senge, 1990) was cited 1,268 times, while the top cited work in the second decade was cited only 189 times. Senge (1990) was cited almost seven times more than was Fullan (2001) to attain the top spot in the first decade.

Table 1
Rank-Ordered List of Most Cited Authors

1990–2000 Sage Handbook of Educational Leadership (English, 2005); Educational Leadership Handbook (Williams-Boyd, 2002).			2001–2010 Sage Handbook of Educational Leadership (English, 2011); Handbook on Preparation of School Leaders (Lumby et al., 2008).	
Rank- Order	Author (Yr.)	# handbook citations	Author (Yr.)	# handbook citations
1	Tyack, D. (1990)	31	English, F. (2008)	30
2	Murphy, J. (1993)	25	Grogan, M. (2005)	29
3	Cuban, L. (1998)	24	Blount, J. (2003)	20
4	Fullan, M. (1991)	17	Brunner, C. (2007)	20
5	Sergiovanni, T. (1992)	16	Kowalski, T. (2006)	11
6	Peterson, G. (1997)	11	Glass, T. (2007)	10
7	Leithwood, K. (1998)	10	Lumby, J. (2006)	7
8	Hallinger, P. (1992)	10	Spillane, J. (2006)	6
9	Starratt, R. (1994)	8	Fullan, M. (2001)	6
10	Senge, P. (1990)	4	Hargreaves, A. (2006)	4

Another pattern in the data in Table 2 is in the fact that only one author, Fullan (1991, 2001), is found on the list for both decades. Interestingly, Fullan (2001) is ranked ninth by handbook frequency (see Table 1), but first by citation in journals (see Table 2).

Crucial Educational Leadership Constructs

Table 3 presents the findings of the research for each of the study decades. The table presents the content analysis of each author's work and identifies the crucial leadership constructs that each author's work develops and on which these works focus. The top third of Table 3 shows those leadership constructs that are deemed to be unique to the authors' works of the 1990–2000 decade. The obvious patterns point to Senge's (1990) unique use of the constructs of *team* and *system thinking*, while Sergiovanni (1992) applies the constructs of *covenant* and *servant leadership* independently of the other works in either decade, and neither of Fullan's works (1991, 2001) demonstrated any unique constructs compared to the other authors.

The middle section of Table 3 displays constructs that were identified to be similar across more than one author's work for both decades of the study. This large cluster of constructs demonstrates that while there were elements unique to the works of certain authors, no discernible pattern exists as to the nature or type of constructs that demonstrated significant overlap. In terms of overlap it is interesting to note just how many of these constructs overlapped with all three works in the first decade (over half), while in the second decade no single construct demonstrated overlap among all three.

Finally, the bottom section of Table 3 presents those leadership constructs that were identified to be unique to the 2001–2010 decade. These decade-specific constructs did not show as much uniqueness to specific works as was demonstrated in the top third of the chart in the first decade. Indeed, just over half of these constructs were shared by at least two of the

Table 2

Most Cited Works of Top Cited Authors

1990–2000			2001–2010	
Rank-Order	Author (Yr.)	# SSCI Citations	Author (Yr.)	# SSCI Citations
1	Senge, P. (1990)	1268	Fullan, M. (2001)	189
2	Fullan, M. (1991)	926	Spillane, J. (2006)	142
3	Sergiovanni, T. (1992)	138	Hargreaves, A. (2006)	74
4	Tyack, D. (1990)	121	Lumby, J. (2006)	23
5	Leithwood, K. (1998)	53	English, F. (2008)	14
6	Cuban, L. (1998)	39	Grogan, M. (2005)	4
7	Starratt, R. (1994)	30	Kowalski, T. (2006)	4
8	Hallinger, P. (1993)	19	Brunner, C. (2007)	3
9	Murphy, J. (1993)	6	Blount, J. (2003)	3
10	Peterson, G. (1997)	1	Glass, T. (2007)	1

Table 3

Crucial Educational Leadership Constructs

Leadership Constructs	1990–2000 Three Most Frequently Cited Leadership Works			2001–2010 Three Most Frequently Cited Leadership Works		
	#1 Senge (1990)	#2 Fullan (1991)	#3 Sergiovanni (1992)	#1 Fullan (2001)	#2 Spillane (2006)	#3 Hargreaves (2006)
Team	*					
System Thinking	*					
Vision	*		*			
Covenant			*			
Servant Leadership			*			
Professionalism	*	*	*	*		
Accountability		*			*	
Change	*	*		*		*
Learning Organization	*	*	*	*		*
Moral Authority	*	*	*	*		*
Culture	*	*	*	*		
Followership			*		*	
Relationship				*	*	
Collaboration				*	*	
Sustainability				*		*
Diversity						*
Distributed Leadership					*	*
Leadership Practice					*	
Justice						*

works. This may be due to the fact that two of these works (Hargreaves, 2006; Spillane, 2006) were published five years after the top cited work (Fullan, 2001) and may have consequently represented more construct convergence following on, or building from, the prior success of the earlier work.

Discussion

This study examined the educational leadership literature during the decades of 1990–2010 to determine how the understanding of leadership has shifted over these twenty years. The findings highlight several patterns that describe how the research and literature of leadership has been applied specifically to educational leadership. These patterns have practical implications for the effectiveness of educational leaders in today’s dynamic environment.

Patterns in the Research and Literature of Educational Leadership

This study identified top educational leadership authors and works during the two decades of the 1990s and 2000s for the purpose of identifying the key leadership constructs in the three most often cited works of each decade. The findings provide insights regarding authors, works and constructs in educational leadership research.

Most cited authors. The patterns in Table 1 suggest three possible explanations for which authors have been the most cited. First, the field of educational leadership itself may reflect a rather transitive nature in terms of the popularity of specific authors and approaches to the study and practice of educational leadership. This transitive nature is demonstrated in that even the most often cited author of the first decade was not ranked at all in the top ten of the second decade. In addition, only one of the most cited author’s works were found in the top ten of both decades.

A second explanation for the pattern of most cited authors may be the level of seniority of educational leadership researchers. That is, more senior scholars may have had the potential for influence on the field of educational leadership for a longer period of time throughout their entire careers. For example, David Tyack and Michael Fullan, two of the most cited authors listed on Table 1, presently hold emeritus status at their universities.

The third explanation for which authors are most cited in educational leadership in these decades could be that not only the works – and their content and approach – were considered important, but that the authors were well known and prominent in the “invisible college” of the discipline of educational leadership. Such prominence would generate name recognition, the tendency for isomorphic approaches to leadership, and the potential for efficiencies in selecting leadership approaches.

Most cited works. The patterns in Table 2 suggest a couple of possible explanations for which of the works have been the most cited. The findings clearly indicate that in the first decade the top two works of Senge (1990) and Fullan (1991) were far more dominant – in fact, they were nearly totally dominant proportionally – in the field of educational leadership than were the two top works of the second decade. Initially, this pattern may suggest that fewer educational leadership works were published during the first decade than during the second decade. However, the bibliometric study did not demonstrate that such a “dilution factor” might be in play. That is, the data did not indicate that a larger number of works had been published and cited in the second decade, leading to a dilution of how often any one was cited.

A second and more likely explanation for the volatility in the number of citations for the most cited works may be found in the evolution of the educational environment. As educational leaders responded to dynamic external changes, they may have begun to reach more broadly than

in earlier eras prior to the 1990s for ideas and solutions to fit their rapidly evolving leadership needs. Their understanding of leadership was itself dynamically evolving, which meant that the set of stable leadership ideas that had previously served them were no longer sufficient. The high citation numbers in the first decade indicates greater stability of ideas, whereas the magnitude of the decrease in citation numbers clearly points to a disruption of previous stability.

A third explanation for the differences in most cited works between the decades, and particularly in the number of citations to these works, may stem from the search processes themselves. The search for new leadership ideas in the second decade may have been facilitated by improved technology that enabled easier searches of the leadership literature. With more educational leaders searching the literature, and with easier search processes, a wider range of cited works could be expected. These three explanations help to create understanding for the patterns of most cited works and suggest that a large magnitude of change in what it takes to attain the top rank of most cited works (and even the top four ranks combined) between the decades.

Crucial educational leadership constructs. The patterns of the leadership constructs in Table 3 provide an intriguing look at how leadership has been understood in education over the past two decades. The overarching pattern that emerges in this data is how many of the leadership constructs shifted over the decades while fewer (only about one-third of the total) remained more constant.

The constructs unique to the early 1990's characterized by Senge (1990), Fullan (1991) and Sergiovanni (1992), highlighted *teams*, *systems thinking*, *vision* and *servant leadership*. In this decade, school leaders increasingly saw their schools as organic rather than mechanistic systems, and they sought leadership influence through both building shared vision with followers

and attending to their individual needs. These unique leadership constructs, reflecting the early writings of transformational leadership theory (Burns, 1978) may have provided educational leaders with their first leadership strategies for change as they needed to rethink their understandings of organizations and how to lead change. In this decade, educational leaders needed to become more responsive and adapt to their increasingly dynamic environment.

The findings also suggested that some constructs explaining effective educational leadership spanned both decades. Clearly influenced by Fullan (1991, 2001) as a common top author in both decades, several constructs provided both an impetus and a common ground for the evolution of leadership into the 2000s. The identification of leadership constructs such as *accountability*, *moral authority* and *change* point to the increasing and continuous influence of the external environment on schools as it adjusted to increasing global pressures on the American educational system (indeed, all educational systems globally). Other constructs, such as *learning organizations*, *organizational culture* and *followership*, highlight school leadership responses to these external pressures and reflected the need for leaders to include a broader range of participants and to become increasingly flexible and dynamic in their leadership approaches. The overlap of these leadership constructs across the two decades of the constructs may suggest that these leadership constructs possess characteristics that endure in the literature and practice over time, amid (or perhaps even because of) significant changes in the context(s) of education.

The leadership constructs unique in the 2000's clearly shifted from those of the 1990's. The increasing focus on organizational learning and change brought greater attention to how effective leaders focused on, and included their followers in, necessary and deep-seated change efforts. The most cited works evince that effective leaders build relationships with followers, develop collaboration between followers, share leadership with followers, and provide followers

with greater access to opportunity and fairness by attending to diversity and promoting justice among followers. Future research should continue to examine the leadership research and literature, particularly in the field of educational leadership, to better understand the evolution of leadership thought to provide effective leadership to educational institutions.

The evolution of leadership thought in education. The patterns discussed in the most cited authors, most cited works and crucial educational leadership constructs support the historical trend that leadership thought evolves and adapts to the current needs of the organization and external environment. These trends are not new or surprising in leadership research. The history of leadership thought clearly demonstrates similar evolutions (Bryman, 1996).

During the period of 1990 through 2010, leadership thought in education demonstrated an era of change in how school leaders influenced their followers and their organizations. One way that this change may be characterized is in the evolution of leadership from focusing on merely the transformation of followers (e.g. transformational leadership (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978) to better understanding of how to include and engage followers themselves in the organizational changes necessitated by the increasingly dynamic nature of the external environment of schools. Specifically, given that educational environments have become extremely dynamic, demanding more effective instructional practices and increased student performance (Roach, Smith, & Boutin, 2011), educational leaders are now required to be more effective leaders for entire school environments, not just individual teachers, students and stakeholders. This study demonstrates that leadership thought adapted to address these environmental evolutions to help school leaders successfully shift their leadership approach and strategies. The findings of this study clearly illustrate the dynamic nature of leadership approaches across these two decades and, specifically,

how the understanding of effective leadership for education has shifted across the last two decades.

Practical Implications for Educational Leaders

A critical question confronting contemporary educational leaders is “how does the continually evolving understanding of leadership best inform my practice and promote effective leadership for schools?” First, school leaders need to understand that leadership thought has always evolved significantly, and it will continue to evolve well into the future. Consequently, school leaders should avoid becoming overcommitted to any given leadership approach, as the only stable understanding of leadership is that the understanding will certainly change.

Rather than overcommit, or treat a particular approach to leadership as infallible and certain, current school leaders need to realize that the literature represents only the state-of-the-art understanding of leadership at a given point in time, for the given set of organizational and environmental conditions, rather than a definitive, final answer. Consequently, school leaders must stay flexible and continually be aware of the changing environment and the resulting development of leadership thought. School leaders must be vigilant in their pursuit of the best in thinking, and then be flexible and adaptive in how – and for how long – they implement any set of leadership constructs.

Lastly, leadership preparation programs must continually update and refresh their leadership training for future school leaders. The tendency to reify theoretical thinking is certainly not limited to busy school practitioners. Professors also tend to resist change, particularly when change means movement away from years or decades of comfortable discourse.

Ultimately, our understanding and practice based on leadership constructs, like leadership itself, must remain dynamic. Our devotion as leaders, whether leading as researchers or practitioners, must be to the pursuit of state-of-the-art solutions in service of students and learning, rather than restful repose in well-worn comfort zones.

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APPENDIX A: EXTENDED LITERATURE REVIEW

The history of the educational leadership literature can be framed in terms of two broad themes. The first theme encompasses the development of leadership as an area of study, and the second deals with how leadership fully transitioned into the educational domain. The first theme is particularly complex, dealing with how the theme of leadership developed in several eras, including the *Early Trait* era (1900-1920), *Power and Influence* era (1930-1950), *Behaviors* era (1950-1970), *Relationships* era (1970-2000), and the *Transformational Processes* era (2000-2010). The following review will deal with both of these two broad themes.

Development of Leadership

Leadership is a subject that has generated interest and speculation among people for centuries. It is a rather strange phenomenon in that everybody seems to know it exists and it happens, but rarely can people seem to agree on what it is or how it works, or even what it supposed to be. As a matter of fact, the term is a word “taken from the common vocabulary and incorporated into technical and scientific vocabulary without being precisely redefined” (Yukl, 2010, p. 2). Often, it was common to associate leadership with something extraordinary about the leader. For instance, the term *leadership* “connotes images of powerful and dynamic individuals who command victorious armies or endeavors” (Yukl, 2010, p. 1). This implies that some people have an endowment for something unique that makes them more successful than others at leadership. Evidently, a potential problem occurs when we advocate specific attributes or traits as having a cause and effect relationship with a leader’s effectiveness. This is because of the failure to take situations into account, and in many instances, the high level of subjectivity in the act of identifying the “most important” leadership traits. From this context, leadership definitions often carry a variety of connotations, depending on the dimensions of the phenomenon studied,

that often create ambiguity of meaning and difficulty in interpretation. An observation by Bennis (1959) illustrates a prevalent early perception that may still ring true today:

Always, it seems, the concept of leadership eludes us or turns up in another form to taunt us again with its slipperiness and complexity. So we have invented an endless proliferation of terms to deal with it ... and still the concept is not sufficiently defined (p. 259).

Over the years, researchers and writers often conceptualize leadership according to their individual perspectives and the aspect of most personal interest to them. Stogdill (1974), following a comprehensive review of the leadership literature, concluded that “there are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept” (p. 259). In the same vein, Bennis and Nanus (1985) pointed out that the research has “produced more than 350 definitions ... with no clear and unequivocal understanding” (p. 21). In spite of the seeming ambiguity and the reality of the challenge in clearly defining leadership, there seems to have been consistent effort and progress made by researchers over the years in identifying themes, concepts and constructs that help writers conceptualize and describe leadership in a more practical way. Many researchers have included common components in explaining the makeup of leadership with different sets of dynamics, contexts, and foci. All leadership authors seem to agree that the act of leadership involves a leader, a follower, an organization, and an environment (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Daft, 2009; Fleishman, 1973; Northouse, 2009; Stogdill, 1974).

From this common context, researchers seek to define leadership and formulate theories from the perspective of how leadership is conceptualized in terms such as traits, power and influence, behaviors, contingencies, relationships, and processes (Bass, 1990; Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2012; Northouse, 2009; Yukl, 2010). For example, Bernard Bass (1990) proposed a

scheme to define leadership as group processes, where the leader is at the center of group change and activity. Hoff (1999) pointed out, “Many definitions of leadership generally agree upon two things: Leadership is a group function: it occurs only in the processes of two or more people interacting; and Leaders intentionally seek to influence the behavior of other people” (p. 312). Many define leadership as an act or behavior – what leaders do, or how they act to bring about change in a group. Still others define leadership in terms of power and influence in relationships, and leadership has also been defined as a process where interactions between leader and followers exist toward accomplishing a common goal. Each leadership theory is further articulated by identifying leadership constructs that underlie the concepts proposed by each theory as it attempts to explain effective leadership. This review follows the general pattern discussed above and explains leadership as: “traits, influence and power, behaviors ... role relationships, and process” (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2012, p. 112).

1900–1920s: Early Trait

While there are a number of authors who have done reviews of the early conception of leadership, the major study done by Stogdill (1974) appears to be among the most comprehensive and frequently cited in the leadership literature. Much of the material presented in this review came from the content of this work and represents similar chronological sequencing in its presentation.

In the early 1900s, scholars attempted to study leadership by identifying the “trait” that made certain people “great.” In one of the earlier definitions of leadership, Cooley (1902) writes, “the leader is always the nucleus of a tendency ... all social movements, closely examined, will be found to consist of tendencies having such nuclei” (as cited in Stogdill, 1974, pp. 8-9). Similarly, Blackmar (1911) defined leadership as “the centralization of efforts of the individual

in one person as an expression of the power of all” (p. 626). Further, Bogardus emphasized the importance of the interaction between leader and group, asserting that leadership is “personality in action under group conditions ... in specific traits of one person and other traits of many” (1934, p. 3).

A closer look at these early definitions of leadership traits reveals that leadership is about being borne with inherent advantages, and is considered a means of controlling others while recognizing the leader as the one who is powerful and uses a heavy hand in directing the behavior of others. Stogdill (1974) analyzed and synthesized hundreds of studies conducted between 1904 and 1947, as well as from 1948 to 1974. He concluded that some of the traits that may be positively associated with leadership in this era include the following: (a) initiative, (b) persistence, (c) self-confidence, (d) responsibility, (e) insight, (f) sociability, and (g) influence (Stogdill, 1974, pp. 73-80). Additional studies of leadership traits and characteristics were conducted by Mann in 1959 (Lord, DeVader, & Alliger, 1986), and Kirkpatrick and Locke (1991). Northouse summarized these traits and characteristics that are deemed central for leaders to possess or cultivate in this list: intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity, and sociability (Northouse, 2009).

Even though there were hundreds of studies conducted to discover the elusive traits or qualities that guaranteed leadership success, none was successful at being definitive. This is likely due to the complexity of intervening variables and roles in the leadership process. For instance, Stogdill (1974) found that an individual does not become a leader solely because he or she possesses certain traits. Rather, the traits that leaders possess must be relevant to situations in which the leader is functioning. Hence, Stogdill’s 1974 review and findings prepared the way for

the added dimension of studying the relevancy of situational factors in order for personal traits for leaders to be successful.

APPENDIX B: DETAILED METHODS

The study implemented a descriptive research method (Best, 2005; Cohen et al., 2007). The descriptive method involved the collection of data that provided sufficient basis to describe the themes, concepts, and underlying constructs that were the focus of interest to the researcher (Fitzpatrick et al., 2010). For this study, the data gathering and analysis were focused on describing what crucial leadership constructs existed in the three dominant educational leadership authors and works of each decade of the study (1990-2000 and 2001-2010). Data gathering and analysis identified those constructs that best explained effective leadership and answered the questions proposed by the study. The identified constructs were organized and presented in summary tables and matrices in order to enhance the clarity of relationships, meanings, and comparisons. Leadership constructs of commonality or uniqueness were used to create tables which facilitated the identification and discussion of commonalities, shifts and changes between the most frequently cited leadership authors and works of the two decades of study. It is hoped that such information provides a knowledge base which can act as a springboard for further descriptive or even inferential studies in the area of effective educational leadership.

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