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Distributed Leadership as a Form of Work Redesign: Exploring its Development and Implementation in High Schools in Slovenia

Sonja Sentocnik
Lehigh University

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DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP AS A FORM OF WORK REDESIGN:

EXPLORING ITS DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

IN HIGH SCHOOLS IN SLOVENIA

by

Sonja Sentočnik

A Dissertation

Presented to the Graduate and Research Committee

at Lehigh University

in Candidacy for the Degree of

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Date

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Dr. George White and Dr. Floyd Beachum
Dissertation Directors

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Accepted Date

Committee Members:

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Dr. Iveta Silova

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Dr. David Mayrowetz

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the development and implementation of distributed leadership in high schools in Slovenia using Mayrowetz et al's Distributed Leadership as Work Redesign framework in order to contribute to the knowledge of how leadership can be deliberately distributed through job redesign. The study used an exploratory case study approach to investigate the characteristics of redesigned work in two schools included in the national pilot project in Slovenia designed to build school's capacity for instructional improvement. This study investigated the characteristics of redesigned work in each school and across schools to explore what facilitates (or constrains) the translation of redesigned work into learning opportunities, the sense made of work, and motivation. This exploratory study investigated how these transition mechanisms shape the performance of leadership practice, and how various contextual variables, in particular organizational structures, influence the formulation and performance of redesigned work. Findings suggest that while the existing organizational structures in schools constrain the formulation of redesigned work as significant for teachers, they are nevertheless not prohibitive of leadership distribution provided that the principal understands his/her new role and acts as a catalyst for lasting dispersal of power among the capable members of the school community. It is imperative that the adjustments of the existing structures and the implementation of the new ones are aligned with common beliefs, expectations, and norms regarding decentralized decision making, capacity building, and collective responsibility for instructional quality. While leadership teams need professional training and continuous support of a coach to build the knowledge and skills necessary for distributed performance of leadership functions, they

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also need to develop internal coherence, mutual trust and support within their team, as

well as be entrusted with leadership authority by the teachers to be able to enact their new

leadership roles.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The field of educational leadership has recognized that the increasingly overwhelming and complex task of leading schools capable of continuous self-renewal demands new ways of understanding leadership (Elmore, 2000; Fullan, 2001; Gronn, 2002, 2003; Maxcy & Nguyen, 2006; Smylie & Hart, 1999; Spillane & Seashore Louis, 2002). Providing guidance, direction and support for school-wide instructional improvement requires "collectively constructed forms of influence" (Watson & Scribner, 2007, p. 447) that can potentially create the spaces, contexts, and opportunities for school capacity development (Hopkins & Jackson, 2003).

The idea of distributed leadership has gained scholarly recognition as a perspective that can help generate insight into school leadership practice as it increasingly manifests in schools (Gronn, 2000; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004), and as a strategy that can potentially leverage instructional improvement (Elmore, 2004; Lieberman, Falk, & Alexander, 1994; Murphy & Datnow, 2003; Smylie, Conley, & Marks, 2002; Timperley, 2005). A distributed perspective conceptualizes leadership in terms of leadership functions or tasks (Heller & Firestone, 1995) distributed across interacting individuals and situations (Spillane, et al., 2004), thus suggesting that leadership extends beyond positional leaders in schools and requires role complementarities and networked patterns of control (Gronn, 2000). Complementary interdependent role behavior capitalizes on a range of individual strengths, thus creating a pooled resource of skills in the organization. This is advantageous because it increases organization-wide density of leadership capacity

(Gronn, 2003). "Networked patterns of control" refer to work coordination that enables a construction of networks of mutually dependent relationships (Elmore, 2000) and supports the performance of distributed leadership as "concertive action" (Gronn, p.35), whereby organization members pool their expertise and regularize their conduct so that the outcome is greater than the sum of their individual actions.

This approach to leadership draws on research in distributed (Salomon & Perkins, 1993) and situated cognition (Lave & Wenger, 1991) that considers how leadership task performance is enabled or constrained by the situation of practice: The way followers interpret the situation and respond to leaders influences how leaders think and act, and vice versa (Spillane, et al., 2004). These reciprocal responses vary from school to school and differently shape leadership activity. Capturing the interactions among people, tasks, and situation, and taking into consideration the antecedent and moderating conditions that can nurture or prevent such interactions in individual schools is thus critical to an understanding of how school leaders create coherent systems that support new instructional practices by negotiating between their given circumstances and new challenges for improved school effectiveness.

In recent years, leadership distribution has become widely incorporated into several privately and publicly funded projects in the United States (Copland, 2003; Mayrowetz, 2008; Smylie, Conley, & Marks, 2002; Spillane & Diamond, 2007), Canada (Leithwood & Mascall, 2008), New Zealand (Timperley, 2005), and England (Harris, et al., 2003) as a strategy for reforming schools. The arguments outlined in conceptual work that have made the idea of distributed leadership particularly compelling are that (1) under distributed leadership, more of the expertise of staff is identified, developed, and

utilized than under traditional hierarchical forms, making today's ambitious goal of all students succeeding on intellectually challenging curricula seem more attainable (Gronn, 2000; Smylie & Hart, 1999; Spillane, Diamond, & Jita, 2003); (2) distributed leadership supports the development of a broad base of instructional leadership capacity making the improvement efforts more sustainable (Elmore, 2000; Harris, et al., 2003; Robinson, 2008); and (3) by "de-monopolizing leadership and potentially increasing the sources and voices of influence in organizations beyond just one" (Gronn, 2008, p. 154), distributed leadership can increase member participation in school-level decision making.

Although these arguments are grounded in a limited base of empirical evidence, the findings that are available have confirmed that distributed leadership makes a positive difference to organizational outcomes (Harris, 2004), positively and significantly correlates with teachers' academic optimism (Mascall, Leithwood, Straus & Sacks, 2008), and can provide the capacity, coherence, and ownership necessary to sustain and deepen the instructional reforms, given adequate time and personnel to handle the tasks (Copland, 2003).

Statement of the Problem

Schools are currently not well designed to facilitate the growth of distributed leadership. Studies have shown that current hierarchical organizational structure and teacher isolation in schools are not conducive to an easy shift to more flexible organizations with widely available opportunities for leadership (Copland, 2003; Hadfield, 2003; Lambert, 2003; Smylie, Mayrowetz, Murphy, & Louis Seashore, 2007). Further empirical work is necessary to increase the understanding of how distributed leadership is enacted and developed, what such leadership consists of when exercised

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across roles and situations, and what changes are necessary at the school level to make it work.

To date, substantial empirical work on distributed leadership has focused on theory development (Bennett, Wise, Woods, & Harvey, 2003; Elmore, 2000; Gronn, 2000, 2002; Heller & Firestone, 1995; Hopkins & Jackson, 2003; Ogawa & Bossert, 1995; Spillane, et al., 2001; Spillane, et al., 2004), and on describing what distributed leadership might look like in practice (MacBeth, Oduro, & Waterhouse, 2005; Maxcy & Nguyen, 2006; Scribner, Sawyer, Watson, & Myers, 2007; Smylie, et al., 2002; Spillane, 2006; Spillane, Camburn, & Pareja, 2007; Spillane & Diamond, 2007; Spillane, et al., 2001; Spillane & Seashore Louis, 2002; Storey, 2004; Timperley, 2005; Woods, Bennett, Harvey, & Wise, 2004). A small number of studies examined the consequences of distributed patterns of leadership for school and students (Cole, 2009; Harris, 2004; Harris, et al., 2003; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1998; Leithwood, Mascal, et al., 2007; Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Silins & Mulford, 2002). Only very limited attention has focused specifically on the implementation and development of distributed leadership (Copland, 2003; Mayrowetz, Murphy, Louis Seashore, & Smylie, 2007; Richie & Woods, 2007; Smylie, Mayrowetz, Murphy, & Louis Seashore, 2007), and on how external agencies can support it (Copland, 2003; Rupnik Vec & Rupar, 2006; Sentočnik & Barber, 2008).

Mayrowetz and colleagues (Mayrowetz, et al., 2007) made a major contribution to the study of distributed leadership development and implementation in schools with their conceptual model that specifies the characteristics of work redesign under distributed leadership reform, the transition mechanisms that turn the redesigned work into

distributed leadership practice, and the antecedent and moderating conditions that can support distributed leadership development. The purpose of the present study was to utilize Mayrowetz et al's model (2007) to examine the development and implementation of distributed leadership in high schools in Slovenia, with consideration of how various individual and organizational factors shape the course of its development. By providing a retrospective view of distributed leadership development process as it unfolded in three high schools included in a national instructional reform initiative, this study contributes to the understanding of how changes in work could lead to the widespread performance of leadership functions, how school contextual variables impact the design and development of distributed leadership practice, and how interactions among people, tasks, and situation can be established.

Purpose and Research Questions

This study applied Mayrowetz et al.'s Distributed Leadership as Work Redesign Model (Mayrowetz, Murphy, Louis Seashore, & Smylie, 2007) to examine how a national initiative that required a long-term commitment to redesigned work facilitated the development of distributed leadership in three Slovenian schools. This exploratory case study investigated the characteristics of redesigned work in each school and their relationship to the transition mechanisms defined as the principal's and teachers' sensemaking, motivation, and learning. This study also explored how the organizational structures, particularly those that dictate the division of labor and use of time, shaped the formulation of redesigned work for the teachers and principal, affected transition mechanisms, and moderated the performance of leadership functions.

The following research questions drove this study:

1. What are the characteristics of the national initiative design, and to what extent do they reflect Mayrowetz et al's conceptualization of redesigned work under distributed leadership reform?

2. How did the performance of leadership functions evolve in the schools over the course of their engagement in work redesign?

3. How has the redesigned work influenced the transition mechanisms for the development of distributed leadership: the meaning that the principal and teachers make of their work, their motivation for work, and their use of learning opportunities to improve their knowledge and skills?

4. How have the existing organizational structures shaped how the school leadership teams in conjunction with the National Education Institute formulated the redesigned work in their schools?

5. How have the existing and new organizational structures moderated the ways principals and teachers undertook redesigned work?

Statement of Significance

With increased concerns in the last decade about improved educational opportunity for all students and improved student achievement, schools are anxious to find effective ways of securing and sustaining improved performance. While the literature suggests that distributed leadership can facilitate individual and organizational development, research on how the implementation and development of distributed leadership practice can be guided and supported in schools is extremely limited.

By examining the characteristics of the national initiative in Slovenia and how it addressed school-level leadership capacity building to help schools take control of their

own development and instructional change, this study has a potential to inform

instructional reform initiatives particularly in Eastern European countries that are

transitioning to more collaborative forms of leadership to meet the demands for increased

autonomy of individual schools, and to achieve more sustainable instructional

improvement.

The proposed study examined the development of distributed leadership in three

public high schools in Slovenia. Research has shown that high schools are particularly

resistant to change due to their specific characteristics, such as their subject-based

curriculum, lesson-to-lesson schedule, large size, complexity of educational program, and

traditional structural arrangements that impede rather than promote collective learning,

coordination, and interdependence (Giles & Hargreaves, 2006; Lee & Smith, 1997;

Leithwood, Leonard, & Sharratt, 1998). By demonstrating how an external professional

development initiative supported internal capacity building in high schools through

purposeful leadership distribution, thus increasing schools' resources and ability for

sustainable instructional improvement, this study has a potential to inform policy,

practice, and models of teacher and principal professional preparation and in-service

programs.

<center>Conceptual Framework</center>

The conceptual framework for this study is grounded in the theoretical work of

Mayrowetz and colleagues (2007), which provides a prescriptive lens for studying

distributed leadership implementation and development at the micro level of school. The

prescriptive or normative view considers leadership distribution as a prescription for

organizational improvement. The present study employed Mayrowetz et al.'s conceptual

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model to frame: 1) the examination of the characteristics of the professional development program (PDP) designed and implemented by the National Education Institute (NEI) in the pilot phase of the instructional reform initiative in Slovenia that aimed at building school capacity for instructional change, and 2) the exploration of the implementation and development of distributed leadership as work redesign in the third cohort of the schools included in the pilot project.

The NEI – the main provider of in-service professional development in the area of pre-university education in Slovenia – designed its professional development program, intended to support high schools in their implementation of instructional change, based on a perspective of leadership that differed from the general conceptualization of leadership that prevailed in the country in 2003, when the piloting of instructional reform started. While legal documents and public perception equated school leadership with the actions of the principal, the NEI encouraged the establishment of school leadership teams and action research teams in pilot schools, and provided on-going training for them, with the purpose of building broader leadership capacity and responsibility for the reform, and thus promoting internally driven school-wide instructional improvement. The NEI's decision to develop collective rather than just the principal's leadership capacity was based on the evaluation findings (Slivar, 2000), which showed that extensive teacher training in the past did not lead to the actual implementation of expected deep instructional change in Slovene high schools.

In their Distributed Leadership as Work Redesign model Mayrowetz et al. (2007) identified five job characteristics of redesigned work that are necessary for distributed leadership implementation in schools. They argued that redesigned work under

distributed leadership reform required administrators and teachers to increase their skills and scope of role, and change their perceptions of their roles and responsibilities. According to this model, sense making, motivation, and learning serve as transition mechanisms for turning jobs with the characteristics into distributed leadership practice. As distributed leadership reforms increase the skill variety and scope of role, many educators will become more motivated. The more meaningful the new work feels to those expected to perform leadership functions, and the more learning to support the performance of this new work occurs in the organization, the model suggests, the more motivated the teachers will become to perform leadership functions that are outside of their immediate job descriptions. The authors defined the outcomes of redesigned work under distributed leadership reform as collectively performed leadership functions as specified by Heller and Firestone (1995). While Mayrowetz and colleagues included school improvement as the ultimate result of distributed performance of leadership functions, they nevertheless recognized that the evidence demonstrating a causal connection between multiple leadership function performance and school improvement was slim, and that the proposed linkage needed to be further investigated.

Smylie and colleagues (2007) applied Distributed Leadership as Work Redesign model in their three-year comparative case study of six schools (two middle schools and four high schools) in two mid-Atlantic states included in the SAELP project, designed to promote the development of distributed leadership. While the purpose of their study was to explore the development of distributed leadership and how various organizational factors shape its course, they focused on trust as one of the antecedent/moderating variables from their framework, to find out (1) how different trust relationships shape the

design of opportunities for distributed leadership; (2) how distributed leadership is performed; and (3) perceptions of distributed leadership by school personnel. Their study found that the relationship between trust and distributed leadership development was dynamic and reinforcing. The initial foundation of trust was very important for distributed leadership to take hold, suggesting that it would vary among schools depending on history, actors, and context. Their study also suggested that the trust relationship between principal and teachers set the stage and shaped the development of distributed leadership from design to performance. The authors recommended that all elements of their framework but especially the organizational antecedents/moderators and transition mechanisms needed data-based exploration to solidify their inclusion in the model.

While the post-socialist context in Slovenia raises doubts about whether Mayrowetz et al.'s model of distributed leadership as work redesign (2007), which was developed for the schools in the United States, was suitable for the study of distributed leadership development and implementation in a post-Communist society, I decided to use their model based on my study of Slovenia's transition to democratic state. The reason for my decision were the new developments in independent Slovenia, like for instance its shift to the limitation of the powers of the state, which revealed that the country shares important values and principles with the Anglo-American systems and their current school reform initiatives: (1) Since its independence in 1991, Slovenia transitioned from one-party system to party pluralism and representative democracy; (2) The values, principles, and goals of the school reform, stated in the *White Paper of Education* (Krek, 1995) emphasize human rights pertaining to education, liberal

democratic values, and the autonomy of schools and teachers; (3)The principles and proposals for reforming K-12 education in Slovenia were widely discussed among professionals in education and the general public, and broad consensus was reached among the stakeholders in education (Plut-Pregelj, 2006); (4) The aim of the most recent reform initiative was to build schools' internal capacity, rather than top-down change implementation (Rupnik Vec & Rupar, 2006), through widening teachers' role and increasing their leadership and didactic skills, developing learning communities, restructuring school day, and facilitating teachers' action research and networking among teams and faculties of pilot schools.

I thus found Mayrowetz et al.'s model (2007) useful because it provided clear guidelines on how work needed to be redesigned at the school level to affect the transition mechanisms (i.e., the meaning the employees attribute to their work, their motivation for work, and their use of opportunities for professional development), which in turn influenced successful performance of leadership functions. The model built on the findings that had noted inconsistent success in the implementation of distributed forms of leadership across schools (Harris, 2004). Consequently, it specified individual and organizational variables as antecedents (they shape the formulation of redesigned work for teachers and administrators), and moderators (they impact the implementation of redesigned work and the performance of leadership functions).

The authors' inclusion of moderating and antecedent variables was important because it alerted the proposed study to the necessity of taking school-level contextual elements into account when exploring the conditions for successful implementation of distributed leadership at different school sites. While the model predicted that distributed

leadership practice would lead to school improvement, investigating the causal link between distributed leadership and school improvement was beyond the scope of this study.

The present study focused specifically on the role of organizational structures as one of the antecedents/moderators from Mayrowetz et al.'s model (2007) in the design and performance of distributed leadership work in schools. Studying this particular organizational variable and its role in distributed leadership development was especially important for this study because of its focus on high schools. Due to a strong tradition of departmental structures in high schools that tend to create isolated, subject-specific social and professional networks (Mayrowetz, et al., 2007; Siskin, 1997), they are particularly resistant to distributed leadership initiatives that require new groupings of teachers and administrators from different grade levels and departments, and enough time for the development of internal mechanisms for distributed leadership practice, and collective sense making of the redesigned work.

While Mayrowetz et al.'s (2007) model emphasized the functionalist perspective on leadership that suggested that successful change did not result from the work of a key leader but from the effective performance of specific leadership functions by many people across school (Firestone, 1996; Heller & Firestone, 1995), the present study drew additionally on the definition of distributed leadership that foregrounds the importance of interactions among school personnel (Spillane, et al., 2001; Spillane, et al., 2004), and the need for coordination of such distributed leadership work toward "concertive action" (Gron 2003, p. 35).

Figure 1   **Distributed Leadership as Work Redesign Model**

Redesigned Work   **Transition Mechanisms**   **Outcomes**

Characteristics of Redesigned Work Under DL Reform	**Sensemaking** What does this new work mean in this context?	**Performance of Leadership Functions**

Characteristics of Redesigned Work Under DL Reform

- Skill variety
- Task identity
- Task meaningfulness
- Balancing of autonomy and interdependence
- Feedback

Sensemaking
What does this new work mean in this context?

Motivation
Do these changes in work make me happier and more excited about my job?

Learning
Do the changes in work allow me to learn how to do this redesigned job better?

Performance of Leadership Functions

- Providing and selling a vision
- Providing encouragement and recognition
- Obtaining resources
- Adapting SOPs
- Monitoring the improvement effort
- Handling disturbances

Antecedents / Moderators

INDIVIDUAL –   Knowledge, skills, growth-need, satisfaction with workplace;

ORGANIZATIONAL – Organizational stability, ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES, school culture, relational trust, micropolitics.

Although Mayrowetz and colleagues (2007) recognized the importance of new relationships among people necessary for interdependent performance of redesigned work in their description of redesigned work characteristics and organizational structures, the dimension of interactions and new relationships was not explicated in their application of the model (Smylie, et al., 2007). Because the redesigned work that the NEI promoted in the pilot schools required groupings of teachers and administrators in leadership teams and action research teams that were previously unknown in Slovenian schools, this study, by contrast, also addressed the interactions, such as the relationships between leaders and followers, the degree of collaborative learning, collective meaning making, and new patterns of control.

By adding the level of interactions, the proposed study recognized that relying on structural change alone may not be sufficient for successful distribution of leadership responsibility (Copland, 2003). Since such distribution is possible only through interdependent work of multiple individuals across school, it requires new relationships among people doing the work, in addition to new skills and appropriate organizational conditions. Recognizing that the reciprocal relationships between leaders and followers shape leadership practice, and that followers are an essential constituting element of leadership activity (Spillane, et al., 2004), this study included both leaders and followers in the exploration of distributed leadership development by taking into consideration their perceptions of and their contribution to the leadership practice.

Although Mayrowetz et al.'s model (2007) was designed for the study of explicit distributed leadership reforms in the United States, and the proposed study examined distributed leadership development in the context of the instructional reform initiative in one of the post-socialist European countries, Slovenia, the model is applicable to the macro level of international education since it provides insights into distributed leadership development at the micro level of school. With the attention to the process of distributed leadership development and the changes that it requires at the individual and organizational level, this study used the model as a tool for the analysis of redesigned work for teachers and administrators in a certain geopolitical context, its effect on the transition mechanisms and the effect of these mechanisms on the performance of leadership functions. The present study thus also served as a validation of the Mayrowetz et al's model.

<center>Definitions</center>

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For the purpose of this study, the following terms are defined:

Distributed Leadership

Distributed leadership refers to a leadership practice that (a) uses multiple sources of guidance and direction to benefit from a combined expertise in an organization; (b) stretches over an interactive web of school actors who perform leadership tasks, the artifacts that they use in the performance of leadership tasks, and the school context and situation; (c) encourages interactions that can be spontaneous, intuitive, or institutionalized and can produce concertive action that refers to additional dynamic and energy arising from individuals pooling their initiative and expertise, so that the outcome is greater than the sum of their individual actions (Elmore, 2000; Gronn, 2002; Spillane, et al., 2001).

Mayrowetz and colleagues (2007) adopted a function-based view of leadership that tied school leadership to the performance of key leadership tasks or functions necessary to achieve organizational goals, rather than to formal roles (Firestone, 1996; Heller & Firestone, 1995).

Work Redesign

Original work redesign theory developed by Hackman and Oldham (1980) contended that the design of work is a major factor in whether employees engage in their work or not, and that to motivate employees for more efficient performance and thus improve organizations, work should be redesigned in such a way that it becomes significant for employees, consists of identifiable tasks from start to finish, requires their use of a variety of skills, gives employees autonomy, and lets them know the results of their work through adequate feedback. Mayrowetz and colleagues adapted the original

work redesign theory by making the characteristics of redesigned work more readily applicable to the study of distributed leadership development in schools, adding two new transition mechanisms and several contextual variables that serve as antecedents and moderators in their model, and changing the outcomes.

Transition Mechanisms

Originally, transition mechanisms were defined as the critical psychological states that the redesign of work meant to create in employees. Mayrowetz and colleagues (2007) define transition mechanisms as interacting drivers for turning jobs with characteristics into distributed leadership practice.

Leadership Functions

Building on Firestone and colleagues' (1995) functionalist perspective of leadership, Mayrowetz et al. (2007) defined the outcomes of redesigned work under distributed leadership reform as the performance of key leadership functions necessary to develop and sustain distributed leadership practice to achieve school improvement. These functions are similar to what Spillane and colleagues (2004) refer to as macrofunctions, although these researchers have geared them more toward instructional improvement. While Spillane et al. argued that for more complete understanding of leadership activity, we need to consider how macro and micro leadership tasks are interlinked; their definition of microfunctions is similar to what Mayrowetz et al. define as redesigned work in their model that is linked to the performance of leadership functions.

Antecedents and Moderators

Antecedents and moderators are characteristics of an individual or an organization that vary among individuals or organizations studied. These crucial individual and

organizational variables not only shape how distributed leadership is formulated at schools (they are antecedents), but also impact the way distributed leadership is implemented (they are moderators).

Organizational Structures

Mayrowetz et al. (2007) refer to the organizational structures that dictate the division of labor and use of time. They consider organizational structures antecedents/moderators claiming that formal and informal organizational structures within the school have a powerful effect on how leadership practice is defined and implemented. While formal team meetings and the informal networks that teachers establish outside of these formal meetings are potential contributors to distributed leadership practice, organizational structures such as "egg-carton" classrooms and grade-level teams (Siskin, 1997; Spillane, et al., 2004, p. 26) that isolate teachers constrain distributed leadership development.

School Capacity Building

School capacity is defined as collective power of the full staff to improve student achievement schoolwide (Newmann, King, & Youngs, 2000). School capacity building is defined as an active process of building organizational strategies that allow the school to use the abilities, skills, and knowledge acquired during one process of change to facilitate subsequent changes (King & Newmann, 2001). Building capacity requires re-culturing, restructuring, and re-skilling at the level of individual, team, and whole school (Hopkins & Jackson, 2003). Building capacity for whole-school improvement requires from school leaders to promote growth at the level of individuals, teams, and departments in a

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balanced and mutually supportive ways, while simultaneously taking care of the

resources, structures, culture, and external influences (Hadfield, 2003).

Inquiry

Argyris and Schön (1978) viewed inquiry as a cyclical process of questioning,

data collection, reflection, and action, and argued that individual and collective inquiry

drove organizational learning. Copland (2003) talks about a cycle of inquiry in terms of

action research, consisting of six steps: selecting and narrowing a question for

investigation, identifying measurable goals, setting specific targets, creating and

implementing particular action (connecting knowing and doing), and collecting and

analyzing data, generated by action taken.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Public schools as they are constituted at present are not administered in ways that

would enable them to tackle the increased accountability pressures that drive the need for

systemic and sustainable improvement of instruction and student achievement. The

complex task of transforming schools is too demanding to expect a formal leader to

accomplish it alone. Earlier conceptions of leadership that focused on individual traits,

behaviors, and actions of the principal have evolved over time to recognize the

importance of teachers' and principals' expertise alike (Frost, Durrant, Head, & Holden,

2000; Gronn, 2000; Spillane, et al., 2007). Advocates for school capacity building that

view school change as an organizational shift have emphasized leadership as a collective

phenomenon rather than a quality of one person (Elmore, 2000; Lambert, 2003; Ogawa &

Bossert, 1995). The idea of distributed leadership that conceptualizes leadership in terms of activities and interactions that are distributed across multiple people and situations (Spillane, et al., 2001; Spillane, et al., 2004) has won scholarly recognition largely because it has "helped expose limitations inherent in leadership understood individually" (Gronn, 2008, p. 142) and moved the thinking about leadership in a new direction, away from fixed entities and tightly drawn boundaries toward "looseness and open-endedness to accommodate a sense of reality as fluid and continually emerging" (p. 144).

While a considerable body of theory explores the concept of distributed leadership, studies that have investigated distributed leadership enactment – be it purposeful or spontaneous – are limited. To date, a very small but growing number of studies have provided empirical evidence about the impact of distributed leadership on school improvement. This chapter first reviews the conceptual literature on distributed leadership to justify the significance of distributed leadership as and idea and illuminate the complexity of the phenomenon. Next, it provides a critical review of a selection of distributed leadership research divided into two broad categories: the studies that have utilized a prescriptive normative perspective and those that have employed a theoretical descriptive lens, with a special focus on the research that has investigated distributed leadership development in schools. The chapter concludes with a summary of the key points that inform this study.

The Growing Appeal of Distributed Leadership

The notion of distributed leadership has become increasingly used in the discourse about school leadership in the last decade. Although the idea of distributed leadership is not new and can be traced back to the field of organizational theory in the early 1950s

(Gibb, 1954), a number of reasons may account for its current popularity. Gronn (2002) argued that distributed leadership more accurately reflected current division of labor that organization members experienced on a daily basis, and thus provided a realistic framework for understanding the current realities of schools and how they might be improved. Schools now "operate in more complex, data-rich task environments than ever before", and in such environments "decision making is heavily dependent upon a rapid processing of large amounts of information" (Gronn, 2000, p.323). Because of greater knowledge fragmentation and dispersal, organizations have an increased need for interdependence and new forms of coordination that are "highly conducive to the emergence of distributed leadership"(Gronn, 2002, p. 19). According to Gronn, awareness and appeal of distributed leadership is growing also because of the disillusionment with the idea of "visionary leader champions" (p. 17).

Using the standards-based reform movement as a guide, Elmore (2000) has suggested that the increasingly overwhelming and complex task of leading schools demands new ways of understanding leadership. Findings have confirmed that one person cannot possibly meet all the new expectations that are currently required of principals (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). The principalship has expanded to include significant responsibilities for instructional leadership, school safety, parent and community relationships, and financial management (Goodwin, Cunningham, & Childress, 2003). In addition, with increasing regulations and reporting requirements, the managerial tasks on which principals traditionally spent most of their time have also expanded. Elmore (2000) suggested that the theory of leadership must therefore move beyond the trait theories into a broader view of leadership as a collective effort. The

large-scale, systematic improvement of instruction that is necessary for schools to ensure that all students meet the required standards requires "multiple sources of guidance and direction following the contours of expertise in an organization made coherent through a common culture" (Elmore, 2000, p. 15). Leadership as a collective phenomenon distributed across multiple people throughout the school thus derives from a need of broader expertise necessary for school-wide instructional improvement that exists in schools, but which is not utilized due to formal hierarchical structures and teacher isolation.

The majority of conceptual work has thus promoted distributed leadership as a means of developing leadership capacity and sustainability of instructional change. However, some researchers have warned that greater distribution of leadership does not necessarily mean better and more sustainable leadership practice. If teachers are not well qualified and their knowledge base is weak, distributed leadership can produce "greater distribution of incompetence" (Timperley, 2005, p. 417) rather than shared knowledge and professionalism. Distributed leadership can also produce conflicting priorities, targets, and timescales (Storey, 2004), resulting in competition of leadership styles rather than increased leadership capacity. Since teachers who do not carry formal authority find themselves in informal leadership roles, their colleagues may disrespect and disregard them (Timperley, 2005), which can negatively affect school climate and contribute to the inefficiency of team work.

While the pilot schools in Slovenia in which the NEI introduced the idea of collective decision making did not seem to have any trouble embracing the concept, the implementation of distributed leadership was not equally smooth and produced differing

results. Although all the principals verbally expressed their relief over teachers'

assistance in leading the instructional reform, only few of them demonstrated that they

really grasped the meaning and consequences of distributed leadership practice. The

reason for that is probably related to the country's historical and cultural past: Formerly a

socialist state and part of a larger federation of Yugoslavia, Slovenia had a system of self-

management, which created a decentralized public administration framework that

required collective decision making. That is probably why the concept was readily

embraced due to its familiarity in the pilot schools. Nevertheless, more often than not,

collective decision making in schools of the Communist past was rhetoric rather than

reality. Teachers, for instance, did not have much say, and the principals had only limited

decision-making power since they had to enact the decisions made at the state level. We

can conclude that in the Communist past, while collectivism in schools was advertised, it

usually remained on the surface level. Thus, a concern remains whether the idea of

collectivism behind the concept of distributed leadership appealed to the pilot schools

only because of its familiar rhetoric from Communist times, or because in was really in

tune with changed values and mental models that evolved with the country's transition to

democratic system.

<div align="center">Diverging Meanings of Distributed Leadership</div>

While the idea of distributed leadership dominates much of current discourse

about leadership and school reform, it has been interpreted in so many different ways that

it is extremely difficult to separate between what does and does not constitute distributed

leadership (Harris, 2007; Mayrowetz, 2008). In addition, some of the descriptions overlap

substantially with earlier, well-developed and long-standing conceptions of other models

of leadership. Some studies have pointed out that distributed leadership overlaps with shared, collaborative, democratic and participative leadership concepts (Bennett, et al., 2003; Leithwood, Mascal, et al., 2007; Woods, et al., 2004); others have used it interchangeably with shared leadership (Harris, 2002, 2004; Storey, 2004), and pointed to the connections between distributed leadership and teacher leadership (Harris & Muijs, 2004; Smylie, et al., 2002). This conceptual overlap not only obscures the meaning of the term, but also presents a danger for distributed leadership to become just another slogan in a long line of fashionable terms. In addition, it makes the research and operationalization of this work more difficult.

Bennet et al. (2003) addressed this concern in their review of literature on distributed leadership since 1988, and identified three distinctive characteristics of the concept of distributed leadership. The conceptions of distributed leadership that highlight it as an *emergent property* view leadership as shaped by the evolving interactions of various leaders at different times and in different situations. Central to this view is the notion that leadership "stretches over" people in different roles (Spillane, et al., 2001) rather than being divided among them, producing a dynamic that is greater than the sum of individual contributions. This characteristic puts distributed leadership theory in contrast with other leadership theories that have viewed leadership as a phenomenon arising from the individual leader who influences others to follow (Blase & Blase, 1999; Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Leithwood, Begley, & Cousins, 1990; Sheppard, 1996). By emphasizing leadership as practice or activity that includes multiple individuals and the situation in which it takes place (Spillane, et al., 2001), the distributed leadership perspective shifts the focus to investigating leadership at the level of school rather than an

individual (Gronn, 2002; Mayrowetz, 2008; Spillane et al.). Because it is a situated

activity, researchers have to include the social and material context in the study of

leadership practice as its constituent part. The manner in which educators utilize tangible

artifacts (assessment data, curriculum guides, meeting agendas, observational forms), and

intangible artifacts (a school's vision, goals, and expectations) is the integral part of

distributed leadership practice (Spillane et al.). Consequently, leadership practice has to

be analyzed both by observing practice as it unfolds, and from the perspective of

practitioners and in relation to the task and the material situation (Spillane et al.);

Complementary to this understanding is the view of leadership as an organizational

quality whereby leadership originates from many people's expertise and flows through

networks of roles (Ogawa & Bossert, 1995).

The next characteristic that distinguishes distributed leadership from other

conceptions of leadership is the *openness of the boundaries of leadership,* which means

that it is predisposed to widen the conventional net of leaders. Leadership positions are

often assumed without formal responsibility or authority (Gronn, 2002; Heller &

Firestone, 1995; Spillane et al.), and decisions about who leads and who follows are

dictated by the task rather than by the position in the hierarchy. While the notion of

distributed leadership does not suggest how wide the boundaries should be set, it also

does not suggest any limits. This characteristic points to the necessity of flatter

organizational structures that provide opportunities for collaboration. A shift toward this

kind of leadership is likely to create cognitive dissonance for individuals used to

traditional school bureaucracies (Copland, 2003), and implies a need for the development

of a collaborative culture within the school based on trust and reciprocal accountability, and the renegotiation of institutionalized role relationships (Copland).

The third aspect of distributed leadership is that it rests on a *variety of expertise* rather than on hierarchical authority, suggesting that numerous, distinct, relevant perspectives and capabilities can be found in individuals across the organization (Elmore, 2000) that need to be brought together. While collaboration and collegiality are at the core of distributed leadership practice, it is important to recognize that such leadership practice requires more than mutual collaboration. It has to be a "*concertive action*" (Gronn, 2003, p. 35) whereby the individuals who work together pool their expertise and energy, thus producing the results that are greater than the sum of individual contributions. In practical terms, this points to the importance of interactions among individuals or actors that include formal leaders, informal leaders, and their followers (Spillane, et al., 2004), and new relationships based on trust and mutual support, flexibility of roles, and the importance of coordinating people and the work that they do. In addition, it implies a need for strong consensus regarding the organizational development, and attention to professional learning embedded in the fabric and culture of the school (Copland, 2003).

Distributing leadership thus requires much more than just delegating leadership tasks to those who are not formally assigned to leadership positions; it requires building a broad-based capacity in school for the improvement of instruction and school performance, and trusting the ability of others to lead (Elmore, 2000). This is especially important now because standard-based reform has turned schools into main units of accountability. It is now up to individual schools to ensure the success of all students. In

order to develop more challenging and more varied academic programs in line with externally imposed state standards, most schools need to change the way they think and work. According to Elmore (2003) "…instructional improvement requires that people with multiple sources of expertise work in concert around common problems" (p. 10). By distributing leadership, it is possible to engage expertise wherever it exists within the organization. Such distribution of leadership can also help sustain change efforts because leadership capacity is spread across the organization. While principal turnover is inevitable and often frequent, leadership succession is guaranteed because there are others in the organization that can lead (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006).

Schools that distribute leadership recognize that the complex nature of instructional practice requires people to work in networks of shared and complementary expertise rather than in hierarchies that have a clearly defined division of labor (Elmore, 2000). New and more responsive leadership approaches that involve teachers in decision making and provide them with time for collaborative inquiry are more successful in mobilizing the staff for meaningful changes in teaching and learning (Copland, 2003; Leverett, 2002) than hierarchical models with top-down decision making that often result in teachers' resentment and resistance to change (Fullan, 1996; Kotter, 1995; Senge, et al., 2000). Forging synergy and coherence is critical when systems are complex, overloaded, and fragmented like schools can become (Fullan, 2001).

While the general understanding of school leadership in Slovenia in 2003, when its National Education Institute (NEI) started to pilot instructional reform, was still limited to the actions, personal traits, and beliefs of principals, who were, according to legal documents, the sole leaders and managers of schools (Ur.l., 1996), the NEI played

an important role in redefining the meaning of school leadership by encouraging work redesign in the pilot schools, and implementing the professional development program that supported transformation from the solo to the distributed leadership practice. While their work did not explicitly grow out of the literature on distributed leadership, it was informed by Fullan's (1991, 1993, 1996, 2000, 2001) and Kotter's (1995) ideas on educational change and school improvement, and followed their recommendations for the establishment of leadership teams in support of schools' capacity building for change. In addition, it was informed by the work of Senge and colleagues (Senge, 1990; Senge, et al., 2000), and Hargreaves and Hopkins (1991) on building schools as learning communities, and by Frost et al.'s (2000) idea of embedding action research into teachers' every day work, plus encourage their reflection in order to evoke their inquisitive attitude toward instruction.

<center>Lenses Used for Understanding Distributed Leadership</center>

Two recent reviews of usages of distributed leadership (Harris, 2007; Mayrowetz, 2008) pointed to the need to differentiate between the bodies of work that have employed either a prescriptive normative lens or a theoretical descriptive lens to investigate distributed leadership. Behind this division is one of the great debates related to the phenomenon of distributed leadership, namely whether leadership distribution is a property of all leadership, or whether distributed leadership is something schools need to develop in order to build their capacity and improve their performance.

While the theoretical descriptive lens widens the view of leadership *as it exists* in schools from a person- or role-based to an activity based leadership that is spread throughout an organization, the prescriptive normative lens considers distributed

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leadership a prescription for school reform and provides guidelines for studying

leadership in schools *as it should be*. It is concerned with both, direction-setting and

generating the most effective forms of distributed leadership practice.

The main concern of the descriptive perspective is thus to widen the conception of

leadership and investigate leadership at a school level rather than studying leadership

traits and skills of administrators (Fullan, 1996; Hadfield, 2003; Mayrowetz, 2008;

Mayrowetz & Weinstein, 1999). According to the descriptive perspective, leadership is a

situated activity that takes shape in the interactions of people and their situation. The

studies of leadership thus need to include the social and material context, such as

interactions among leaders and followers, tools and language that they use in the

enactment of leadership practice, and organizational structures and other factors that

either enable or constrain leadership practice (Mayrowetz, 2008; Spillane, et al., 2001).

The normative orientation, on the other hand, is concerned with practical

application of the concept. Rather than studying what leadership practice looks like and

how it gets defined in a distributed form, the normative frame directs the focus to how

schools and school members need to change to accommodate effective leadership

distribution (Mayrowetz, et al., 2007), and how leadership should be distributed, by

whom, and with what effect (Harris, Leithwood, Day, Sammons, & Hopkins, 2007;

Leithwood, Mascal, et al., 2007; Richie & Woods, 2007).

Most of the studies that have assumed a normative stance adopted certain parts of

the descriptive conceptual frame, especially its view that distributed leadership is the

activity of leadership enacted by multiple individuals, and turned it into a prescriptive

usage (Cole, 2009; Copland, 2003; Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, & Hopkins, 2007;

Leithwood & Jantzi, 1998; Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Riggan, 2009; Scribner, et al., 2007). Mayrowetz et al.'s (2007) theoretical work stands out in that they designed a prescriptive frame "to provide the field with new insights into how to predict whether distributed leadership projects will take hold and work in schools" (p. 76). By reviving work redesign theory and customizing Hackman's and Oldham's (1980) Job Characteristics Model (JCM), they outlined a conceptual model for the study of distributed leadership, in particular how distributed leadership develops, how it is performed, and what changes are necessary at the individual, collective, and organizational level to make it work. Their Distributed Leadership as Work Redesign model, used to frame the present study, builds on the premise that introducing distributed leadership into schools requires redefinition of administrators' and teachers' work, which inevitably leads to organizational restructuring and reculturing, and capacity building. Consequently, the authors consider the initiatives to develop distributed leadership in schools forms of work redesign.

(1) The Prescriptive (Normative) Frame

In designing their prescriptive frame that they call Distributed Leadership as Work Redesign model, Mayrowetz et al (2007) took into consideration the meta-analysis of the JCM, other redesign efforts in schools (e.g., career ladders, participative decision making, mentoring), and their own initial findings from six secondary schools included in the State Action Education Leadership Projects (SAELP). Their model specifies five job characteristics that encompass the aspects of educators' redesigned work necessary for the success of distributed leadership reform; three transition mechanisms produced by the redesigned work that cause educators to engage in leadership tasks, thus turning their jobs

with characteristics into distributed leadership practice; and six leadership functions whose performance is the outcome of redesigned work that can tentatively lead to school improvement. In addition, the authors also specify a number of antecedent/moderating variables at both individual and organizational levels. These variables represent major structural, cultural, and micropolitical elements. Antecedents and moderators shape how organization members define and implement redesigned work, how engaged they are in their new work, and how they perceive and perform leadership functions. Embedded within the model is an element of change over time, making it a suitable tool for studying the development and implementation of distributed leadership in schools.

Redesigned Work

As a form of work redesign, distributed leadership practice in schools requires a redefinition and expansion of educators' work for which they need to develop new skills and assume new responsibilities (Mayrowetz, et al., 2007). The model identifies five job characteristics of redesigned work that are at the core of distributed leadership implementation in schools: skill variety, task identity, task meaningfulness, balancing of autonomy and interdependence, and feedback.

Skill variety. Distributed leadership reforms require that administrators and teachers increase their skills and scope of role, and change their perceptions of their roles and responsibilities. Teachers need to expand their responsibility for school-level improvement, and learn how to perform leadership tasks in interaction with their colleagues and administrator. Administrators' work has to shift from influencing the followers to activating the motivational and educational potential in school, coordinating the redesigned work, managing boundaries, participating in teams, and building

coherence. Consequently, the administrators and teachers need to learn communication techniques and other interpersonal and motivational skills to be able to perform the work.

Task identity. Participating in distributed leadership reform requires teachers to climb out of their discipline and classroom-based mentality, and widen the understanding of their job to develop a more system-level view. To develop such task identity, teachers need opportunities to create meaning together and develop their commitment to common goals. While administrators are still ultimately accountable, they have to conceptualize their role in terms of engaging and empowering others to lead. The model thus suggests that not only the redesigned work matters to the performance of distributed leadership, but also how teachers and administrators perceive and experience new work and their new responsibilities.

Task meaningfulness. Building on the understanding that developing teachers' capacity for leadership and engaging them in leadership practice does not threaten their power and authority, the administrators need to create opportunities for teachers to develop the desire and capacity to engage in leadership practice. In their application of the model, Smylie et al. (2007) found that principals were crucial in "selling" the significance of distributed leadership to teachers, and in setting the stage for redesigned work. Raising teachers' awareness about the significance of redesigned work will prevent teachers from perceiving it as additional burden that takes time away from their traditional responsibility in the classroom. Activating teachers' motivation for leadership work can be challenging particularly because teachers will more often than not keep their full work-load in the classroom (Sentočnik & Barber, 2008), and will not be formally assigned to leadership positions (Timperley, 2005).

Balancing of autonomy and interdependence. Distributed leadership performance that pushes for collective responsibility and interdependence decreases individual autonomy and independence that are the hallmarks of teaching profession (Little, 1990; Mayrowetz, et al., 2007). The authors predict that teachers will not easily sacrifice their individual autonomy for increased collective autonomy. In addition, the administrators may make the shift to collective decision making even harder. Because various external agencies consider formal leaders accountable for school success and failure, it may be difficult for principals to let go of their control and allow teacher teams to be autonomous in decision-making. For successful leadership distribution, a balance between the administrator's need for coordination and control and the teachers' desire for decision-making authority needs to be achieved. A shift toward collective autonomy that is characteristic of successful distributed leadership practice requires proper organizational conditions, such as trust, healthy micropolitics, and organizational stability.

Feedback. Building on the findings of studies such as Copland's (2003) longitudinal study of distributed leadership development in a context of a region-wide school renewal effort, the authors argue that feedback has the greatest potential to activate learning among educators involved in distributed leadership, and that the manner in which educators receive and make sense of feedback is crucial for the success of a distributed leadership reform. Studies suggest that in the educational setting, accurate and productive feedback can be attained through techniques like action research and collective inquiry (Copland, 2003; Sentočnik & Barber, 2008) on condition that schools build a culture of inquiry and organizational learning. Also, using evaluation data

gathered throughout the process of change at all levels of school work is necessary for feedback to be effective.

Transition Mechanisms

Mayrowetz et al. (2007) hypothesize that the redesigned work will make the educators' work experience more stimulating by developing their collective understanding of the meaningfulness of the new work, and by building their individual and collective leadership capacity, thus motivating them to become more satisfied and productive in their work. Through improved motivation, better dynamics between individual and organization, and more human capital, key leadership functions for school change will be performed more effectively, thus positively contributing to reform efforts.

The authors identify three transition mechanisms that can engage the educators in distributed performance of leadership functions as a consequence of redesigned work: sense making, motivation, and learning.

Sensemaking. The authors cite the work of Weick (1991) as the basis for understanding sensemaking, which they describe as an important bridge between individual and collective focus. While individuals operate through their mental models that they bring to their job setting, successful work redesign has to involve collective sense making that can be achieved by drawing on the organizational culture and creating a new collective set of beliefs that will permit the change to take hold among most members, despite stress that changes in the job will necessarily produce.

Motivation. Work conditions that support good performance can have a motivational effect on employees. Studies have found that, e.g., teacher teaming increases teacher satisfaction and professional commitment (Mayrowetz, 2008). Also, when

teachers perceive their work as important, and when they have opportunities to develop

their capacity for effective work performance, their motivation will also increase.

Learning. Teachers are experts in classroom instruction in the particular subject

that they teach, but have to learn how to become change agents. The performance of

leadership functions will require a knowledge base that is outside of a teacher's

traditional repertoire. Learning at the individual and organizational level through

different initiatives and forms of support – preferably on a continuous basis – and

applying new knowledge in a safe environment - is thus necessary for successful

distribution of leadership practice.

Antecedents/Moderators

Taking into consideration that distributed leadership development will differ

among schools, Mayrowetz and colleagues (2007) specified antecedent and moderating

variables at the individual and organizational level, stating that individual factors such as

knowledge, skills, growth need, and satisfaction with the work-place differ among

schools and may positively or negatively moderate the relationship between particular

design characteristics of work, how redesigned work is perceived and enacted, and the

quality of distributed leadership. Similarly, the existing and new organizational

structures, culture, level of trust, stability in leadership and teaching personnel, and

micropolitics have a powerful and recursive relationship to the initial perception of

distributed leadership (they are antecedents), and its development (they are moderators)

in individual schools.

Organizational Structures

The establishment of various teams, in particular the school leadership team, to serve as a vehicle for the distribution of leadership work is a trademark of distributed leadership reform. Every study that has examined the development of distributed leadership in schools (Copland, 2003; Richie & Woods, 2007; Smylie, et al., 2007) underscored the importance of putting new organizational structures in place for creating the opportunities for spreading leadership practice across roles.

Mayrowetz at al. (2007) argued that the structures that dictate the division of labor and use of time have direct consequences for organizational processes and outcomes in the context of distributed leadership reform. Formal hierarchical structures may be so inflexible that they prevent teachers in informal leadership roles to perform leadership tasks, either because they lack formal authority or because of lack of time for collective engagement in leadership work due to existing schedules, routines, and the amount of release time and length of school day. Although flattening the hierarchy is a visible sign of distributed leadership, the existing hierarchy will not disappear, and will thus impact the distributed leadership reform, partly because of tradition and habit, and also because formal leaders retain certain responsibilities that derive from their formal role, and remain accountable to external stakeholders.

Building on the research of the role of academic departments within comprehensive high schools (Siskin, 1997), the authors point out that researchers need to take departmental structures based on discipline specialization into consideration particularly when exploring high-school restructuring and collective sense making. Siskin's research has shown that: (1) teachers identify themselves as members of a professional network by subject; (2) department designations are boundaries that divide

teachers into distinct and different worlds; (3) teachers consider department chairs the appropriate authority because of their specialized knowledge, and consequently turn to them rather than to principals as appropriate instructional leaders; (3) departments serve as formalized administrative units with their own offices, organizational routines, and discretionary budgets.

Since academic departments in high schools tend to create isolated, impermeable social and professional networks, they can represent a barrier to the development of distributed leadership, characterized by the creation of new groupings of teachers across grades and departments. Strong department loyalty and sense of identity can prevent such regroupings. In addition, isolated entities can produce strong balkanization, making shared vision building and collective sense making extremely difficult.

Outcomes. The model adopts a function-based view of leadership (Firestone, 1996; Heller & Firestone, 1995), and a perspective that leadership activity is distributed across individuals and roles throughout the school (Spillane, et al., 2004). The function-based view of leadership suggests that successful change does not result from the work of a key leader but from the effective performance of specific leadership functions by many people across school (Heller & Firestone). These leadership functions are: (1) providing and selling a vision, (2) providing encouragement and recognition, (3) obtaining resources, (4) adapting standard operating procedures, (5) monitoring the improvement effort, and (6) handling disturbances.

Similar to Spillane's description of macrofunctions (2004) but geared more toward whole-school and not just instructional improvement, the authors present leadership functions as being supportive of effective redesigned work in that they ensure

the appropriate conditions for effective distribution of leadership. Collective performance of these leadership functions at a school level is a desirable outcome of redesigned work, and has a potential to improve schools by making reform efforts deeper and more sustainable. These functions have been empirically tested and recognized as crucial for understanding the practice of distributed leadership in schools (Maxcy & Nguyen, 2006; Mayrowetz & Weinstein, 1999).

The authors maintained that the function-based view of leadership was the most suitable for their model because in their opinion it provided a concrete framework for understanding what constitutes leadership practice in schools with successful distributed leadership program (Mayrowetz, et al., 2007). While they noted that they also shared the views expressed in the later work of Spillane and Scribner and their colleagues (Scribner, et al., 2007; Spillane & Diamond, 2007) in that the success of distributed leadership should not be judged only by how effectively individual organizational members perform different leadership functions, but also by the new relationships that develop among people doing the redesigned work, the dimension of interactions and relationships is not explicit in their model.

Studies Employing Prescriptive (Normative) Stance

The normative prescriptive strand of research that has developed as an antidote to the descriptive strand is concerned with practical application of the concept, and views leadership distribution as a deliberate strategy for school improvement. Studies from this body of literature that have focused specifically on the development of distributed leadership are limited in scope and have explored the following dimensions: (1) redesigned work (Smylie, et al., 2007); (2) school capacity building (Copland, 2003); (3)

the role of principal (Murphy, Smylie, Mayrowetz, & Seashore Louis, 2009); (4) patterns of leadership distribution (Camburn, Rowan, & Taylor, 2003; Leithwood, Mascal, et al., 2007; Richie & Woods, 2007); and (5) the role of micropolitics (Maxcy & Nguyen, 2006; Storey, 2004).

Other studies that adopted the normative stance but did not focus specifically on the development of distributed leadership have investigated the following aspects of distributed leadership: (1) the relationship between distributed leadership and school improvement (Harris, 2004; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1998; Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Mulford & Silins, 2003); and (2) the effects of distributed leadership on group discourse and collaboration (Riggan, 2009; Scribner, et al., 2007).

Studies Investigating the Development of DL

Redesigned work. In their three-year longitudinal comparative case study of six secondary schools, Smylie et al. (2007) employed the Distributed Leadership as Work Redesign model (Mayrowetz, et al., 2007) to explore the relationship between trust as one of the organizational antecedent and moderating variables and the development of distributed leadership. The six secondary schools in their study participated in a reform initiative that promoted the redesigned work through the establishment of an internal leadership team to serve as a vehicle for distributed leadership work in each school, and an external consultant who provided support and training in leadership skills and processes.

Viewing distributed leadership as the performance of leadership functions involving multiple actors across multiple roles across multiple levels of school organizations, the researchers employed mid-year and annual interviews of multiple

individuals and groups, such as principals, assistant principals, teachers on the leadership team and those outside the leadership team, central office administrators, and union representatives, to capture different trust relationships in systems or networks. Their interviews focused on the distributed leadership initiative, the development of distributed leadership practice in schools, and the relationship of distributed leadership to the improvement efforts. In addition to conducting the interviews, the researchers also observed leadership team meetings and examined documents related to the distributed leadership initiatives.

Their findings have suggested that the development of distributed leadership in schools follows a three-step logic: (1) engaging a strategically chosen group of teachers in a narrow scope of leadership activities that prepares a terrain for more complex work to come; (2) engaging a greater number of teachers in a more systematic processes of problem identification, study, and problem solving. The leadership team starts to reach out to the faculty to identify concerns related to instruction, and begins to lead portions of faculty meetings and discussions of faculty concerns; and (3) focusing on issues of teaching and student learning, and encouraging and supporting more and more teachers to develop, implement and evaluate their own improvement efforts.

The authors presented their findings in a form of two case studies that were the examples of the positive and the negative. Their analysis has produced recommendations that may be applicable to any serious effort to introduce and sustain change in organizational settings, and that are relevant to the development of distributed leadership: (1) Organizations should attend to the development of a foundation of trust because initial levels of trust are essential for distributed leadership development. Trust relates to

the design and performance of distributed leadership, and how it is perceived and accepted. Lack of trust results in teachers' reluctance to engage in the distributed leadership work afforded to them; (2) the relationship between trust and distributed leadership development appears to be dynamic and reinforcing; and (3) principal leadership is crucial to the development of trust as the foundation for distributed leadership development. The authors recommend that principals cultivate trust proactively and strategically within and beyond their school's distributed leadership initiative.

Their cases have illustrated that within broad systems of trust relationships that exist in schools the trust relationship between principal and teachers sets the stage for distributed leadership and shapes its development from design to performance. The degree of trust that teachers place in those that initiate, design, and lead distributed leadership implementation, and the degree of trust that those in leadership positions place in teachers, are related to the characteristics of redesigned work. If trust is strong, formal leaders tend to introduce fewer bureaucratic controls and extend greater autonomy to those assuming leadership work; collaboration tends to be more open and bi-directional; information flow tends to be easier, assessment tends to be more honest, and feedback less bridled. Their study has thus suggested not only that trust matters (Tschannen-Moran, 2000), but also how varying levels of trust in individual schools relate to the formulation, design and implementation of distributed leadership, particularly to the redesigned work that distributed leadership implementation requires.

While Smylie et al.'s (2007) study represents the only attempt so far to apply their normative frame to the study of distributed leadership development, they referred only to

parts of their model in their case study narratives without explicitly stating ahead of time what in their model they intended to utilize and how. The authors mainly explored characteristics of redesigned work and how trust as one of the organizational conditions shaped the understanding, formulation and performance of that work in individual schools. While they stated in the conclusion that they also referred to the moderating effect of trust on transition mechanisms, these references are not clear and could have been explicated in a more systematic way, which would contribute to a better validation of the usefulness of their framework for the purpose for which it was designed. While their employment of the longitudinal case study method enabled them to provide a thorough exploration of how the relationship between trust and the performance and perception of redesigned work developed over time, Smylie and colleagues did not explore the outcomes of redesigned work specified in their model as the performance of leadership functions, and their link to improved school performance.

School capacity building. Copland's findings (2003) from a large-scale mixed-method longitudinal study of distributed leadership development also pointed to the importance of organizational conditions. Copland, who viewed distributed leadership as a collective activity focused on collective goals that relied on expertise and involved the spanning of tasks, responsibility, and power boundaries, found considerable variation among the schools in levels of trust, teacher commitment and school's readiness to engage in leadership distribution. His findings have showed that these variations depended on each school's experience with reform, expectations regarding the goals of the reform geared toward school-wide improvement of instructional expertise, established cultural norms, and connections to resources in the region to support school's work.

Copland's study (2003) specified the organizational conditions that need to be in place for the successful development of distributed leadership, such as a collaborative culture based on trust and reciprocal accountability, openness of the school community to learning and engagement in a cycle of inquiry, a strong consensus regarding the important problems facing the organization, and rich expertise to improve teaching and learning among all those that work in school. Copland stressed the importance of preparation for leadership transformation, and the necessity of embedding the training efforts into the fabric and culture of the school. This notion is supported by the theories of organizational learning (Senge, 1990), and presumes collective engagement in the development of professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes, as well as organizational structures and processes that support the pursuit of such collective enterprise.

Copland's study (2003) has demonstrated how distributed leadership can be effectively implemented within the framework of a comprehensive region-wide school reform initiative by involving teachers in a collaborative inquiry process that requires the creation of new leadership positions and the appointment of coaches and facilitators to provide adequate support. It has also foregrounded the challenges in negotiating new roles in leadership teams and coordinating the efforts of redesigned work. His findings have suggested that the success of new leadership structures is linked with a degree to which school culture is supportive of redesigned work. His work has thus suggested that it is important to consider the influence of organizational variables on the development of distributed leadership at the level of individual schools, which relates it to Mayrowetz et al.'s (2007) framework, and their inclusion of organizational antecedents and moderators in their Distributed Leadership as Work Redesign model.

Similar to Mayrowetz et al. (2007) and Smylie et al. (2007), Copland has pointed to the importance of formal leaders in their transformed role as catalysts for distributed leadership reform, protectors of school vision, buffers between district and school, and providers of support and space for inquiry. Copland's findings have suggested that if the principal fails to believe in and support the innovation, teachers will not engage in leadership work, despite an abundance of professional training.

Role of principal. Although researchers have claimed that when investigating distributed leadership, it is crucial to de-center the research focus from administrators to leadership practice at the school level (Gronn, 2002; Spillane, et al., 2004), with some going so far to suggest that the principal's job has become redundant (Lakomski, 2002), study after study has revealed that while the principal's role became different, it remained critically important for the successful development of distributed leadership development.

In their recent case study of an urban middle school, one of six cases in a larger three-year investigation of distributed leadership development in two mid-Atlantic states, Murphy and colleagues (2009) investigated the formal administrative leaders' role in creating leadership-dense organizations inside two broad leadership functions: crafting organizational structures and shaping organizational culture. While reaffirming that the extant system of schooling – its culture, its structure, and its professional overlay – inhibits the introduction and development of distributed leadership, the authors have illuminated the role of principal in overcoming cultural, structural, and professional barriers in the process of distributed leadership implementation.

Murphy et al.'s study (2009) has thus confirmed previous findings that due to their formal position and influence principals have a key role in creating the structures conducive to distributed leadership practice, forging policies and institutionalizing practices that support these structures (Smylie & Hart, 1999; Smylie, et al., 2007). Strategies that have proved to be essential for the success of distributed leadership included avoiding favoritism in selecting teachers into school leadership teams, providing time and relieving teachers on the leadership team of their classroom work, and making the new structures meaningful to teachers by staying involved and ensuring that they use time productively. Their findings have also suggested that continuous building of the culture that supports the work in new structural arrangements and recognizes individual and collective efforts is essential for distributed leadership to spread.

Leithwood et al.'s two-stage multiple-methods study (2007) has also pointed to the crucial role of formal school and district leaders, specifically in coordinating the performance of leadership functions, creating the environment for building leadership capacity in others, and monitoring the leadership. Although the authors focused primarily on differences in patterns of leadership distribution, and on outcomes of distributed leadership including both organizational effects and effects on student learning, they also examined characteristics of those who perform leadership functions and factors that assist or inhibit the development of distributed leadership. The findings of the first stage of their study have suggested that: (1) coordinated patterns of distributed leadership as the most productive form of distributed leadership were common to the initiatives given high priority and attention by the principals but quite uncommon among the initiatives given less attention; (2) the structures, cultural norms, and opportunities for teachers to build

their leadership capacity depended heavily on the intentional work of principals; (3) teachers attributed leadership to those of their peers who shared traits and dispositions typically associated with formal administrative leaders; (4) it fell to principals to enact critical direction-setting leadership functions, redesign the organization, create a supportive culture, and empower others to lead.

Their evidence as a whole indicated that distributing leadership more broadly did not result in less demand for formal leaders but rather in their changed role that seemed even more demanding. Principals became responsible for coordinating distributed performance of leadership functions, building leadership capacity in others, monitoring distributed leadership work, and providing constructive feedback to teachers about their efforts. These results are consistent with the findings of the researchers that investigated distributed leadership development and the role of formal leaders (e.g., Copland, 2003; Murphy, et al., 2009; Smylie, et al., 2007).

Patterns of leadership distribution. Other studies that have investigated various patterns of leadership distribution suggested that distributed leadership can take many forms, and linked these differences to variable organizational characteristics of the schools. Ritchie and Woods (2007) identified three types of distribution on the continuum, from emerging, to developing, and embedded as the most advanced form, and connected them with organizational characteristics such as shared values, relationships, and staff motivation. Their findings showed that schools with embedded patterns of distributed leadership demonstrated broad dispersal of authority, widely dispersed capacity for leadership among organizational members, social relations with properties such as high trust, a culture that encouraged teacher leadership, informal and spontaneous

opportunities for teacher leadership as well as structural means to support them, and diminished hierarchical aspects of the organization.

In their investigation of how a variety of leadership functions – including instructional coordination and improvement, building management, and boundary spanning functions – are distributed across the formally designated leadership positions in the schools included in the comprehensive school reform, Camburn, Rowan and Taylor (2003) found that the principals engaged in all three leadership functions at the highest level, with the assistant principals performing at the same level in the amount of building management, and the school coaches engaging at the same level in instructional leadership as the principals. In addition, their findings indicated that the amount of professional development received was positively related with the provision of instructional leadership and boundary spanning but only when it provoked the participants to reflect on their practice in a new light.

The role of micropolitics in DL development. Storey's (2004) study has illuminated the role of an organizational variable in the development of distributed leadership that Mayrowetz et al. included in their model as micropolitics. While the researcher utilized the term "shared leadership" to mean distributed leadership, the findings of her mixed-method longitudinal study revealed how the competition among leaders hindered the implementation of distributed leadership. Although her study was limited to the analysis of one school, her findings revealed how the faculty's initial enthusiasm for distributed leadership became thwarted due to differences in priorities, timing, and objectives among the principal and teacher leaders. In addition, her findings confirmed that lack of clarity about the precise practice of distributed leadership, and

uncertainty about the degree of autonomy and responsibility on the part of different

formal and informal leaders can lead to a stagnant practice with each leader seeking

supporters for their own polarized vision instead of pursuing a common vision.

In their case study research of distributed leadership implementation in two Texas

elementary schools, Maxcy and Nguyen (2006) have illustrated a positive effect of

micropolitics on distributed leadership implementation despite the negative

circumstances that existed in the schools at the start of the process. Because redistribution

of leadership in the school under study followed clear guidelines from a university group

of experts, the faculty had a clear understanding of the meaning of distributed leadership

practice. The school was thus active in identifying and deliberately eliminating internal

problems, such as a gap between the principal's and teachers' vision, entrenched and

ineffective practices embedded in ineffective organizational structures, and principal

primacy in decision-making. The researchers also studied how leadership tools or

artifacts, such as student assessment and peer review, either prompted or restricted

leadership distribution, depending on the conditions in each school such as collegial

sharing, communication, and a presence or lack of a culture of mutual trust and support.

According to the researchers, allowing multiple years for the reform process was also

among the factors that contributed to the successful implementation of distributed

leadership in the schools.

Studies Employing Normative Stance to Investigate Different Dimensions of DL

Relationship between DL and school improvement. In an earlier study that drew

survey data from a large sample of teachers and students from one large school district,

Leithwood and Jantzi (1998) shed doubt on the benefits of greater distribution of

leadership for the improvement of student performance. The results of their study indicated that leadership from different sources widely distributed throughout the school had negative effects on student engagement, thus revealing that greater distribution did not automatically mean better leadership, and that careful planning and consideration of existing school condition was crucial when implementing leadership distribution as a strategy for school reform to ensure that it contributes to school improvement in a positive way.

In a more recent study in which they employed a mixed-method approach to investigate differences in patterns of leadership distribution and their effects on student learning and school outcomes, Leithwood and colleagues (2007) found that different patterns had different effects on organizational outcomes. Their findings also revealed the factors that support the development of distributed leadership, such as the culture that is open, free of favoritism and internal dissent, and supportive of participation and professional development, and those that inhibit the development of distributed leadership, such as the pressure of time on teachers who already have a full-time job but are now expected to lead; lack of leadership skills; unwillingness of formal leaders to share power; and hierarchical structure of school that does not support the distribution of power.

Delving deeper into patterns of distributed leadership and their relationship to a modified version of what Hoy and colleagues (Hoy, Tarter, & Woolfolk Hoy, 2006) defined as academic optimism, Leithwood and Mascall (2008) provided evidence that high levels of academic optimism were positively and significantly correlated with planned approaches to leadership distribution, and low levels of academic optimism were

negatively and significantly associated with unplanned and unaligned approaches to leadership distribution. The researchers found many instances of planful alignment, which they compared to Gronn's institutionalized practice, in the schools that gave the highest priority to distributed leadership initiative. While the authors attributed the disparity in planful alignment to the attention of the principal, they also recognized that informal leaders made high contributions in direction setting, people development, and instructional management once a vision was in place.

Leithwood and Mascall's study (2008) differs from Mayrowetz et al.'s work (2007) in that they do not claim that academic optimism operates as an antecedent and moderating variable in the development of different leadership distribution patterns. The authors do speculate, though, that some set of teacher beliefs may have an influence on how leadership distribution develops in schools, and that some teacher beliefs may develop as a consequence of teachers experiencing different patterns of distributed leadership. To date, researchers have not explored these speculations further.

Effects of DL on group discourse and collaboration. Recent work of the researchers from University of Pennsylvania who have focused on the investigation of the behaviour, capacity, and impact of leadership teams in schools that practice distributed leadership represents an important contribution to a better understanding of the role of varied sources of leadership in distributed leadership implementation. The findings of a mixed-method study (Riggan, 2009) that employed the analysis of 13-hours of video recordings of distributed leadership team meetings, individual and focus-group interviews, survey, and analysis of school performance data have produced the evidence that while the portion of time in which different members assumed lead roles shifted over

the course of the year, more than 60 percent of all meeting time was led by someone other than the principal or coach.

Although Riggan's study (2009) was limited in that it did not investigate the quality of discussions in teams and the effectiveness of leadership, his finding that sharing or co-construction of leadership work was a prominent feature of leadership team meetings has suggested that the principal's formal role was diminished within the leadership team. This finding may have something to do with the fact that leadership teams spent a high percentage of their time for planning and developing strategies around instructional improvement rather than for other leadership functions such as crafting organizational structures and shaping organizational culture that require a strong contribution from the principal (Murphy, et al., 2009).

Building on previous research that described leadership as an intrinsically social phenomenon (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003), Scribner and colleagues (2007) focused on studying forms of leadership that are created by interactions and are thus spontaneous and unpredictable. The researchers applied a descriptive perspective on distributed leadership (Gronn, 2000; Spillane, et al., 2001) in a normative sense, arguing that successful leadership is not a function of what the principal does but involves the practices of multiple individuals and occurs through the complex networks of their relationships and interactions. Their findings revealed that a differing nature of group functioning was related to factors inherent to the groups and to organizational conditions. They also found that oppressive and controlling structures in schools that constrained team functioning were not limited to hierarchical organizational structures, but also included the long-standing cultural patterns that determined the way individual schools operated and that

could suppress groups' divergent thinking and sense of autonomy. Additional constraints were lack of ongoing administrative support to empower teachers, lack of meaningful feedback, lack of time, lack of clear parameters of what autonomy the teams have, and lack of capacities in the areas of facilitation, interaction, and communication on the part of formal and informal leaders.

The findings of Scribner and colleagues (2007) overlap with Mayrowetz et al.'s work (2007), particularly with their inclusion of organizational conditions in their model such as school culture, relational trust, and organizational structures as the antecedent and moderating variables, and with their guidelines to redesigned work that stressed the importance of balancing autonomy and interdependence and feedback, and their relationship to transition mechanisms, such as teacher motivation and learning.

(2) The Descriptive Frame

The researchers originally used the concept of distributed leadership as a descriptive, theoretical lens to study leadership in schools (Gronn, 2000, 2002; Spillane, 2006; Spillane, et al., 2007; Spillane & Diamond, 2007; Spillane, et al., 2003; Spillane, et al., 2001; Spillane, et al., 2004). They built the descriptive frame on the assumption that leadership in schools is always distributed. Unlike the normative frame that provides guidelines on how to implement distributed leadership at the school level, the descriptive frame serves as an analytical tool for thinking about leadership practice *as it exists*, and as a diagnostic instrument that can offer practitioners a new perspective on familiar activity, thus enabling their reflection and informing their action in changing their practice (Spillane et al., 2001).

In describing the descriptive frame, both Harris et al. (2007) and Mayrowetz (2008) referred to the work of Gronn (2000, 2002, 2003) and Spillane with colleagues (Spillane & Diamond, 2007; Spillane, et al., 2003; Spillane, et al., 2001; Spillane, et al., 2004) who are in the forefront of the theoretical work concerning distributed leadership. They pointed out that both Gronn and Spillane et al. made it clear that the aim of their extended analytical discussions of the concept was to develop an analytical tool for understanding how school leadership is enacted, rather than prescribing how it should be.

Both Gronn (2000, 2002, 2003) and Spillane and colleagues (2001, 2003, 2004) presented their views of leadership as spread throughout the organization, rather than vested in individual leaders, formal or informal. While this idea is important, it is not new and has been expressed before both implicitly and explicitly (Mayrowetz, 2008; Mayrowetz & Weinstein, 1999; Ogawa & Bossert, 1995). The important new aspect for studying leadership as distributed practice that Gronn and Spillane et al. introduced was a focus on *how* leadership was distributed. They argued that the researchers studying leadership need to focus on interactions or "concertive action" among individuals, groups and the context in which leadership is enacted. They defined distributed leadership as jointly performed and concertively aligned practice, providing opportunities for synergy.

Gronn (2002) identified *interdependence* and *coordination* as the essential properties of distributed leadership. He defined *interdependence* as a reciprocal dependence between two or more organizational members that is manifested either as the overlap of members' responsibilities or as complementary interdependence. Overlapping interdependence occurs due to mutual need of information and support, and is essentially structural redundancy that can provide mutual reinforcement and reduce the likelihood of

decision errors. Complementary interdependence occurs when members pool differentiated resources and skills. This form of interdependence is advantageous because it enables organizational members to capitalize on their strengths and enhance their lesser skills through a concerted approach to task accomplishment.

Gronn (2002) suggested that such a collaborative interaction among individuals and groups working in concert could produce the results that were greater than the sum of their parts. Organizational members who influence their colleagues and are influenced by them experience a sense of *synergy* through reciprocal experience. Synergy develops when people work together in such a way that they pool their initiative and expertise, producing energy that is greater than the sum of their actions. By capitalizing on their competencies, each person performs specialized labor in a concerted approach to task accomplishment. Gronn distinguished between formal and informal synergies, claiming that formal synergies were based on role, and informal synergies were anchored in personal relations. However, while his work provided useful analytical discussion of synergy, he did not provide methodological guidelines for its implementation.

Gronn (2002) defined *coordination* as managing dependencies between activities, and claimed that the use of coordination mechanisms varied depending on the interdependencies and activities, and the extent to which they were routinized. He outlined three forms of coordination that can be observed in the practice of distributed leadership: spontaneous collaboration, intuitive working relations, and institutionalized practices. Spontaneous collaboration occurs when the interaction among two or more individuals who use their expertise to solve a problem or complete a task is not assigned or planned. Intuitive working relations usually occur over time when members of school

community rely on each other to work together and do what is necessary to solve a problem or complete a task without being stated. Institutionalized practices of distributed leadership are dictated by formal structures in a school that include role assignments, schedules and organization of group work.

According to Gronn (2002), conjoint agency is the defining attribute of concertive action. When acting conjointly, actors synchronize their actions by having regard to their own plans and to those of their peers, and a sense of unit membership. Integrating Gronn's concept of conjoint agency into the distributed leadership perspective requires a paradigm shift from looking at roles and individual actions and behavior associated with hierarchical leadership structures to considering the interactional processes embedded within activities as fundamental properties of leadership.

While Gronn (2000) argued that researchers should focus on "the concertive labor performed by pluralities of interdependent organization members" (p. 318), Spillane and colleagues (Spillane, et al., 2003), who built on the distributed cognition theory, took this new aspect of distributed leadership practice further, arguing that leadership practice was "constituted in the interactions of leaders, followers, and their situation in the execution of leadership tasks" (p.541). The situation as an important element of leadership practice that is not only a medium for leadership but also its outcome refers to the day-to-day experiences and tasks completed by the actors as they use and incorporate various artifacts. The situation is thus represented by artifacts and organizational structures. The artifacts can be tangible, such as instructional tools, meeting agendas, curriculum guides, lesson plans, assessment data, students' work, observation forms, and intangible, such as school's vision, goals, and expectations. Both types of artifacts drive the collective

patterns and beliefs of the leaders and followers in their daily performance of activities

and either enable or constrain leadership practice (Spillane, et al., 2001). Formal and

informal organizational structures within the school shape leadership practice. While

formal team meetings and the informal networks that teachers establish outside of these

formal meetings are potential contributors to distributed leadership practice,

organizational structures such as "egg-carton" classrooms and grade-level teams

(Spillane, et al., 2004, p. 26) that isolate teachers constrain distributed leadership practice.

  Both Gronn's and Spillane et al.'s perspectives viewed leadership as a fluid

phenomenon emerging from the interactions among multiple school members, but

Spillane and colleagues also viewed it as embedded in the social and material context that

did not only influence leadership practice, but was its constituent part (Spillane, et al.,

2004). The descriptive frame of distributed leadership that offers a potentially powerful

and illuminating way for analyzing, describing and diagnosing the complex nature and

quality of leadership practice as it unfolds on a daily basis has important implications for

research. Using the descriptive lens to study leadership requires two important shifts in

thinking (Mayrowetz, 2008): (1) researchers must investigate leadership at the level of a

school rather than an individual, although administrators must not be ignored; and (2)

researchers' attention needs to be focused on interactions or concertive action among

educators and their contextual factors.

<p align="center">*Studies Using Descriptive Frame*</p>

  While Gronn did not perform empirical work himself but supported his theorizing

about distributed leadership by re-analyzing empirical studies from different fields,

Spillane and colleagues conducted a variety of studies to illustrate how leadership activity

was distributed across people and roles, and how the enactment of certain leadership tasks depended on the interactions between two or more actors and different aspects of their situation.

In their substantial qualitative study of thirteen elementary schools in Chicago, Spillane et al. (2001) applied their distributed leadership framework for studying leadership as practice in relation to the transformation of teaching and learning. In this study and elsewhere, Spillane et al. posited that while their distributed leadership framework addressed school leadership in general, their concern was mainly with the instructional aspects of leadership.

Claiming that distributed perspective on leadership is grounded in activity rather than in a position or role, and that analyzing leadership practice should begin with a consideration of tasks around which school leaders organize their practice, the researchers initially identified the key leadership tasks on a macro and micro level in each school, and then explored their enactment. According to Spillane et al. (2001), both the large-scale organizational tasks or macro functions (e.g., constructing a school vision, building norms of trust, supporting collaboration and teacher development, monitoring instruction and innovation), and the day-to-day work or micro tasks (e.g., creating opportunities in the school day for collaboration, organizing professional development) provide a framework for analyzing practice and enable us to attend to the daily work of school leaders without losing sight of a big picture. Observing practice as it unfolded and then asking practitioners about the observed practice helped them distinguish between desired ways of enacting practice (espoused theories) and its actual enactment. Studying human activity enacted by multiple individuals proved to be complicated because it

required understanding of the knowledge, expertise, and skills that different people brought to the execution of the task.

In line with Gronn's (2002) argument, and based on their observation that the knowledge and skills needed for the enactment of leadership practice is not the sum of individual contributions, but rather a collective enterprise that is potentially more than the sum of each individual practice, Spillane et al. (2001) concluded that leadership had to be analyzed at the group or collective level. Their study produced three case studies in which they illustrated how different skills and knowledge of two or more individuals created a situation in which their co-enacted leadership produced an understanding of the task that neither could have achieved alone.

The central argument that Spillane et al. (2001) sought to support through their examples was that leadership practice needed to be analyzed in relation to the task and what they called "artifacts that represent in reified form the problem-solving initiatives of previous human action" (p.25). In the examples that they provided, artifacts included test scores, instructional plans, and protocols used for classroom observation. They argued that such materials and structures do not only "affect what leaders do, but are constitutive of their practice" (p.26).

Their research illustrated how a distributed leadership perspective could support building case studies that could generate rich knowledge helping practitioners to identify dimensions of their practice, articulate relations among them, and understand better what they do, how they do it, and what they need to change. Their findings have suggested that distributed leadership looks different in different schools, and that it differs even within schools depending on the situation and the manner in which educators utilize various

artifacts. As a consequence, they recommended that from a distributed perspective, leadership practice needed to be analyzed on a situation by situation, and on a task by task basis.

Their distributed perspective has also suggested that intervening to improve school leadership by investing in the development of individual formal leader's knowledge and skills should be replaced by the development of leadership capacity at the school level. They have argued that if expertise is distributed, then the school rather than the individual leader is the appropriate target of professional development and other interventions to develop leadership capacity.

In their mixed-method longitudinal study of the school principal's workday, Spillane et al. (2007) took a distributed perspective to examine how principals in one midsized urban school district in the United States tackled the challenge of managing and leading their schools, and in particular to what extent management and leadership work was co-performed with others or distributed over people in schools. They examined the distribution of leadership across people from the perspective of the school principal's workday, claiming that in contrast to some commentators who downplayed the school principal's role in managing and leading school, their distributed perspective was not intended to negate or undermine the role of the school principal.

Motivated by the leader-plus and practice aspects of distributed leadership (Spillane et al, 2001, 2004), and building on the hypotheses generated in prior research, namely that school administrators did not have a monopoly on leadership and management work (Camburn, Rowan, & Taylor, 2003; Heller & Firestone, 1995) this study examined the extent to which responsibility for administration and curriculum was

spread across multiple individuals in schools, and the extent to which administration- and curriculum and instruction-related activities were co-performed by one or more individuals.

Spillane et al.'s (2007) understanding of management and leadership was based on Cuban's (1988) distinction between the two terms who used both of them with reference to administrative-type activities, and instruction or curriculum-type activities. The difference between the two is that management refers to efforts to maintain current arrangements, and leadership refers to moving to new arrangements. In their study, Spillane et al. focused on the activities that the school principals in the study identified as administrative and curriculum and instruction-type activities.

Using a randomized treatment design, they collected data from 52 school principals from elementary, middle, high, and special schools who were either participating in a leadership development program (NISL) or were assigned to a control group. They collected data by means of an experience sampling method (ESM), a principal questionnaire, a school-staff questionnaire, observations of school principals and of the NISL treatment, in-depth interviews with school principals, and school principals' responses to open-ended scenarios. They used ESM as a technique in which respondents completed an instrument at multiple randomly selected times during their workday when being alerted by the researchers. On the basis of instances of collaboration on various management and leadership activities as noted down by the principals each time during their workday when they received an alert from the researchers, and on the basis of data collected from principal shadowing, evidence suggested that (1) leading and managing schools involved multiple individuals, some with formal leadership

responsibility and some without it; (2) co-performance of leading and managing activities, as measured from the performance of the school principal's practice, was relatively commonplace, but it varied from school to school; (3) the mix of school actors that were involved in the co-performance of different leadership and management activities varied from activity to activity.

Overall, principals co-performed almost half (43%) of administrative and instruction and curriculum-related activities. However, while principals less frequently co-performed in instruction and curriculum-related activities (with teacher leaders and classroom teachers), in these activities leadership and management was distributed across a larger number of actors. While principals more often collaborated in administrative activities (with assistant principals), these activities were distributed across a smaller number of actors and most often performed by the principals alone. The extent to which the work of leading and managing was distributed therefore depended on type of leadership and management activity. This finding is consistent with Riggan's (2009) study. The distribution of responsibility for instruction also depended on the subject. All these variations also differed from one school to another.

The article did not report the findings from the surveys and interviews that were quoted in the methods section; neither did it provide the results from the control group or a comparison between the two groups of principals. The article also failed to provide a description of the content and approach of the professional development program that the first group of principals experienced. The results from such an analysis would shed light on the effects of a professional development intervention on the extent to which

leadership was distributed in each school, and on the development of school leadership capacity.

While the authors provided evidence that the work of leading and managing in school was indeed distributed, they could not provide any information about the nature of the interactions, and the roles that different co-actors played in collaborated distribution of leadership because they draw their data exclusively from the principals. Though their theoretical framework challenged the studies that focused on one leader, the positional leaders remained in the center of Spillane et al.'s research.

Timperley's (2005) employment of Spillane et al.'s descriptive framework (2004) was superior to that of the authors' in that she also examined the differential effectiveness of leadership tasks in addition to analyzing how leadership tasks were distributed over actors, artifacts, and their situation. By utilizing measurable reading assessments, she determined how distributed leadership affected the students' reading performance, and found significant differences among the seven schools included in her study.

Timperley (2005) conceptualized leadership as an enacted phenomenon visible in the dynamic interactions that are distributed across multiple leaders, followers and situations (Camburn et al., 2003; Copland, 2003; Spillane et al., 2004). She took a descriptive position similar to that of Spillane et al. (2004) assuming that leadership in schools is always distributed, and that what needed to be considered was *how* the leadership activities were distributed, and the ways in which this distribution varied in its effectiveness, especially with regard to instructional improvement.

The focus of her study was leadership activities and how they were distributed, the social distribution of task enactment, and the place of artifacts in distributed

leadership. The researcher observed the interactions of literacy leaders and teacher teams during their meetings. To capture the task complexity and ambiguity that may have a constraining effect on the actions and interactions, and that may have not been revealed through observations, she conducted interviews with literacy leaders and team members after their meetings. She also interviewed principals to gain understanding of how cultural artifacts that they used contributed to distributed leadership practice in the schools she studied, and analyzed student achievement data for each year to determine the level of instructional improvement.

The analysis of the meetings and interviews showed differences between the higher and lower achieving schools in meeting activities and in the use of material artifacts such as the presentation of achievement data, and also in the articulation of cultural artifacts such as the communication of the school vision. Based on her findings, Timperley warned that wider distribution of leadership was not necessarily beneficial because it could result in greater distribution of incompetence, which was in contrast to the claims of previous research, namely that greater distribution was more desirable for overall school effectiveness (Camburn, et al., 2003; Harris, 2004).

Timperley recognized that the school micropolitics could reduce the acceptability of those with expertise into leadership teams. Consequently, she suggested that greater distribution of leadership was only desirable "if the quality of the leadership activities contributed to assisting teachers to provide more effective instruction to their students" (p. 417), thus alerting the future research to focus also on the quality of leadership activity, and not only on broadness of its distribution as the indication of school improvement. Similarly, the researchers working for England's National College for

School Leadership also warned against a naively optimistic view of distributed leadership claiming that "if they are not bound together by a clear vision, tight processes and clear accountability, multiple sources of leadership can pull a school apart" (Hargreaves & Fink, 2005, p. 111) .

Summary

This study assumed that distributed leadership was something that needed to be developed in schools, and thus adopted a normative stance for studying distributed leadership development and implementation in schools. Consequently, this study employed Mayrowetz et al.'s (2007) prescriptive frame to examine distributed leadership development at the level of school and across schools. However, since the present study also examined the interactions such as relationships between leaders and followers, the degree of collaborative learning, collective meaning making, and new patterns of control, and how they evolved in the process of distributed leadership development, it also utilized a descriptive lens to study how principals and teachers understood and enacted interactions at a particular point in time, i.e., three years after the completion of the NEI's intervention.

Building on the theoretical strands of literature described in this chapter, the present study integrated three concepts into the perspective on leadership: Gronn's (2000, 2002) concept of concertive action; Spillane et al.'s (2001, 2004) concept of leadership as practice that is co-performed by or spread over multiple individuals and is the product of their interactions, their use of artifacts, and their situation, (2004); and Elmore's (2000) concept of leadership as guidance and direction from multiple sources of expertise for the improvement of instruction.

In line with the above concepts, this study also utilized the functionalist perspective on leadership (Firestone, 1996; Heller and Firestone, 1995) that defined leadership as a set of functions that needed to be performed for successful change implementation at the level of school, rather than work of a role. These functions are similar to what Spillane et al. (2001) have referred to as macro functions although they geared them more toward instructional improvement.

The present study thus shifted from looking at roles and individual actions and behavior associated with hierarchical leadership structures to considering leadership functions or activities performed by multiple actors, and interactional processes embedded within activities as fundamental properties of school leadership. Bearing in mind that the reciprocal relationships between leaders and followers shape leadership practice, and that followers are an essential constituting element of leadership activity (Spillane, et al., 2004), this study included both leaders and followers in the exploration of distributed leadership development by taking into consideration their understanding of and their contribution to the leadership practice.

The normative strand of research, specifically Mayrowetz et al.'s (2007) model, provided guidelines to this study for examining (1) the characteristics of the NEI's intervention that was designed and implemented to support the redesigned work and performance of leadership functions in schools as the outcomes of redesigned work; and (2) the characteristics of the redesigned work institutionalized in schools three years after the intervention and their relationship to the transition mechanisms. By specifying the characteristics of redesigned work, the model facilitated the exploration of leadership activity enacted by multiple individuals, which required the understanding of the

knowledge, expertise, and skills that different people brought to the performance of leadership functions. By connecting redesigned work to transition mechanisms, the prescriptive model provided guidelines for exploring educators' understanding of changes in their practice, in the meaning they attributed to their work, in motivation to perform redesigned work, and in opportunities to learn how to do it better.

The descriptive strand of research guided the manner by which the performance of leadership functions was examined in this study. Since distributed perspective on leadership is grounded in activity rather than in position or role, analyzing leadership practice began with a consideration of tasks around which school leaders organized their practice, considering both the large-scale organizational tasks or macro functions, and the day-to-day work or micro tasks (e.g., creating opportunities in the school day for collaboration, organizing professional development). In addition, this study also examined the degree to which day-to-day work contributed to the execution of the macro tasks. Rather than relying on broadness of distribution as an indication of school improvement, the proposed study examined the quality of leadership task enactment (Timperley, 2005). To distinguish between espoused theories (ideal or desired ways of enacting tasks), and theories in use (what people actually do), the present study involved observing the school sites and educators' behavior, and asking principals and practitioners in leadership roles and outside leadership roles about leadership practice.

Building on Mayrowetz et al.'s prescriptive framework, and on the results of empirical studies within normative and descriptive frame described in this chapter, the present study considered the influence of organizational variables on the development of distributed leadership at the level of individual schools. While concentrating on

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organizational structures as one particular organizational variable, this study also took into consideration other antecedents and moderators such as organizational stability, school culture, and relational trust when examining the development of distributed leadership in individual schools and analyzing the success of distributed leadership implementation at the level of school and across schools.

The findings of Murphy and colleagues (2009), and Leithwood and colleagues (2007, 2008) provided a reference for analyzing the principal's role, and for the identification of the factors that either assisted or inhibited distributed leadership development and implementation in individual schools.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the procedures selected for the present study, the rationale for the selected methodology, the unit of analysis, the methods used in collecting the data, and the procedures employed for the analysis of the data. These were specifically designed to align with the purpose of the study, which was to examine the development and implementation of distributed leadership in high schools through the exploration of the characteristics of redesigned work in each school, and their relationship to transition mechanisms, with a special consideration of the characteristics of the national initiative designed to support redesigned work, and the organizational structures functioning as antecedent and moderating variables. The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are the characteristics of the national initiative design, and to what extent do they reflect Mayrowetz et al's conceptualization of redesigned work under distributed leadership reform?

2. How did the performance of leadership functions evolve in the schools over the course of their engagement in work redesign?

3. How has the redesigned work influenced the transition mechanisms for the development of distributed leadership: the meaning that the principal and teachers make of their work, their motivation for work, and their use of learning opportunities to improve their knowledge and skills?

4. How have the existing organizational structures shaped how the school leadership teams in conjunction with the NEI formulated the redesigned work in their schools?

5. How have the existing and new organizational structures moderated the ways principals and teachers undertook redesigned work?

Study Design

Given the exploratory nature of the present inquiry into the development of distributed leadership, this study employed a comparative multiple case study design. A case study design is an appropriate choice for a study when "researchers are interested in insight, discovery, and interpretation, rather than hypothesis testing" (Merriam, 1990, p. 10). This design was suited for this study because of its special features, such as its focus on developing understanding and describing process more than behavioral outcomes (Merriam), its deliberate inclusion of contextual conditions in the study of a phenomenon (Yin, 1994), and its suitability to studies in which the researcher had little control over

key variables (Yin, 2003). Another strength of case study design that is essential for the present study is that it allows for the exploration of a complex phenomenon in its natural setting and of its development along with the variables that are embedded in the dynamics of the context, and that might have an effect on the process being studied (Creswell, 2008; Stake, 1994; Yin, 2003). For this study, three school sites were originally designated for data collection to enable the researcher to provide detailed description of distributed leadership development within defined boundaries of each school, and then follow up by a cross-case analysis to compare, contrast, and analyze themes across schools, thus inferring relational patterns and adding to the understanding of a complex phenomenon under study (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003).

Distributed leadership is a complex phenomenon that has been widely discussed in the literature. The distributed perspective that views leadership as the engagement of collective expertise that exists within the organization challenges the long-standing assumptions about the nature and scope of leadership practice. Spillane and colleagues (2004), who are in the forefront of distributed leadership research and theory, observed that it was difficult to isolate key constructs in an analysis of distributed leadership because the concept involved a web of tasks, situations, and people, as well as reciprocal interactions among them. They underscored the necessity to include school context in the study of distributed leadership, claiming that it was an integral part of distributed leadership practice.

The empirical knowledge base on distributed leadership so far has been largely qualitative in nature, with the majority of studies exploring what it may look like in practice, but with only a few focusing on its implementation and development (Wright,

2008). Since leadership distribution as a strategy for human capacity development holds promise to lead to school improvement (Mayrowetz, 2008), there is a need to develop a better understanding of the process of moving from a long standing, hierarchical conception of leadership within schools to the broader conception of leadership that is distributed across multiple leaders, followers, and situations (Copland, 2003) so as to assist those working with schools to build school capacity for distributed leadership and instructional change.

The present study addressed this need by employing a multiple case exploratory methodology to deepen the understanding of the implementation and development of distributed leadership practice in schools. Yin (2003) recommends this design for studies in which outcomes and relationships are uncertain. This study sought to develop an insight into how schools may function and act differently when putting distributed leadership in place by focusing on three Slovenian high schools that participated in a national professional development intervention. The National Education Institute (NEI) of Slovenia, the main provider of in-service professional development in the area of pre-university education, designed its professional development program (PDP) that was piloted between 2003 and 2007 in ten high schools from across Slovenia to build school capacity for instructional change, and thus promote internally-driven school-wide instructional improvement. The PDP evolved over three years, adapting its content and delivery to the needs of the participating schools, and was implemented within two intertwined projects, the Didactic Reform Project (DRP) and the Implementation of Change Project (ICP). While the DRP, which was designed and implemented first, aimed

at improving instruction, the ICP sought to build school leadership capacity and encourage organizational learning.

Unit of Analysis

The present study employed Mayrowetz et al.'s framework (2007) to study distributed leadership development in three schools included in a national instructional reform initiative, and thus adopted the same normative view of leadership as used in their work. Because the distributed perspective on leadership views systemic school improvement as an organizational shift that requires the skilled and coordinated engagement of all members of the instructional team (Elmore, 2000; Lambert, 2002), the unit of analysis for this study was the school.

Gronn (2002) was the first to propose a new unit of analysis for distributed leadership practice based on a revised conception of leadership. He explained that the distributed perspective entails "implications of a dynamic understanding of the unit of analysis [that] include[s] a view of leadership as less the property of individuals and more as the contextualized outcome of interactive, rather than unidirectional, causal process" (p. 444). Mayrowetz (2008) observed that researchers studying distributed leadership had to "de-center, but not ignore, administrators to investigate leadership at the level of school rather than individual." (p. 426).

Data Collection

Selection of Cases

According to Yin (1994), any use of multiple-case design should follow a replication, and not a sampling logic that is commonly used in surveys. Striving for statistical generalization in which a correctly selected sample readily generalizes to a

larger universe would be incorrect when dealing with case study research. Instead, case studies should rely on analytical generalization whereby the investigator is striving to generalize a particular set of results to some broader theory.

Accordingly, the three cases for this study were selected so as to maximize what could be learned about distributed leadership development in the period of time available for the study, and not to generalize the findings to other similar cases. The present study strived for analytical generalization by attempting to generalize the cross-case study results to Mayrowetz et al.'s theory of distributed leadership development in schools.

The three high schools that were selected for this study represented the entire third cohort of the schools in which the NEI piloted its school capacity building professional development program (PDP). The rationale for selecting the entire third cohort for the proposed study was that (1) multiple cases could increase the certainty of the results and richness of the underlying theoretical propositions; (2) three school sites represented a manageable number for data collection for the proposed study given the limitations of time; (3) the evaluation report on the PDP implementation and results (Rutar Ilc, Rupnik Vec, & Rupar, 2007) revealed contrasting outcomes in the three selected schools, and (4) according to the same evaluation report (2007), the PDP evolved to its optimum quality and efficiency in the third year of the NEI's project.

Three distinct cases were expected to provide different and potentially contrasting perspectives on distributed leadership development, and to enhance the stability and validity of the study (Merriam, 1990; Yin, 2003). All three sites selected for the proposed study were exposed to the same intervention for the same period of time, and were expected to have routinized the innovation in the two years after the completion of

the NEI's Didactic Reform Project when the data for this study was collected. However, while the Project encouraged the same work redesign in each school, this study predicted contrasting results from each case in accordance with Mayrowetz et al.'s model (2007). According to Mayrowetz et al. (2007), individual and organizational factors characteristic of each individual school predict and moderate how distributed leadership work is designed and performed, and determine the performance of leadership functions that in turn influence school improvement.

The three selected schools were small to medium-sized high schools with a student population between 300 and 900; one of the schools was a rural school, and two were suburban schools, located in different parts of Slovenia. All three schools offered two programs that ran in the same building: an academic program called 'gimnazija' that is comparable to a college preparatory track in the United States, and a vocational or technical program that either leads to employment or prepares students for technical colleges. While most of the teachers specialized in core subjects and taught in both programs, the minority that specialized in technical and vocational subjects, taught only in the vocational track.

I first approached the principals of the selected schools via an e-mail message (Appendix A) asking for their permission to do research in their respective schools, and describing the purpose of the study, the nature of questions that I would pose during the interviews, the expected time commitment from the participants selected for the study, the potential benefits for the study participants and school, and my commitment to protect the participants' confidentiality, and minimize the disruption to the normal school operation during my presence in the school. After establishing the initial contact via e-

mail and gaining the permission to enter the sites, I followed up with a phone call prior to each school visit, and then held a separate meeting at the commencement of the study with each school's principal and the members of their faculty that participated in the study, where they were briefed about the purpose of the study, expected time commitment, and the participants' right to withdraw their consent and discontinue their participation at any time. These meetings provided opportunities to establish rapport with the participants of the study, and gave them the chance to reflect on their experience in the project prior to giving their consent to participate.

Data Collection

The proposed study drew from qualitative data that was collected in three high schools that represented the third cohort of the schools that were included in the national pilot project completed in 2007, and from the secondary data collected for a pilot study that I conducted in June 2008. The pilot study used a nested case study approach to examine the NEI's PDP and its role in shaping distributed leadership work in high schools in Slovenia, and the implementation of distributed leadership in one Slovenian high school that participated in the program. The pilot study employed the same model that served as the framework for the present study (Mayrowetz et al., 2007) to frame the construction of the protocols for the pilot study, and the construction of the case. The data collected in the pilot study included an interview with the NEI's program administrators and interviews with the principal, school leadership team, and a focus group of six teachers that were available when I was on site. In addition, I observed three 45-minute classes taught by the teachers who were, according to the principal, more active than their colleagues in implementing instructional change promoted by the NEI's PDP.

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After testing the protocols in the pilot study, I made the following revisions to the pilot-study interview protocols for the present study: (1) mapped the interview questions to the research questions so as to better ensure that all variables in the study were addressed; (2) broke up more complex questions into sub-questions to ensure that the participants had the opportunity to address each part of the question (e.g., instead of asking 'What changes have you noticed in the performance of the leadership functions since the beginning of the project, such as providing and selling a vision, providing encouragement and recognition, obtaining resources, etc., I reframed the question to 'What tasks does the school leadership team (SLT) perform? How did you create vision in your school? Who led the process? Did you contribute to the creation of school vision?'); (3) reworded the questions to include the terminology familiar to the participants, rather than strictly adhere to the wording used in the Mayrowetz et al.'s framework since such questions did not generate rich data in the pilot study (e.g., instead of asking the leadership team 'How did you adapt standard operating procedures in your school?', I posed questions like 'Did you provide support to AR teamwork in terms of time, space, professional and personal support, feedback? If so, describe how?').

After testing the observation protocols in the pilot study, I constructed new observation protocols to generate data about the organization of space in each school, school culture, and relationships in teams rather than focusing on instruction, thus aligning the observations with the interview questions, and increasing the possibility that inferences from what the study participants reported would be consistent with what I would observe. Since triangulation entailed using several and diverse methods of data

collection, I also reviewed relevant documents related to the distributed leadership initiative and its implementation.

Qualitative research methods such as interviews, observations, and review of documents were selected for this study because I did not know a priori what I was going to find in the schools, and because I wanted to generate data rich in detail, and embedded in a context to capture multiple perspectives and interpretations of the phenomenon. Using qualitative data collection instruments allowed me to come in close contact with the individuals and their respective schools, which increased my opportunity to grasp the complexity of human interactions and practices embedded in the school context that are characteristic of distributed leadership practice. Framing the data gathering protocols with Mayrowetz et al.'s (2007) Distributed Leadership as a Work Redesign model ensured that all parts of the model used for this study that provided a framework for the study of distributed leadership development were addressed in the interviews, observations, and document review.

The data were collected using a two-level research design: The first level included the NEI's leadership development program and the extent to which it reflected Mayrowetz et al.'s (2007) conceptualization of redesigned work, as well as the ways in which it introduced and supported distributed leadership development in schools. This level drew from secondary data collected for the pilot study (Sentočnik & Barber, 2008), and from informally gathered data through casual conversations with the NEI's program administrators, teachers and principals at the school sites, and from incidental observations.

The second level included the experiences of the principal and teachers in learning and undertaking the redesigned work at the school level. I collected data during two to three whole-day field site visits per school conducting $60 - 90$ minute interviews each with the principal, school leadership team, and a focus group of 6-8 teachers that were not part of the school leadership team but were active in AR teams. In addition, I drew on observations of school sites and participant interactions during field visits to each school, and on the examination of relevant documentation. Finally, I also wrote detailed research notes and reflections after each interview, observation, and document analysis to reflect on those experiences and document personal impressions.

Multiple data for the current study that were collected from the interviews, direct observations, and documentation were expected to increase the reliability of the gathered data and confirm the validity of the process of data gathering (Yin, 1994). The study employed the triangulation of multiple data selection methods and sources of evidence to ensure construct validity.

Using Mayrowetz et al.'s (2007) model, which is very complex, to frame data collection protocols generated extensive data, rich in detail, which led to the production of three very long and complex case reports. Given the complexity of the phenomenon of distributed leadership that is the focus of this study, and bearing in mind that "overreducing data can obscure understanding" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 100), I ultimately decided to present the findings in the form of two (instead of three) cases – the best and the worst – rather than attempting to shorten the cases and thus risking to lose potentially important details for understanding distributed leadership development. While the analysis of the case that was ultimately omitted from the present study showed that it

could have provided some added insight into the role of micropolitics as the antecedent

and moderator of distributed leadership development, in all other respects distributed

leadership development in the third school bore very strong resemblance to one of the

other two cases included in the present study. Given that micropolitics was not the focus

of the present study, I decided to present two instead of three cases for the sake of

avoiding data overload, and to ensure focus and coherence in the narrative.

Interviews

I as the researcher was the primary data collection instrument (Merriam, 1990). I

used semi-structured interviews to collect data from three data sources during two to

three full-day field site visits per school: the school principal, the school leadership team,

and a group of six to eight teachers. The length of the interviews ranged from 60 – 90

minutes. I developed a protocol for each interview, and used the same protocols across

three schools to ensure reliability of the data collection method. I employed Mayrowetz et

al.'s model (2007) to frame this study to guide my preparation of the interview questions,

and built on the findings from my prior pilot study in which I pilot-tested the interview

questions that led to revisions of this study's protocols.

The interviews were audio recorded, transcribed in Slovenian, and then translated

into English. A native Slovene speaker transcribed verbatim the collected data, which I

then translated into English since I am fluent in both my native Slovene and in English.

Following Guest and MacQueen's (2008) observation that the back-translation of a

written transcript of an oral communication increases the researcher's distance from the

original data, given the complex nuances of spoken language (as captured on audio

recording), I refrained from back-translation.

The role of the researcher as both interviewer and translator helped reduce the risk of losing the original meaning of the interviews. To avoid bias that could occur with the researcher as the translator, this study employed the participant check of the translated transcripts to ensure the reliability of gathered data. Since all the respondents mastered English at least at an intermediate level, they were capable of reviewing the transcripts in English language to make sure that they reflected their recollections. I was mindful, especially when analyzing informally gathered data, not to cite anything that could have violated confidentiality or privacy or have been potentially damaging to anyone included in the study.

While I avoided using leading questions in the interviews to lessen my influence on the interviewees' replies, I was aware that eliminating my influence was impossible, and that it was more important to understand how I might influence the interviewees' responses, and how this may have affected the validity of inferences I drew from the interviews (Maxwell, 2005) than trying to eliminate my bias.

Principal interviews. The principal interviews targeted the questions such as the principal's role in various stages of the NEI's project implementation, the principal's role in the school development team, her/his perception of the development of redesigned work and its influence on her/his motivation, learning, and sensemaking, her/his understanding of the role of the school development team and team performance of leadership tasks, and her/his understanding and support of the AR teamwork (e.g., Has your role changed since the beginning of the project? If so, how? What did leadership work mean to you before the project? Has this changed during the project? How did you develop personally and professionally? To what do you attribute the changes that you

have observed in yourself and in your work? In what ways, if at all, has the school development team been helpful to you?).

In one of the schools that had a new principal that took the position after the NEI's project ended, I also conducted a 60-minute interview with the past principal in addition to a 60-minute interview with the current principal, to ensure the comparability of gathered data across schools.

School development team interviews. The school development team focus-group interviews targeted the questions such as the formulation and implementation of redesigned work in the team, new relationships in the school development and action research teams, and new patterns of control at the school level (e.g., How was the school development team formed initially? Has the membership changed? What has been the responsibility of the team? What roles do members of the team play? How often do you have meetings? Has this changed over time? Who plans the meetings? What do you discuss at the meetings? Are people open to each others' ideas? How are the work and responsibilities distributed among the members? How would you describe the relationships in the team?). I ensured the participation of all the team members in the interviews; in addition to 18 subjects planned, 15 teachers and three principals, I included two additional past school development team members in the interview in one school on the team leader's request.

Teacher interviews. The teachers for the interview were selected by the principal of each school from among the teachers that were available during my presence in school using the following criteria: (1) they should not have served on the school leadership

team; (2) they had to be actively involved in action research groups during the implementation of the NEI's intervention.

The teacher focus-group interview targeted questions such as their perceptions of the redesigned work and its effect on transition mechanisms, their perception of action research teamwork, its purpose and usefulness for their teaching practice, changed role of teachers and principal, and changed leadership practice in their school (e.g., What was the purpose of action research teams? How were they formed? Is teamwork still strong in your school? When do you meet to work in teams? Do you have special time planned for these meetings? What does the school leadership team do? What is the role of the principal?). I planned to recruit 18 to 24 teachers, 6 to 8 per school, and the total number of interview participants was 21.

Interview with NEI's administrators. Because I did not need additional information about the NEI's professional development program and its implementation, I used the information collected from four NEI's project administrators in a 90-minute focus group interview, effected during the previous pilot study, and also from my informal conversations with them after the conclusion of the pilot phase of the Didactic Reform Project.

Direct Observations

Observational evidence was collected throughout field visits to each school during which interviews were conducted. I followed a single observational protocol across the schools to ensure the validity of observational evidence. Observations of the condition of buildings and work spaces provided data about the climate of each school, and enabled inferences about the extent to which the conditions in each school seemed conducive to

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teacher collaboration in their performance of redesigned work. Observations of the participant behavior (including verbal behavior) during the interviews revealed the nature of relationships among teachers and between formal and informal leaders, and provided clues for better understanding of individual and collective perspective on distributed leadership. Taking into account Yin's (1994) warning that the inferences from observation "should be treated only as clues worthy of further investigation rather than as definitive findings, because the inferences could later turn out to be false leads" (p. 81), I corroborated the information from direct observations with interview data so as to avoid misinterpretation.

Documentation

The present study examined the development of distributed leadership in three high schools that was encouraged and supported by the national pilot project. To examine the demographics of each school and its improvement efforts, as well as the characteristics of the NEI's project implementation, I examined such documentation as school demographic information, general student success in 'matura' exam since 2003, school improvement plans since the beginning of the inclusion of the third cohort in the NEI's project in 2005 to December 2009, strategic plan documents (action plans) in 2009-2010, fall 2009 school development team meeting agendas and minutes, 2009 project evaluation reports, wall charts, announcements, and working papers. To make inferences about communications and interactions within each school, I reviewed documents such as the correspondence between the leadership team and the staff, and agendas and minutes of the leadership and action research teams' meetings in 2009. Since Yin (1994) warns against over-reliance on documentary evidence since it represents the

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main threat to internal validity, I used the documents in conjunction with other data

sources to avoid false inferences, and interpreted their contents critically, taking into

account the context in which they were prepared.

<div align="center">Data Analysis</div>

I employed a framework designed by Miles and Huberman (1994) for analyzing

the full data set, collected for this study, including the interview transcripts, observation

notes, documentation data, and my research notes. I utilized the following three

concurrent flows of activity that Miles and Huberman recommend in their qualitative

analysis framework: (1) *data reduction* that refers to the process of selecting, focusing,

abstracting and transforming the data that appear in written-up field notes and

transcriptions (p.10); (2) *data display* that they define as "an organized, compressed

assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action" (p. 11), and (3)

conclusion drawing that refers to noting regularities, patterns, explanations, possible

configurations, causal flows and propositions, while maintaining openness and

skepticism, and *verification* that refers to continuously testing the meaning emerging

from the data for their plausibility and sturdiness by rechecking field notes and interview

transcripts, and possibly by using argumentation and review among colleagues.

In the first step of the analysis, I examined the pilot study interview transcripts,

observation data, research notes, and documentation (the NEI's professional development

offerings in 2003 – 2004; 2004 – 2005; 2005 – 2006, and 2006 – 2007) to identify core

elements in the NEI's professional development program. I then compared the findings

about the program, derived from the interview and observation data in conjunction with

the evidence from the documentation, with Mayrowetz et al.'s model (2007) to determine

the degree to which the NEI's professional development program reflected Mayrowetz's conceptualization of redesigned work under DL reform.

The next step was to analyze all relevant evidence gathered at each school site to determine the nature of distributed leadership development at the level of individual school. The gathered data included transcribed interviews, observation notes, research notes and school artifacts that were requested of the respondents as evidence that distributed leadership was practiced in the school. Artifacts that included school action plans, meeting agendas and leadership meeting minutes, wall charts and announcements, were analyzed by the degree to which they promoted distributed leadership practice in the school.

Starting with the data reduction process, I initially coded all the gathered data by hand, utilizing basic or descriptive coding (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Being explicitly mindful of the purpose of this study while allowing myself to be open to things I did not expect to find, I wrote marginal remarks while scanning the data gathered from three sites in a form of meaningful phrases as codes, such as *time constraints*, *bureaucratic (form-filling) tasks*, *leadership functions*, *sense of purpose/loss of purpose, climate, teacher resistance, work overload, etc.,* to attach meaning to the data.

After the descriptive coding, I further analyzed the data through advanced coding (Punch, 1998) to draw deeper inferential meaning as it pertained to distributed leadership practice in schools. Using inferences from the data, I defined pattern codes (1998), which I then categorized and compared to the categories and subcategories of Mayrowetz et al.'s (2007) model that served as the theoretical proposition (Yin, 1994) for this study, to see whether and where they fit. I then grouped the codes into a smaller number of themes

or constructs by pulling together interrelated constructs into more meaningful and parsimonious "meta-codes" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 69). Then I went back to my research questions to remind myself of what was important, and reviewed the codes – accepting or rejecting them – according to their explanatory power. Using highlighters, I then connected the quotes from the text of the interviews, and descriptions from observation notes and artifacts, with the themes, and then looked at the relationships among themes across the data sources.

I then used Mayrowetz et al.'s frame (2007) for segmenting the data from three data sets into the following themes, using the codes as sub-categories to those themes: (1) *redesigned work* that included the subthemes *development of knowledge and skills, task significance, task identity, assuming leadership roles, balancing autonomy and interdependence,* and *feedback*; (2) *antecedents and moderators* with the sub-elements *hierarchy, departmental structure, relationships, school culture, curriculum, schedules, routines and external requirements, school development team structure,* and *action research team structure*; (3) *transition mechanisms* with the subthemes *making sense of redesigned work, motivation*, and *learning*; and (4) *leadership functions* that included the subthemes *providing and selling a vision*, *providing encouragement and recognition, adapting standard operating procedures, monitoring improvement, working with resistance, planning redesigned work*, and *buffering the faculty from outside interference*.

Once descriptive and inferential coding was complete, I displayed the data in a visual format (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Using a matrix for each case helped me organize information into a compact form that enabled me to sum up the events, the behavior of people in different roles in the process of distributed leadership

implementation and development in each school, and contextual conditions in each school, pertinent to the phenomenon of distributed leadership. The coherently arranged displays permitted noting trends, patterns, and relations between variables, and thus facilitated the arrangement of coherent within-case information.

Vertical analysis of each case aimed at building explanation about the phenomenon under study in a narrative form (Yin, 1994). While following the theoretical proposition (Mayrowetz et al.'s framework, 2007), I also examined all the relevant evidence from each case, including the opposing views on the phenomenon under study, thus allowing for other plausible or rival explanations (Yin). I avoided making unfounded conclusions by frequently consulting the case study database, and making sure to follow the chain of evidence from each case. Using a common reporting format for all the cases helped me construct parallel, systematically arranged cases.

The next step was looking across the cases to deepen the understanding and explanation of the phenomenon under study, and strengthen the theoretical proposition that the study followed (Miles & Huberman, 1994). I used the horizontal cross-case analysis to compare the themes and relationships among them across the two cases so as to surface similarities and differences in the processes of distributed leadership development and implementation in two school sites that were included in the same professional development training over the same period of time. The horizontal analysis also provided an opportunity to examine how various individual and organizational factors shaped the design and moderated the performance of redesigned work that laid different groundwork for more or less successfully distributed performance of leadership

functions. The conclusions drawn from the two cases became the conclusions for the overall study.

Although the evidence that these two case studies generated was suggestive rather than conclusive, the cross-case analysis of the findings revealed patterns of distributed leadership practice development, and provided insights that have the potential of leveraging the improvement of school leadership.

Validity

With the purpose of ensuring the accuracy of the collected data and validity of the conclusions, I identified and then attempted to minimize the validity threats to my study. In the following sections, I describe each threat and then present the strategies I used to eliminate or minimize those concerns.

Researcher Bias and Reactivity

As a previous NEI employee of 12 years, I was involved in designing the professional development program presented in this study, especially the part that addressed leadership capacity building in schools, which posed both substantial risk of bias and distortion of the data, and a unique opportunity for me as the researcher to acquire a deeper understanding of distributed leadership development than a complete outsider. Although I was aware of my researcher bias, I also knew that attempting to exclude personal values and expectations from the research design was neither possible nor necessary (Maxwell, 2005). What was necessary was to be aware of specific validity threats, and to apply the strategies to identify and minimize their influence on the interpretations and conclusion of the study (Maxwell). Recognizing that my personal bias, derived from my close connection with the NEI in the past, may have distorted my

understanding of the phenomenon central to this study, I took the following precautions to rule out researcher bias: (1) triangulated multiple sources of data collected from interviews, informal conversations, primary and secondary documents, observations, and detailed field notes to acquire a more complete and accurate account than by using data obtained from only one source; (2) selected the school sites with varied outcomes, and thus looked for evidence that challenged my expectations and conclusions; (3) used a digital device to record the interviews, and employed a native Slovene speaker to transcribe them verbatim, thus avoiding the danger of making notes only on what was significant for me as the researcher, and (4) took detailed, descriptive notes during, as well as immediately after, observations.

Reactivity, or the influence of the researcher on the setting or individuals and groups studied, was also of concern while conducting interviews (Maxwell, 2005). While I distanced myself physically and psychologically from the immediate context when I left Slovenia in 2005, and stopped working with the schools, I nevertheless kept high expectations for the successful implementation of the program that I helped conceive. Being aware of my expectations, I made every effort to avoid leading questions in the interviews, remain open-minded and non-judgmental.

Descriptive Validity

In interview studies, descriptive validity refers to the accuracy and richness of gathered data that provide "a rich, detailed grounding for, and test of, the conclusions" (Maxwell, 2005, p. 111). To avoid gathering only the data that supported my expectations, I prepared and used interview and observation protocols. I recorded each interview, hired a reliable person to write down verbatim transcriptions of the recordings,

and then I translated those transcriptions into straightforward English. I also took detailed, descriptive notes of what I observed in the schools.

Interpretative Validity

To avoid subjective analysis of the data and ensure accuracy in understanding and reporting the participants' viewpoints, thoughts, and experiences (Maxwell, 2005), I conducted member checks after translating each set of interviews, and discussed my arguments and conclusions with my committee chair.

Theoretical Validity

Theoretical validity requires consideration of alternative explanations or understandings of the phenomenon under study (Maxwell, 2005). This requirement is particularly relevant for distributed leadership, which lacks conceptual clarity. I reviewed all available theoretical literature on distributed leadership, as well as significant doctoral dissertations that investigated distributed leadership development. I also discussed various opinions and understandings of the concept with my dissertation chair and professors at the Clark Scholar seminar, keeping an open mind to various interpretations.

Limitations of the Study

This study utilized a multiple comparative case study research design that was based on two- to three-day observations of each school site and interactions in school teams, review of relevant documents, and the principals' and teachers' self-reports about distributed leadership development at their schools. While a longitudinal study would be ideal for the purpose of this research since it would provide data on cumulative effects of the external intervention on distributed leadership development, data collection for the present study was limited to one data point during the fall of 2009 due to the restrictions

in time and scope. Consequently, this study had access only to snapshots of distributed

leadership development in two high schools, and relied heavily on the respondents'

recollections of distributed leadership development processes. The present study assumed

that the respondents not only possessed the knowledge to respond accurately to the

questions posed during the interviews but that they also provided truthful answers.

CHAPTER FOUR

EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN SLOVENIA,

POLITICAL TRANSITION AND EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

The Historical Background

As a former socialist country located in Central Europe, Slovenia offers an

interesting context for studying the development of distributed leadership in schools.

Slovenia was one of the eight federal units of the Socialist Federal Republic of

Yugoslavia, previously the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, until 1991 when the country

proclaimed its independence and was established as the sovereign state for the first time

in the history of the Slovenian nation. Slovenia exhibited strong national identity and

national autonomy within the kingdom, and later within the Yugoslav federation, having

its own official language and culture, as well as rapidly developing a robust economy,

which contributed to its smooth road to independence.

After the disintegration of Yugoslavia, Slovenia transitioned to a pluralistic

democracy, emerging as one of the most successful and prosperous of the formerly

communist countries that have joined the European Union since 2000. Its smooth

transition to pluralistic democracy is probably due to a number of reasons connected to

the country's past. Among the important reasons is that as part of Yugoslavia, which

broke the alliance with the Soviet Union early on, and practiced a more decentralized form of communism than other Central and East European countries behind the "Iron Curtain," Slovenia was the wealthiest, most economically developed, and socially evolved republic (Hladnik, 2000). Situated in the north of former Yugoslavia, Slovenia had the highest proportion of its population employed in industry, and the highest value of exports per capita (Albrecht, 1999). Slovenia also boasted Europe's second-highest literacy rate in the 1980s. Bordering Austria and Italy, it had absorbed much from Western political and economic thought. Even before the disintegration of Yugoslavia, civil society in Slovenia was active in promoting democracy, tolerance, and human rights.

Political Transition and Educational Change in Slovenia

Educational change in Slovenia began prior to its political transition and was initiated by the educational reform in former Yugoslavia in 1970s. The basic idea of the reform was to improve the connection between school and work, which led to the abolishment of the traditional academic upper secondary schools 'gimnazije', and their replacement with the so called "career oriented education." During the process of drafting a new common core national curriculum, the centralist government in Yugoslavia demanded stronger harmonization of mother tongue, literature and history in what was an extremely diverse and multi-ethnic federation, which provoked fierce opposition across the states. In Slovenia, this was an imperative for the revival of civil society and gradual democratization leading toward the independence of the country (Zgaga, 2003). Even before its independence, Slovenia re-established the 'gimnazije', re-introduced the school-leaving 'matura' exam, and substituted the subject self-management and

Marxism, which was prescribed by the common-core Yugoslav curriculum, with sociology and civic culture.

After independence, a progressive, step-by-step approach allowed sufficient time for a broad national debate and a thorough review of comparative research findings, which served as the basis for shaping the direction of change (Gaber, 2003). After two years of national consultation, [1]the Ministry of Education and Sport appointed a group of experts that prepared the basic strategy paper called *White Paper on Education in Republic of Slovenia* (Krek, 1995), which set out the principles and values of human rights pertaining to education and liberal democratic values (e.g., the rule of law, democracy, autonomy, equal opportunity). The conceptual reform framework and the educational legislation that followed in 1996 were democratically adopted by the majority vote in the Parliament; however, the discussions, originating from different value priorities within the liberal democratic tradition, continued after the adoption of the legislation. Three phases of extensive reform of pre-university education followed: in the first, the legal foundation for overhauling the entire structure of educational system was provided, in the second, the appointed curricular committees for different levels of schooling, subject committees and subcommittees of professionals and practitioners of every subject taught in elementary and secondary school formulated new curricula through a democratic process. In addition, a new assessment and evaluation system was established with national tests for third and six graders, and graduation exam at the end of elementary school (ninth grade), and secondary school (fourth grade), that later substituted the previous university entrance exams. In the third phase, major changes in

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[1] The Ministry of Education and Sport is the main policy making body with an overall responsibility for and control of the entire school system in Slovenia.

elementary education were implemented gradually, starting with thirty schools that volunteered, and then adding schools each year until all the elementary schools started to work in a new way in 2003. The major changes were: (1) a compulsory nine-year education starting at the age of six (previously at the age of seven); (2) new curricula for all subjects and grades; (3) structural changes, such as early groupings for instructional purposes, two teachers in early grades (nursery and regular) team teaching; (4) the integration of students with special needs into regular classrooms.

Critics of the reform warned (Plut-Pregelj, 2006) that the implemented solutions, like for instance early differentiation of curriculum, ability grouping, and a strong emphasis on testing, were not in line with the principles of justice or the principle of respecting students' diversity and developmental characteristics, stated in the *White Paper* (Krek, 1995). In addition, the evaluation studies (Slivar, 2000) showed that the prevailing frontal instruction , dictated by separate disciplines, led to departmentalized curricula and shallow learning without understanding. Although the *Guidelines for Curriculum Reform* ("Smernice kurikularne prenove ", 1996) indicated that these issues were supposed to be addressed by the curriculum reform, research showed (Marentič-Požarnik, 1998) that the reformed curricula exhibited a positivistic and narrowly specialized instead of interdisciplinary approach, with information overload and teacher-centered instruction. Ample state regulations created tensions and moral conflicts in teachers instead of helping them solve their daily problems in productive ways (Plut-Pregelj, 2006). Examples of such tensions and conflicts are: the drive for accountability measured by test results versus the need for professional autonomy; the demand for summative assessment and external evaluation against the value of formative assessment

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and self-evaluation; imbalance between traditional subject disciplines (and subject testing) and cross-curricular learning.

<center>The Role of Principal in Educational Change</center>

In the centrally controlled education system of former Yugoslavia, the role of principals was that of middle managers who enforced decisions made by the state in their schools. As such, school principals were appointed to their positions without any specific requirement for training, and they acted according to the best of their abilities to ensure the smooth operation of their schools. Although the former Yugoslav system of self-management created a decentralized public administration framework, school governance remained hierarchical, with the principal at the apex. While principals were expected to act based on collective decision making, in reality teachers did not have much say, and principals – though central figures in school had limited authority since they were expected to enact the decisions made at the state level (Velikonja, 1989).

The principal's role and responsibilities were first broadly defined by legislation in the late 1970s, making them responsible for managerial, financial, and pedagogical tasks. In addition to controlling and supervising the program's building and planning, ensuring its implementation, and managing and overseeing the budget, principals were also expected to perform pedagogical functions such as supervising teachers, providing them with assistance and support, and evaluating their work. In reality, most principals avoided pedagogical tasks because they lacked the necessary knowledge and skills (Velikonja, 1989).

With the transition to independence and democracy in Slovenia, and membership to the EU in 2004, the Slovenian education system decentralized, and individual schools

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gained more power and autonomy to make decisions about their own development. The role of principal has become broader and more complex. Legislation from 1996 explicated the role of principal as a pedagogical leader, making principals responsible for defining school missions and visions, preparing annual programs, implementing the curriculum, overseeing instruction quality, and creating a climate conducive to high-quality teaching and learning (Uradni list RS, 1996). All these duties and responsibilities were assigned to principals on top of their growing managerial and financial responsibilities.

Although principals aspire to fulfill all of these responsibilities, research has shown that these pedagogical goals become lost in their day-to-day preoccupation with administrative tasks (Koren & Logaj, 2007). When asked about their work, many principals admit that they do not have time to fulfill all their responsibilities. At the expense of their pedagogical responsibilities, they consider managerial and financial tasks their priorities. While most of them blame the lack of time for their negligence of pedagogical tasks, others admit that they have insufficient knowledge and skills to oversee teachers' pedagogical work (Koren, 2007; Rupar, 2008).

Leadership Preparation in the National School for Leadership in Education

Based on the recognition that aspiring and practicing school principals need specific preparation, the Slovenian Ministry of Education and Sport established the National School for Leadership in Education (NSLE) in 1995, providing a training program for principals for the first time. It should be noted that formal training for school leadership has been relatively rare outside of the United States, and that Slovenia is among the early developers of leadership training in comparison with not only

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developing countries, but also developed countries. England, Australia, China, and many other countries used the traditional apprenticeship model where future school leaders moved up the ranks from classroom teachers to heads of departments to school principals well into the 20th century (Su, Gamage, & Mininberg, 2003). England was the first among these countries to start running a national qualification program for principals in 1997, with Australia following the British model soon after (Bush, 2002). Thanks to the Slovenian government, which recognized the need for principal preparation early on, the NSLE's leadership program is well established, offering a mandatory certification program for aspiring principals, mentoring programs for newly appointed principals, and in-service training programs for practicing principals (Erčulj & Peček, 2008).

A closer look at the NSLE's certification program for aspiring principals nevertheless reveals that it places the main weight, demonstrated on a five-point scale, on content such as human resources management (5), organizational development (4), and legal issues (3), pedagogical leadership (2), and change management (1) receive the least amount of time and attention (Erčulj & Peček, 2008). The mentoring program offered since 2003 organizes principals into networks, with more experienced principals offering advice to new school leaders during their first year of appointment. The non-mandatory in-service training program for practicing principals consists of annual conferences with presenters from the field of educational administration, international activities (e.g., institutional cooperation and projects) and lately the networks of learning schools that stimulates the exchange of good practice among schoolteachers from different institutions (Erčulj & Peček).

The NSLE's focus on preparing aspiring principals predominantly for their managerial work may appear sensible in view of the present demands. Especially principals of public high schools often remark that in recent years, their role has become more managerial and less devoted to pedagogical leadership (Lorenčič, 2006). Due to the increased influence of external stakeholders and greater autonomy of individual schools to design their programs according to demand, principals spend a lot of time acquiring the financial resources for extracurricular programs that distinguish them from other schools and can make them more attractive to potential customers. However, the NSLE's managerial orientation can also have a damaging effect. By narrowing the principal's role to the performance of managerial tasks, the NSLE presents an obstacle to the understanding and implementation of successful leadership practice for change that should be the result of the interdependent work of multiple individuals, rather than the agency and individual actions of the principal alone (Gronn, 2002; Spillane, et al., 2004). Because the NSLE's programs are predominantly intended only for the training of principals, the NSLE neglects potential sources of teacher leadership in schools.

The National Education Institute's Reform Initiative

The National Education Institute (NEI) of Slovenia, the main provider of in-service professional development for pre-university educators, launched a four-year instructional reform pilot project in the fall of 2003. The professional development program (PDP), designed by a team of the NEI's experts with a general goal to build school capacity for instructional change, was piloted in ten high schools that joined the project in three subsequent cohorts. The NEI selected the pilot schools by the region, and by the schools' reputation of having the principal and the faculty that were open to

change and collaboration with the NEI. The NEI set the condition that the principal had to gain a majority consensus from their faculty to be actively involved in the project. The pilot project concluded in the fall of 2008 when the state-wide implementation of high school reform began.

The PDP was implemented within two intertwined projects, the Didactic Reform Project (DRP) and the Implementation of Change Project (ICP). The DRP was initiated to develop the capacity of teachers for creating the environment that will ensure effective student learning toward high quality knowledge acquisition and development of their independent and creative minds (Rutar Ilc, et al., 2007). While the DRP focused on instructional change, the ICP, which was designed while the DRP was already being implemented, focused on three goals: (1) building school leadership capacity; (2) building a climate conducive to organizational learning; and (3) supporting teachers in systematic research of their practice to drive their decision making about instructional change, and enable them to take ownership of change (Rupnik Vec & Rupar, 2006).

The National Education Institute's Professional Development Program

The National Education Institute of Slovenia designed its professional development program, intended to support high schools in implementing instructional change, with a different perspective of leadership. The main goal of the PDP piloted between 2003 and 2006 in ten high schools across Slovenia was to build school capacity for instructional change, and thus promote internally driven schoolwide instructional improvement. Because after a year of intensive teacher training, the proposed instructional change did not take root, another project called The Implementation of Change Project (ICP) was designed with the aim of building school leadership capacity

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and encouraging organizational learning. The ICP encouraged the establishment of leadership teams in pilot schools, as well as action research teams of teachers, with the purpose of fostering teacher ownership of didactic innovation, promoted by the NEI's experts through the ongoing school-wide and small-group training. While the schools had been familiar with teamwork in the form of in-school and between-school study groups of teachers of the same subjects, the new structures of leadership teams and action research teams initiated new vertical and horizontal relationships among teachers of different subjects within and among schools. By establishing and fostering communication within and among teams, and by including teachers in the decision making about the school, leadership teams were expected to plant the seeds of systems thinking in their schools.

While the NEI's work did not explicitly grow out of the literature on distributed leadership, their design for reform demonstrates their understanding that (1) the responsibility for school improvement needs to be shared and owned by teachers, rather than owned solely by the principal at the top of the organizational hierarchy; (2) the capacity to lead is not something that only principals need to develop but has to be developed in teachers as well; (3) the capacity to change instruction cannot develop by transmission of knowledge and skills, but requires engaging teachers in collaborative inquiry of their own practice, and supporting their learning needs, identified in the process of inquiry, on an on-going basis; (4) cultural change has to develop through individual and collective engagement in vision building process, and regular professional dialogue about the progress toward common goals; (5) new structures have to be

established to promote broader involvement of the faculty in planning the internal school reform and decision making related to instructional change and improvement.

Although they relied on Western school reform ideas (Frost, et al., 2000; Fullan, 1996, 2001; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996; Kotter, 1995; Senge, et al., 2000), the NEI's experts, who designed the model and implemented the training, were mindful not to adopt Western models uncritically in the Slovenian post-Socialist society. For instance, to avoid making the teachers, who became members of school leadership teams, feel reluctant in front of their colleagues, they followed their suggestion and soon changed the name school leadership team into school development team, which was intended for eliminating the danger of teachers perceiving the team as an elitist group. The NEI included the schools and their ideas in the preparation of an elaborate professional support system to the schools to build their broad leadership capacity, and the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes for carrying out and evaluating their instructional change efforts.

Implementation of the PDP in the First Cohort

The training provided to the first cohort of four pilot schools was based on a top-down initiative from the NEI, and focused on the improvement of the didactic aspects of teachers' work. Once they initiated the instructional reform top down, the NEI's experts invited the schools into a partnership to pilot the proposed change, acknowledging that they did not have all the answers. After presenting the project goals to schools and inviting their input about their expectations from the project, the NEI provided the schools in the first cohort with three whole-day on-site seminars for the full faculty on conceptions of knowledge, teaching and learning, backward design of unit planning, and

descriptive criteria design for assessing student understanding. After the seminar, the faculties broke into smaller groups by departments for a workshop with the NEI's subject-specific advisors who helped them apply the theory to practice. The same advisors were then available to the teacher groups for advice over e-mail, and they also met with the teachers in groups by subject from all four schools in the first cohort on an on-going basis (at least once a month) to assist them with planning instructional units, aligning instructional objectives to taxonomies, and facilitating collegial classroom observations of the newly planned instructional units with post-observation analysis against the project goals. At the end of the school year, the four pilot schools were invited to present their experience with teaching the newly planned instructional units and the examples of best practices to each other.

The innovation that the project introduced in the first year was the on-site professional training for full faculties, the on-going close collaboration between the NEI's subject specific experts and groups of teachers of the same subject, and the networking of the pilot schools' faculties in the final festival of best practices at the end of school year.

The ICP was in the infancy stage in the first cohort because the NEI had much more experience and knowledge on didactic reform than on school capacity building. In addition, the NEI's experts that held formal power did not consider school capacity building and change implementation to be an important part of instructional reform because they believed that the teachers would do as they were told once they learned how. Nevertheless, a team of four advisors encouraged the principals in the respective pilot schools to form leadership teams, consisting of four teachers and organized monthly

meetings with these teams. While the inclusion of the principal in the team was

obligatory, they did not have to assume the leadership of the team if they chose not to.

The leadership teams served as a liaison with the NEI, and as change agents for their

faculties.

Each meeting with the leadership teams from four schools that was organized at

the NEI's headquarters started with the teams reporting about the development of didactic

change in their schools, followed by a theoretical input and a workshop led by the ICP

team on different leadership capacity building topics, such as the roles and

responsibilities of school leadership team, group dynamics, stages of change

implementation, strategies for dealing with resistance and for monitoring improvement

efforts, and annual school schedule planning to ensure the inclusion of teachers in out-

of- classroom tasks. The principle of work that the ICP team used was learning through

inquiry and reflecting upon the learning process in order to model to the team members

how they should work with their respective faculties once back at their schools.

In addition to the school leadership team meetings, the ICP team also organized

two meetings for the school principals from all cohorts to enable exchange of experience,

provide theoretical input on the new principal role, and allow for a group discussion.

Implementation of the PDP in the Second Cohort

On the basis of the evaluation and feedback received from the schools in the first

cohort, the NEI adapted the strategy of work with the schools in the second cohort.

Instead of offering ready-made didactic workshops, which the schools perceived as

overwhelming, the NEI invited the teachers from the schools in the second cohort to

identify problems related to instruction that they wanted to research, and form action

research teams around the identified problems. The ICP experts supported the action research teams in their inquiry into the identified problems and in the development of the strategies for solving them in a systematic way. The NEI then provided the faculties with the same school-based didactic seminars (reducing them to two instead of three) as in the first cohort followed by individualized work of subject advisers with groups of teachers of the same subject. On the initiative from the schools, the NEI followed up with additional seminars on motivation and communication that were offered to the first cohort in their second year of work in the project. The school year ended with a two-day festival of best practices during which the school leadership teams – which started to be called the school development teams (SDT) in the second cohort – from both cohorts presented their development work, and the NEI presented the project evaluation results and the input for the following year's work in the project.

The ICP's work intensified with the second cohort schools. While they still organized five meetings per year for the school development teams to monitor the development process in each of the respective schools and enable their exchange of experience (the teams had to report at the beginning of each meeting), they also provided them with professional development on the leadership topics similar to those in the first cohort, plus organized two two-day professional retreats on the topics of action research and school vision building. In addition, each ICP team member also assumed a role of a coach responsible to assist the SDT in one of the schools in annual planning, data gathering and analysis, and work with the faculty. They also organized separate meetings for the principals to encourage networking among the principals from both cohorts.

The ICP was considered a sub-project of minor importance in the first year based on the belief of the NEI's administration that the teachers in pilot schools will change their instructional practice once the NEI's experts teach them how. Consequently, they viewed the capacity building part provided by the ICP as just an addition to the didactic training that was considered essential for the reform. While their mental models started to shift when the evaluation showed hardly any changes in the first cohort schools' instructional practices after a whole year of training, the DRP and ICP nevertheless did not manage to balance the two projects to provide more coherent training to the schools in the second cohort. As a result, the teachers could not relate their work in action research teams with the didactic training provided to them, and thus experienced the latter as an addition to their action research work, and as such too overwhelming. On the other hand, the school development teams functioned better than in the first cohort due to intensified leadership capacity building and support from the NEI, and they were also better at defining the role of the SDT. In the second cohort, the SDT members worked as the leaders of action research teams, which opened up the communication channels, and presented an opportunity for them to establish themselves as competent teachers and leaders.

Implementation of the PDP in the Third Cohort

On the basis of the evaluation data, the NEI again adapted the strategy of work with the schools in the third cohort. While keeping the action research teams, the full faculty professional development was designed to serve the needs of the teachers better. Instead of offering the same set of didactic seminars and workshops, school development teams received a list of the NEI's workshops, and they could choose from the list after

discussing the needs with their faculty, and connecting them back to the instructional

problems identified in action research teams. The NEI thus worked collaboratively with

the schools on improvement of their program, focusing their training to the individual

school's needs, and taking into account their different pace of development, which was

not the case in previous cohorts. Didactic workshops were implemented only on request

from schools. The same as in the second cohort, each school was provided with a coach

who assisted SDTs in the implementation of leadership tasks such as vision building,

collecting evaluation data and preparing the evaluation report, facilitating teacher action

research, dealing with resistance, and providing encouragement. The ICP team organized

monthly meetings for the third cohort SDTs, plus three professional retreats during which

the coaches modeled an enquiry process for the SDT members with the aim of providing

them with experiential learning experience that they were then expected to implement

with their faculties. The ICP also organized two meetings for the principals from all three

cohorts. In addition, they extended the Festival of Best Practices that was organized at

the end of school year to a two-day retreat, and invited the SDTs and teachers from all

three cohorts to present their development work to each other.

In the third year, the NEI's professional development program thus evolved to

promote the growth at different levels of school operation: at the level of full faculty,

school teams, departments, and individuals in a more balanced and mutually supportive

manner than in the previous cohorts. By taking into account differences among schools,

the systems of pressure and support that the NEI employed to encourage change

implementation became more integrated. In addition, by leaving plenty of room for

autonomous decision-making to the schools, the NEI empowered them for taking

ownership of change.

Table 1: Comparison of First Year Implementation of PDP Among the Cohorts

	CONTENT OF NEI'S PDP	FIRST COHORT	SECOND COHORT	THIRD COHORT
FULL FACULTY	**Examination of Need**	**August:** Two NEI's Experts present the goals of the DRP and the NEI's expectations. Then they invite the faculty to identify their school's needs, and analyses their readiness for change.	**August:** School Coach and Head of NEI's Regional Unit present the DRP's goals and big picture, and the NEI's expectations. Then they conduct a workshop on quality indicators of school development and invite the faculty to identify their development needs. Discussion of school's readiness for change follows.	**August:** School Coach and Head of NEI's Regional Unit present the DRP's go and big picture, and the NEI's expectations. Then they conduct a workshop on school quality indicat and invite the faculty to complete a questionnaire on school climate tha serves for their discussion about the school's readiness for change.
	Training for Didactic Knowledge and Skill Acquisition	**September - May:** Throughout the eight months, teams of NEI's experts provide theoretical inputs and workshops at the school sites on conceptions of knowledge, taxonomies, active teaching methods, and assessment criteria. After the theoretical input the faculties break into department groups to work with NEI's subject advisors.	**October, January & March:** Teams of NEI's experts provide theoretical input on conceptions of knowledge, taxonomies, active methods of teaching, and assessment criteria. The work is limited to three visits per school site, with the NEI's subject advisors working with department groups between the meetings. The SDT receives a list of additional workshops to choose from according to need.	The SDTs receive a list of didactic seminars and workshops to choose in the middle of the year once the a research is well on its way. Teams NEI's experts conduct workshops o active methods of teaching, taxonor assessment criteria etc. on the SDT initiative based on their judgment o their faculty's readiness.

			October:	A NEI's expert conducts a worksho
Action Research Capacity Development			A NEI's expert conducts a workshop on action research strategy of work at the beginning of school year at each school site. The NEI's ICP team helps the teachers identify instructional areas in need of development and turn them into research questions. Action research teams of teachers work on their own throughout the year, school coach visits when invited.	action research strategy of work at t beginning of school year at each sch site. Then the NEI's ICP team helps teachers in each school identify instructional areas in need of development and turn them into research questions. The school SDT previously trained by the NEI's ICT helps teachers prepare work plans a instruments for inquiry into previou identified instructional problems. T ARTs continue their work led by th SDT throughout the year consulting their school coach when they feel th need.
Leadership Capacity Building			School coaches conduct workshops for the faculty in each school on peer observation and post observation discussion. The SDTs are encouraged to lead their faculties through vision building process.	Throughout the year, school coache conduct workshops on peer observa and post observation discussion**,** improve communication, and lead groups of peers. The SDTs are encouraged to lead their faculties through vision building process.

SCHOOL TEAMS	**Action Research Capacity Development**		The training of the SDTs throughout the year is focused on building their capacity to lead their faculties through the process of researching their instruction using action research strategy of work.	The training of the SDTs throughou year is focused on building their capacity to lead their faculties throu the process of researching their instruction using action research strategy of work.
	Leadership Capacity Building	The NEI's ICT provides professional training throughout the year to the SDTs on roles and responsibilities of SDTs in change implementation, stages of change implementation, strategies for dealing with resistance and monitoring improvement efforts, annual planning and evaluation.	The NEI's ICT starts professional training in a two-day retreat by leading the SDTs through a vision building process, followed by defining the SDTs roles and responsibilities in change implementation. The NEI provides workshops on communication techniques and dealing with resistance on request from individual school SDTs.	The NEI's ICT starts professional training in a two-day retreat by lead the SDT's through a vision building process, followed by defining the S roles and responsibilities in change implementation. The coaches provi guidelines for annual planning and workshop on evaluation, followed b year-long support. Workshops on communication techniques and dea with resistance are provided on requ from individual school SDTs.
	Training for Didactic Knowledge and Skill Acquisition	Throughout the year NEI's subject advisors work with departmental teams of teachers from all pilot schools on the implementation of new instructional methods, peer observation and analysis in relation to DRP goals.	Throughout the year NEI's subject advisors work with departmental teams of teachers from all three schools in the cohort on the implementation of new instructional methods, peer observation and analysis in relation to DRP goals.	The NEI's subject advisors' work w departmental teams of teachers is le intensive and geared toward the individual needs revealed through a research.

Evaluation Capacity Building	The SDTs receive guidelines for collecting evidence of their school's development and they have to report about their progress at cohort meetings. They are required to present their progress to the schools from the second cohort joining the project at each meeting.	The SDTs receive guidelines for collecting evidence of their school's development and they are required to report about their progress at cohort meetings based on gathered data. They also present their achievement at the Festival of Best Practices that the NEI organizes for both cohorts at the end of the year.	The NEI's experts conduct worksho on evaluation and provide guideline formative evaluation of school development. The SDTs are require present their progress based on data throughout the year at the cohort meetings, and exhibit their achiever at the Festival of Best Practices that NEI organizes for all three cohorts end of the year.

		Leadership Capacity Development	The NEI's ICT organizes three meetings for all the principals in the cohort to discuss leadership styles, requirements and reward system for work in DRP, and logistics of collaboration with the NEI. At the end of the year, the NEI's expert invites teachers to prepare individual professional plans and provides guidelines for them to follow.		PRINCIPALS The NEI's ICT organizes three mee during the year for the principals fr all three cohorts to exchange ideas a discuss strategies to deal with resist stress, peer coaching, decision mak and logistics of collaboration with t NEI. TEACHERS The SDT supports teachers to prepa individual professional developmen plans. The principal of each school condu conversations with individual teach on their instructional change work. suggests the SDTs to invite individu teachers to take over school project attend training related to the project work.
INDIVIDUALS					

Summary

With each consecutive cohort, the approach to training became more flexible, taking the needs of individual schools, teams, and teachers more into account. While distributing leadership caused changes in the authority structure and relationships in the high schools, as well as the re-structuring and re-culturing of the schools' hierarchical structure and power relations, the NEI's experts also had to work on the re-structuring and re-culturing of their own organization, and on internal professional development in order to keep up with the changing demands from the field. At the end of the project, even those NEI's experts that initially doubted the importance of building school capacity for change management developed awareness that such work with schools was essential for sustainable instructional change to take hold and become part of the school's culture.

CHAPTER FIVE

CASE STUDIES

This study presents two cases of the schools – the best and the worst case in the third cohort of schools that were exposed to the same reform initiative, and underwent the same professional development training. Participation in the NEI's reform initiative required a two-year commitment from each school, based on the faculty majority agreement to pilot the instructional change process under the NEI's guidance, assistance, and supervision. Piloting instructional reform required from the schools to restructure their work, – which, among others, meant restructuring the roles and processes of school leadership from traditional norms of hierarchy toward distribution and functional expertise, – participate in an on-going professional development, and implement and evaluate instructional change. As a whole-school

reform, instructional reform initiative by definition worked against the traditional grammar of schooling, and thus implied the necessity of mental model transformation, and change in school culture.

I utilized all relevant data (Yin, 1994), obtained from interviews, site observations, document review, and my research notes, to construct two cases with the aim of developing deeper understanding of the nature of distributed leadership development. Framing the data gathering protocols with Mayrowetz et al.'s model (2007) rather than "translating" the research questions directly into guiding questions for her interviews, observations, and field notes enabled me to collect extensive data, and capture multiple perspectives and interpretations of the phenomenon under study (Maxwell, 2005), which I then utilized for providing rich, thick description of distributed leadership implementation and development in two cases. According to Merriam (1990), the strategy of providing rich, thick descriptions of the phenomenon under study enhances the possibility of generalizing the results of a qualitative study beyond that of a particular study.

Case 1: Linden Tree High School

School Setting

Linden Tree High School is a suburban school located in the center of a small town in northwestern part of Slovenia. The town is close to well known tourist attractions with famous lakes and high mountains that offer possibilities for various sports like skiing, hang-gliding, swimming, fishing, and mountaineering, and which are increasingly popular among the tourists from all over Europe. Although located in an economically strong area with the greatest small business growth in the country in the last fifteen years, the town itself, predominantly middle- and working-class community, is socioeconomically challenged. A few years ago, a nearby steel factory

that employed many of the townsmen was closed, and a local shoe factory downsized their employee base, causing severe job losses in the area. With high unemployment, some people have started their own small businesses, taking up a variety of arts and crafts that used to make the town well known. Others decided to commute to bigger towns for work or migrate to the cities in search of a better life for themselves and their families.

One of six high schools in the region, Linden Tree High School offers two programs, the academic business program called 'ekonomska gimnazija' that prepares the students for university study, and the vocational program that trains students for the job market. School enrolment has declined from 890 students in 2007 to 450 in 2009. The decline is attributed to declining birth rate in Slovenia, as well as migration to the cities in search of job opportunities. In spite of the dramatic decline in student population, the school administration managed to secure positions for most of their 42 teachers – only five teachers have been dismissed since 2007. The school has a stable teacher body with predominantly middle-aged teachers. Some teachers have to commute to neighboring high schools to complete their contract requirement because they do not have enough teaching hours at Linden High. In terms of academic performance, Linden High is showing declining trends. While the school had a 100% success rate on the 'matura' school exit exam five years ago and a couple of "golden [2]graduates", their results have dropped since then to 97% in 2009, which is average achievement compared to other high schools in the country. When asked about the reasons for declining results, Lydia Kos, the current principal, explained in the interview:

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[2] "Golden graduates" are the students who achieve all the points on the external high school exit exam called 'matura'

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> *Having such low enrolment now, we have to accept literally everyone. We have students commuting from J. [a neighboring city] because the high school there won't accept them with such low grades from elementary school. Our student population has changed, these kids start at much lower level and are much less motivated for learning ... and while we've noticed that they make great progress in our school, their results on the 'matura' are still not comparable to those of the academically stronger students.*

As suggested by her explanation, Lydia believes that the declining results on the 'matura' exam have less to do with the quality of classroom instruction and more with the changes in the society. Lydia's words describe the situation in the school two years after the NEI's project ended. As revealed later in the interview, her view was very different when the school entered the Didactic Reform Project – she was certain that the improvement of instruction was urgent and that teachers had to become more accountable for the quality of their work, instead of being shielded by the consequences of their mediocre practice.

Developments Leading to the School's Joining the NEI's Didactic Reform Project

Context

The years leading to the NEI's professional development intervention were troubled ones for Linden High. While the combined academic-vocational program had historically resulted in high enrolment, Linden High started to lose students in 2003, and in the next year, one year before the NEI's intervention, the enrolment dropped dramatically. Since then, the school has increasingly lost the academic-track students to a high school in a neighboring city that was better established as a purely academic high school. While at first Linden High managed to compensate for that loss with higher enrolment of the vocational students, a 2002 state initiative channeled increasing numbers of elementary graduates into secondary technical programs not offered by Linden High, thereby depleting the school's enrolment numbers. Three

years ago, the school introduced a new media technician program that has been attracting students, but, – because the program has attracted mostly boys, aggression and violence have been on the rise presenting a challenge to the faculty who have not been used to dealing with this kind of problem. During my visit, the faculty was getting ready for a round table discussion on school violence with student representatives, teachers, psychologists, and parents at the same table.

Despite the changes in the student enrolment and the community's economic challenges, the school conveys a sense of friendliness. Two students welcome guests and visitors as they enter the school. Despite its [3]age, the building's small size and cleanliness makes it pleasant and warm. The prizes won by the students in various competitions are exhibited in a glass vitrine by the entrance, and on the wall by the stairs that lead to the classrooms is a huge mural of a tree with all the regular and extra-curricular school activities written on the tree leaves, and 'matura' on top of the tree with a sentence beneath it that says [4]"Non scholae sed vitae discimus." At the bottom of the mural, the signatures of the students who painted the tree convey a sense of student ownership of the school. Student artifacts are displayed on the walls and shelves around the classrooms. During the breaks, the school conveys a sense of community. The students from both the academic and vocational program work in common areas with desks and chairs near the library, socializing across the groups and working on projects. All the students are [5]wearing slippers in the school, and keep their shoes in the lockers located to the left of the reception desk.

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[3] The school was built in 1903.
[4] A Latin phrase meaning: We do not learn for the school, but for life.
[5] The Slovenes have a habit of taking off their shoes and wearing slippers in their homes. Because elementary schools are more personable, they require students to wear slippers once they enter the school especially in lower grades. Linden High's extension of this practice to high school thus conveyed a distinctive feel of community.

The staff room conveys the same sense of community and warmth. Although the teachers are coming and going, they take time to talk to each other, and a couple of them approach Lydia and me as we are looking through four thick folders displayed on the shelf to say 'hi' and shake my hand. Some of them eat [6] 'potica' that waits for them on a huge tray on the table in the alcove of the staff room, others are getting 'cappuccinos' from the machine in the corner. Lydia introduces me to a couple of teachers who are the new leaders of school projects and asks them to tell me about their experience.

The school did not have this sense of warmth when it entered the NEI's Didactic Reform Project. The analysis of the initial questionnaire on school climate that the faculty completed at the beginning of their collaboration in the NEI's Didactic Reform Project revealed toxic culture created by lack of hope – "*students are worse every year, they just don't want to learn*", and dogmatism – "*I've been teaching in the same way for 25 years and it's worked, why would I change anything*". Teachers were not eager to collaborate or share resources and ideas. They focused on their classroom and were reluctant to attend faculty meetings. When the newly established school development team tried to use the strategies that they learned at the NEI's workshops to improve relationships, they got discouraged because, as Lydia explained, "*Especially male teachers always provoked us, making the climate in the staff room really bad. It was very difficult to remain encouraging, and sometimes we used humor to go beyond the general bad mood ... it was really difficult.*"

Change Initiative

Recognizing that the falling student numbers might force a reduction in his faculty base, Larry, the former principal, saw the NEI's professional development

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[6] "Potica" is a pastry that contains ground walnuts or poppy seeds and is baked in Slovene homes usually around Christmas.

program as a vehicle for improvement. In conjunction with Lydia, the assistant

principal (who became the school's principal three years ago), Larry decided that the

school needed to become more competitive in order to attract more students. This

would require substantive and systemic changes in teachers' practice to better support

students' learning needs and strengthen their preparation for the 'matura' exam. They

regarded the professional development program as a vehicle that could support the

needed growth because of its complex approach: It promised to provide on-going

support and training to individual teachers in instructional planning and the

implementation of more student-centered instruction and – using a variety of teaching

approaches – to encourage collegial work and inquiry, and to train and support action

research of teams of teachers. In addition, it was expected to provide support and

training to the school development team that would help promote broader

involvement in the innovation. Finally, the program also organized opportunities for

networking among the schools in the same cohort, and, occasionally also among the

schools from different cohorts.

In addition to having the resource of NEI's experts explaining and supporting

the implementation of the professional development intervention, the principal also

had a chance to consult with other schools from previous cohorts already in the

program. As Lydia explained, the way the professional development was

implemented had a positive impact on the climate and relationships in the school:

> *[Especially useful was the] continuous professional support from the Institute's subject advisors, time for the teachers to learn and try out innovation, and the opportunity to observe each other teach and analyze what they saw in relation to what was expected from them to change. All these resulted in broad collaboration among teachers, and [the] exchange of ideas and materials. Also, a need developed in the faculty to present in front of their colleagues what they thought they did well.*

The NEI required that the principals involve teachers in making the decision whether the school would join the Didactic Reform Project, and get the majority agreement. Larry, the former principal of Linden High, first presented his idea to join the project to Lydia, his assistant principal, and sought her advice on how to get the faculty's agreement. When he presented the idea to the faculty, he faced resistance from teachers despite his convictions about the value of the NEI's initiative. Some teachers were reluctant to participate because of the ongoing challenges of their relationship with Larry. As Lydia explained:

> *One of the male teachers was especially strongly opposed to any suggestion for change from Larry, and he would spread [a]bad mood and make others resistant. He would constantly and brutally attack him verbally and humiliate him at the faculty meetings, saying things like 'you have no clue about what you're doing' and 'you're deceiving people.' It seems that Larry took it personally and was hurt, and he started to distance himself.*

The former principal worked to enlist teacher support, and did finally get their collective agreement to participate, although a sub-group of teachers remained resistant and critical of his efforts. After establishing the initial process, he withdrew and delegated the responsibility for reform implementation to the assistant principal.

Developing a Sense of Urgency

After two years in the project during which the reform initiatives remained on the surface, the school was marked by a significant tragedy in the school community that reflects both a significant obstacle and also a transformative moment for the school. In 2007 Larry resigned, and Lydia who was the assistant principal at the time assumed his position. At the end of the school year when the school development team members were away taking part in the NEI's Festival of Best Practices, Larry committed suicide in the school.

As the new principal, Lydia Kos took up a different role than that of her predecessor in terms of working with teachers; while Larry had gotten a basic level of *agreement from* teachers, Lydia got a deeper level of *engagement with* them. The tragedy created a sense of urgency among faculty and served as catalyst for transformation. As the new principal, Lydia decided to be candid about the context for the decision she and Larry had made in initiating the professional development intervention – that a continued decrease in student enrolment would result in some teachers being let go. She urged them to start working together in order to strengthen the school program and increase enrollment numbers. As she noted, the faculty responded to this sense of urgency:

> *It seems that the emotional stress opened people up and made them really collaborative. The situation made us a true community. Questions like 'how are we going to do that?' started to appear. People became totally engaged. Although we had been in the Institute's project for the third year at that time, things started to really move... With the tragedy, people started to respond with more responsibility. I [the principal] don't hear the complaints in the staff room anymore. Nobody says 'why do we need this' like they used to. And they also don't complain about having to come to the meetings.*

Although the majority of the faculty had sensed that they would need to start teaching in a different way to accommodate the needs of their students before they joined the NEI's DRP, they became consciously aware of the urgency for change after the traumatic experience and their increased understanding of the possible consequences of failing to become more competitive and effective. The small group of resisters gradually joined the rest of the faculty in their effort to promote the school, especially after the male teacher, who used to attack Larry, left the school – which happened right before Larry's resignation. Although they kept expressing their doubts about the reform, they agreed with the rest of the faculty that something had to change. In the words of a teacher:

It just hit me after that long day at school [after Larry's suicide]
when we were very honest with each other I realized and I think
others did too, that we won't get anywhere blaming everybody else
but ourselves…'cause we got the kids that we have, it's not like
you're teaching the subject no matter what, no, you're teaching
children … unless we use other ways of presenting the material, our
results will keep sliding downward, and we were already getting
less and less students…,we were in this together, everybody … no
students and you can kiss your job goodbye.

As school development team members reported, instead of investing superficial efforts into collaboration that served more for their socializing than collaborative learning, the faculty started to show determination to make demanding improvements together, with the aim of benefiting their students' learning.

Developing Commitment to Common Goals

When the new principal decided to be candid about the need for change – thereby shifting the responsibility for higher student enrolment to the faculty – the teachers at Linden High started to feel the pressure to become more actively involved. In addition, because Lydia and the school development team used the traumatic experience of Larry's death to address people's emotions and engage them in the process of making sense of the reform and its significance for individual and organization, teachers recognized the need to change and developed a sense of internal drive.

Having developed the necessary skills by taking part in the NEI's two-day retreat on vision building, the team let people voice their concerns but kept them focused on what they wanted the school to become and what needed to be changed. As Trudi, a biology teacher with fifteen years of experience at Linden High, who recently became the new school development team leader, explained:

When you start promoting the school, it's necessary that you're up to date. So we started to ask ourselves, what does it mean to be up to date, what should we be like so that parents see us up to date. And again the answer was the quality of teaching.

The faculty was in agreement that while their priority should be attracting more students so that the school could keep the programs, in order to do that they would have to identify and implement strategies that would help them achieve that goal. They identified a dual purpose: 1) developing better relationships with the community, and 2) improving teaching and learning.

Once the faculty agreed about the common goals, they discussed concrete strategies for their implementation, which led to the decision that everybody would take part in the NEI's professional program, including the teachers in the vocational program that were initially left out in accordance with the [7]NEI's recommendation. In addition, the faculty also agreed that they would make the community aware of their instructional change efforts in different ways, among them also by showcasing their innovative teaching to the parents and community in their open school day. With the decision to establish the school by opening it to the community and inviting them to observe the instructional process, teachers felt an increased need for gaining new knowledge and skills.

Characteristics of Redesigned Work Under the NEI's Project

Development of Knowledge and Skills

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[7] Because of the existence of a separate Vocational Institute in Slovenia that provides training exclusively to vocational teachers, the NEI prepared their professional development program aimed at the teachers in the academic program only. The NEI's experts who visited the pilot schools to introduce the Didactic Reform Project advised them not to include their vocational teachers in the reform initiative with an explanation that the Vocational Institute was working on their own reform program. Later, however, it turned out that the NEI's professional development program was broad enough to benefit the teachers in both programs. While some schools decided to include their vocational teachers from the start despite the NEI's recommendation, Linden High started to invite vocational teachers to attend the training sessions in the second year of the school's collaboration in the NEI's project, and then made their participation obligatory in the third year of the school's participation in the Didactic Reform Project.

Before the NEI's intervention, Linden High teachers attended professional training seminars individually mostly within their subject area, and occasionally as a faculty on common educational issues presented to them in one-day on-site seminars. They had never engaged together as the faculty in professional development efforts that were coherently focused on long-term learning and improvement. As the result, while individuals may have experimented with instructional innovation in the isolation of their classroom, such efforts were not shared and were thus usually short-lived. Teachers' comments in the interviews in the second year of the school's participation in the NEI's project revealed that collaboration outside the departments was not in the culture of the school, and that as a consequence, teachers were initially unable to engage in dialogic relationships. As Peter, a gym teacher with nine years of experience at Linden High, remarked, "*I can't discuss instruction with math and geography teachers in our group. We don't have a common language. Plus why would I observe a math teacher? Physical education ...it's different, we don't have anything in common with other subjects.*" Susan, an English language teacher in her eighth year at the school, revealed a similar dilemma, "*I collaborated in the project Language Portfolio with foreign language teachers from other schools, and I attended some training sessions but didn't share what I learned with the faculty because things were so subject specific.*"

In the first two years of the school's inclusion in the Didactic Reform Project, the NEI's training did not breed success because the school culture encouraged negativity and a toxic view of professional development. In the absence of collaboration and common purpose, the faculty was not ready for the method of work used by the NEI. As Lydia explained, "*People got really annoyed when the Institute's coach asked them to reflect their work and expose their areas of growth in front of*

each other." Interviews with the principal and teachers revealed that changing mental models through vision building was essential for the teachers to start perceiving the need for change.

When asked about the benefits of the Didactic Reform Project two years after it ended, the teachers reported that they appreciated that it gave them enough time to learn how to teach in a different way so that they were not "*pushed*" into the reform like other schools that did not participate in the NEI's pilot project.

While [8]the school development team had an essential role in developing the faculty's readiness for learning, the team members had to develop their own skills first, especially communication skills and problem solving skills, and build their team's internal coherence before they could assume new leadership roles to assist the faculty in transforming their perception of their work. As described in greater detail in the antecedent/moderator section, they developed these skills in the NEI's workshops and with Lydia's constant encouragement and support.

Task Significance

The school development team members described their work on the team as significant for both, their own and the school's growth. One member reported, "*I can't imagine not being part of this team, it gives me an opportunity to co-create the school's future.*" Another said, "*None of us has any doubts that Lydia wouldn't be able to do everything on her own*." In addition to the significance that the team members derived from the task, Lydia also cultivated within them a sense of their own significance in regard to the task. As the school development team leader, she made the team members aware from the start how valuable they were for her and for

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[8] The school development team members were all department heads, respected for their expertise as exceptional teachers among the faculty.

the school by continuously supporting their leadership capacity building, and by engaging them in decision making.

After leading the faculty through vision building process, the school development team followed up by creating an annual plan in which they specified the school's priorities and the activities that were either mandatory or elective to fulfill the goals. They made sure that every single teacher had an obligation within the annual plan that was outside their classroom work but was important for the success of the school. Some teachers' remarks in the interviews suggested that broader involvement of the faculty in the new work became a norm at Linden High. Peter, the gym teacher, for instance, remarked, "*Five years ago none of us would go out with our graduates to the street. Now this has become something normal for us. I remember seeing D., who has this reputation of being extremely serious Physics teacher, standing in the street directing the traffic so that our graduates could pass*."

Based on what some teachers reported in the interviews, it seems that they initially considered their work on the tasks that were outside of their traditional responsibilities in the classroom significant mainly because they felt under pressure to do well in their public presentations, like for instance in their open school days or when presenting to colleagues from other school cohorts. But, as described in greater detail in the antecedent/moderator section, the change in the school culture and professional culture helped internalize teachers' awareness that their work on those tasks was as important as their work on instructional improvement because both were necessary for making their school an exceptional place for students and teachers.

Task Identity

One of the school's priorities that the faculty agreed on was to increase student enrolment in order to keep all their programs open. When the school development

team facilitated the discussion about what the teachers could do to make it happen, the faculty came to a conclusion that improving instruction was most important, in addition to improving collaboration with parents and local community.

Following the faculty meeting, the school development team contacted local business representatives and invited them to come to the school and talk to the teachers about the competencies the students would need upon entering the job market. As the teachers reported in the interviews, the discussion with the local business representatives strengthened the faculty's awareness of the need to build their students' competencies to prepare them for life after school rather than just "*jog their memory*" with requirements to memorize facts. Gradually, their preoccupation with content coverage waned away as a collaborative effort to improve instructional methods became their new focus.

The faculty's decision to change their usual way of organizing the open school day from explaining their programs to showcasing active teaching across-disciplines further strengthened their collective focus on instructional improvement. Through the process of deciding to invite the visitors into the classroom, teachers shifted to a readiness to step out of their departmental isolation and prepare for the event utilizing what they had learned in the NEI's seminars.

Assuming Leadership Roles

Lydia Kos, who has acted as a leader of the team from the start, first in her role as assistant principal and subsequently in her current role as principal passed the leadership of the team onto another team member one year after the end of the Didactic Reform Project but has remained an active member in the team. The responsibilities on the team have always been divided, with individual contribution depending on individual strengths, competence, and availability. A year ago the team

invited a colleague from the vocational program to join them because they wanted to add a "*vocational perspective*" to the team.

Members of the team described their efforts in ways that conveyed their belief that the quality of leadership had improved because as a team they could view the school's progress on the reform from more than one perspective, which helped them develop better understanding of how to build a sense of school community. Team members indicated that while their roles complemented each other in accordance with their individual characteristics and their role in the staff room, each of them contributed in an important way to the team. As Trudi, the new school development team leader, explained,

> *… [One team member] spontaneously took on the role of an idea generator. She's really good at that. Another one is very practical and she is always the first to try out new things in the classroom. She's an extraordinary teacher, very popular with students and faculty. Maybe quiet in this group, but very important. She helps our teachers implement new approaches to instruction. And M. is more of a note-taker, she's really detailed and well-organized and invaluable in preparing project documentation and things of that nature….*

Interviews with the team revealed that the perception of their role has changed over five years. While they initially perceived their primary role as a chance "*to disseminate information about what we have learned at the NEI's meetings and workshops, and to grow professionally,*" two years after the Didactic Reform Project ended, they considered their role as an opportunity to "*encourage others to take on the responsibility for moving the school development toward agreed upon goals,*" which points to their effort to widen leadership boundaries.

Team members shared their feelings of initial frustration over their inability to be the leaders of the reform at their school, which the NEI expected from them. Teachers' comments revealed that Lydia and the team members were initially able to

exercise their leadership only inside their action research work. Nevertheless, their capable leadership of action research teams helped them build their credibility with the teachers, which then allowed them to assume other roles in the school, like for instance the role of communication facilitators to "*clarify common goals,*" problem solvers, and staff developers.

Balancing Autonomy and Interdependence

While teachers reported that they had many opportunities for collaboration in formal and informal settings, some of their remarks indicated that they were also frustrated about their diminished individual autonomy and independence as the result of their increased collaboration in the school. As one young foreign language teacher reported, "*I sometimes get a feeling that I am not the one who makes decisions about what and how I teach my subject anymore.*" Other teachers regarded their collaboration as beneficial for students. As Nadia, a geography teacher in her twenty-first year at the school, explained, "*We are now aware that our students profit from our collaboration. If we work in isolation from each other, we can't help them make connections among the disciplines, and they can't develop a habit to do so outside of the school.*" By collaborating to prepare interdisciplinary units together, they felt that they created opportunities for their students to acquire better connected knowledge that was more meaningful to them.

The school development team's attitude toward the implementation of instructional change was that instead of forcing teachers to change instruction, they would rather provide opportunities for them to motivate their engagement in change. One such opportunity that seemed to engage the faculty was when they decided that in a week before Christmas when students were less attentive in class due to approaching holiday, they would invite teachers to experiment with active methods of

teaching to see if they could engage students better. Once the teachers decided with whom they wanted to partner, how much time and what technology they needed, the team coordinated the schedule, space, and student body, thus enabling the teachers to focus solely on teaching. Lydia, who walked from classroom to classroom, shared, *"I saw extremely interesting instruction […] and was surprised to see one of the serious resistors paired up with an older colleague trying to teach in a new way. I really liked that."*

While their initial aspiration was to motivate every teacher to employ more active teaching methods that they had been learning in the NEI's seminars, two years after the Didactic Reform Project ended, Lydia revealed a more moderate approach. She reported that the school development team came to a conclusion that the faculty should seek balance allowing the teachers who did not become persuaded about the benefit of new methods to teach in the old way because students could thus experience *"both methods in the best possible form."*

Lydia seemed to have ensured successful implementation of the reform with an autonomy informed by her assessment of the school's needs and readiness. A certain distance to the external initiatives has always been characteristic of her – she never followed everything that the NEI proposed blindly. Only after she determined that the NEI's incentives addressed students' and teachers' needs, she engaged herself in promoting them. Her attitude influenced the way Linden High embarked on the implementation of change promoted by the didactic reform. After the faculty prepared their own strategic plan following their vision building process, the school development team screened the professional development program that the NEI offered, and selected the workshops and presenters that fitted their plan and their teachers' needs.

Lydia observed that they could sustain such reflective attitude with the support of the NEI's coach who "*made us realize that there was no such thing as one right direction, that [...] when we feel our development, then that's the right thing, who never told us that what we did was wrong but helped us overcome our fears and gain incredible energy.*"

Feedback

As an essential component of organizational growth, feedback attained from a process in which teachers engage data gathered through techniques like action research, collective inquiry, or peer observation, has a potential to activate individual and organizational learning. Linden High teachers initially relied on NEI's experts who worked with subject teachers for feedback on their understanding and use of didactic reform initiatives. Through their engagement in collaborative action research, they gradually developed a habit of collecting feedback from at least three different sources when facing instructional problems, and then resolving them in collaboration with their colleagues. As Nina, a school development team member and a math teacher in her eighteenth year at the school, explained, "*Since we worked in the action research team, I've changed my attitude. If I come across a [instructional] problem, I investigate it, I don't make decisions based on my feelings and assumptions anymore.*" Other teachers confirmed that they shared Nina's attitude by consistently referring to data that they had collected from their students, parents, and colleagues when justifying their various instructional decisions in the interviews. This demonstrated that they had developed not only the habit of collecting data but also the skill of analyzing data and using the results for informed decision making.

Another strategy that the NEI encouraged in the Didactic Reform Project and that Linden High has continued to use for generating effective collegial feedback is

peer observation. While Lydia had observed each teacher once a year already before their inclusion in the project, teachers are now also required to observe one colleague per year and select someone to observe them at least once a year. Once teachers fill out an annual collegial observation plan each fall, the plan is then displayed in the staff room reminding each individual teacher to follow up on their decisions.

Lydia sees peer observations as an opportunity for collegial support, "*because a teacher can better advise a colleague than I can. They notice different things than me, they're the experts. There's a lot of willingness now among them to help each other, and it needs to be used in productive ways.*" However, some teachers' comments in the interviews revealed their mixed perceptions of peer observations. Although all of them stated that the school climate was open and allowed them to be honest with each other, some of them were still stressed when their colleague came to observe them, like for instance Mila, a Slovene language teacher with twenty-five years of experience, who revealed, "*I can't really relax when I'm observed. And when I have to give feedback I'm still a little careful. I think that teachers don't take criticism from a colleague well.*" Others appreciated the opportunity to get feedback, taking it as a learning experience that helped them develop self-awareness and thus improve their teaching. As Maria, an economics teacher in her twelfth year at the school reported, "*I think you get good feedback especially from colleagues. And when you observe them, you get good ideas and see what you yourself can improve.*"

<center>*Antecedents/Moderators*</center>

While the present study focuses on organizational structure as both antecedent (representing the existing conditions in school that shape how distributed leadership is formulated) and moderating variables (impacting the way distributed leadership is implemented), two other contextual elements emerged from gathered data that are

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consistent with Mayrowetz et al.'s framework (2007), trust, and school culture. Sub-elements to the identified contextual variables used in this study were inferred from recurring phrases and common threads in informants' accounts. While Mayrowetz et al. did not identify sub-dimensions to their variables, most of the sub-elements that emerged from the data for this study can be inferred from their descriptions of antecedents/moderators. The sub-element that cannot be inferred and was added to this study is a curriculum. Because Slovenia has a national curriculum, it may seem that this sub-element does not belong to the school's organizational structure. However, since gathered data revealed strong implications of the national curriculum for how distributed leadership was formulated and implemented at the schools, the curriculum was added as a sub-element of the organizational structure. While most of the sub-elements of the three variables are presented as both antecedents and moderators of the distributed leadership development, school development team and action research team structures can only be discussed as moderators because they represent the newly established organizational structures as part of the NEI's reform initiative.

Organizational Structures

　　Hierarchy as antecedent to DL development. The former principal of Linden High, who was described as being open and democratic, engaged his assistant principal in his leadership decisions but did not use the same practice with the newly established school development team. It seems that he did not recognize the potential of the school development team to assist him in engaging the faculty to pursue common goals. Larry carried the burden of changing times and outside regulations on his own, based on his belief that as the principal, he was fully responsible for supervising the quality of the school's operation and providing resources for high-

quality teaching and learning. He failed to engage the faculty in conversations on

what truly mattered to the school's future improvement, and let the staff meetings

escalate with a male teacher openly provoking him and questioning his decision to

join the Didactic Reform Project. As Lydia explained in the interview:

> *We didn't have much collaboration in the past. There was no*
> *professional dialogue in the staff room. Maybe the faculty was not*
> *mature enough for more open relationships. Maybe Larry had*
> *difficulties opening up to people. He was trying but he didn't have*
> *enough support. Maybe it was easier for us [the School*
> *Development Team] because we did it as a team.*

Instead of operating from the center – as the first among the equals – Larry chose to

force the faculty's agreement to join the NEI's Didactic Reform Project top down

from his formal position of authority, triggering some teachers' resistance to any

change that the NEI's professional development program tried to encourage in the

first two years, which undermined the staff's morale and motivation.

　　Hierarchy as moderator of DL development. When she assumed the

principalship, Lydia at first carried on the same hierarchical structure as her

predecessor – it seems that her perception of principal control function took

precedence over more collaborative decision-making approach that she had

previously encouraged in the school development team. While as the assistant

principal and leader of the school development team she saw the value of having a

leadership team with whom she could discuss instructional change and ways to

implement it, the way she took up her new position as principal suggested a belief that

she had to carry all the responsibility for the school's development. This temporarily

undermined the school development team's engagement of its own leadership

potential. As she continued in her role, however, she started to shift her perspective

back to a more collaborative form of leadership. Some of her actions, like for instance

rearranging her office to make room for a round table to accommodate spontaneous

meetings with her team, revealed her deeper understanding of the value of a

leadership team and her need to continue her engagement with the team also after she

became the principal.

She realized that each of the school development team members contributed

to leadership work in a special way, and that they had grown together. She kept

supporting the development of her team members' leadership capacity because she

perceived them as a valuable asset for a broader school's capacity for instructional

change. As she revealed in the interview, she has continued to value the team as a rich

source of ideas and of a broader insight into what is going on in the school.

> *This team [the school development team] has been of immense*
> *importance to me, and I am doing my best to support their*
> *individual growth and let them know how much I value each of*
> *them. I feel so peaceful inside now… from that initial, shall I say,*
> *chaos, when I kept rushing all the time because I felt that I had to*
> *have everything under control ...which is impossible ... to now*
> *when we have built this incredible trust and our responsibilities are*
> *distributed. Although we have so much to do things don't seem*
> *overwhelming to me anymore.*

As suggested by the description above, Lydia did not appear to feel that her

position had been threatened in any way because of the existence of the school

development team, on the contrary, she had come to realize that leading the

implementation of the school's instructional reform was more effective based on team

decision making.

Departmental structure as antecedent to DL development. Before joining the

NEI's Didactic Reform Project, the teachers of Linden High communicated

professionally mainly within the departments. Since the faculty was small and some

teachers did not have colleagues that taught the same subject in the school, they

would seek contacts with their colleagues from other nearby high schools whom they

met in regular study group meetings that have a tradition of more than two decades in Slovenia. When they worked on the projects with outside institutes, it was always with the same subject colleagues, which led to the development of strong subject specific identities.

In my interviews with Linden High teachers two years after the Didactic Reform Project ended, some of them still expressed a strong sense of departmental identities. Susan, an English language teacher in her eighth year at the school, for instance, remarked in the interview, "*Maybe we, the language teachers, are more communicative. The economists have a stronger left-brain orientation….* Or Nina, a math teacher and member of school development team, "*I can speak for my subject only. I can get the students really involved but then they forget what we've been learning because they don't revise at home and you need constant revision in math…."*

While the interviews revealed that some teachers retained a strong sense of their subject-specific identities, they also pointed to increased permeability of departmental boundaries that developed as a result of the school development team's efforts to embed the action research principle of work that brought together teachers across subjects into the culture of the school.

Because the school development team and action research teams were conceptualized as a major part of the organizational structure in Linden High with carefully planned release time for their regular meetings, and because the work in these teams was meaningful to the teachers, the departmental structures started to lose their primacy and give way to teacher collaboration across subjects and grades within these new structural arrangements.

Departmental structure as moderator of DL development. When forming the school development team, the former principal took into consideration that the department chairs had played a significant leadership role in the school and invited the teachers that were strong departmental leaders and respected teachers to become the members of the team.

Having established their reputation as exceptional teachers in their subject-based communities, the school development team members did not face any resistance when they assumed leadership of action research teams that consisted of the teachers from different departments. But lacking Larry's support, the school development team members were initially able to establish themselves and negotiate their place in the system only to a limited degree. While they could lead through their action research projects, they were unable to exercise power and influence to shape a vision for the school and improve relationships at the organizational level.

Because of the team's internal cohesiveness and because of Lydia's continuous display to the faculty of her appreciation of the team members when she took over the principal position, the school development team gradually gained considerable power that enabled them to redefine cultural norms and expectations in the school, and mobilize the faculty for school-wide instructional change implementation.

School development team structure as moderator of DL development. As the new principal, Lydia Kos took advantage of having a team of teachers on the school development team with whom she could discuss the strategies to overcome the faculty's resistance and inertia. As their leader, she encouraged the school development team members to use every opportunity to work together at the training seminars where they learned about problem identification, data collection and

analysis, and problem solving. Once back at school, they tried to adjust what they had learned to the needs of their faculty, and explore ways to influence school culture and relationships.

Initially, the team helped her acquire a better insight into the learning needs and daily challenges of teachers, "*but not in a sense that the SDT members would report to me what people say. Absolutely not. More in a sense of providing incentives, ideas, advice, what's necessary to do…usually in just the right time.*" Since as a team they could read the micropolitical dynamics of their staff room much better than the principal alone, they could thus better identify the issues that stood in the way of building a positive, supportive, collegial culture in the school.

In addition to acting as providers of insights into complex needs of their faculty, the school development team members also described their role as community builders during their first years in the Didactic Reform Project. After Larry's tragic death, they used their problem solving and facilitation skills that they had learned at the NEI's training sessions to lead their staff's discussion about the school's future. It took them half a year to clarify their expectations and set their priorities. Once they achieved such clarity, each school development team member took the responsibility to work on one school priority, gradually involving other teachers, and within a year, there was not a single teacher left not involved in an out-of-classroom activity in pursuit of common goals. Manuela, a member of the school development team and a foreign language teacher in her fifteenth year at the school, shared her thoughts on how broader teacher involvement in school leadership worked at Linden High:

> *There is a general understanding among our teachers now that it's not enough for a teacher to do his or her job in the classroom but that they have to engage for the success of the school, too. They are ready to stay in the school after they finish teaching in the afternoons as the faculty together, which was unheard of in the past.*

We agreed in our team that one of our objectives was to make every teacher work hard on instruction plus give each of them also certain responsibility for the school. The best way to silence their criticism was to include them in the decision making, and then hold them accountable for what they decided to do. When you take responsibility for something and see how much work is involved, you'll think twice before criticizing others.

Although the school development team still feels responsible for making sure that "things really get done," they make a conscious effort to distribute decision making and include everybody. As Susan explained, "*If you don't volunteer, they [the school development team] will assign you some task. If you don't have any idea or you aren't sure where you want to participate, they will include you in something so that you can contribute, too.*"

Action research team structure as moderator of DL development. When the school joined the NEI's Didactic Reform Project, teachers from different departments were brought together for the first time to engage in action research as part of the reform efforts. Because the school development team adjusted the time for the meetings of action research teams to meet the teachers' needs, and because they prepared responsibly for their leadership roles, action research work successfully shifted the departmental isolation to cross-departmental collaboration.

As teachers described, working in small action research teams in which they engaged in meaningful dialogues about instruction strengthened their relationships and helped them arrive at greater awareness of the issues and each other. As Andrea, a history teacher in her twentieth year at the school explained, "*We helped each other, exchanged experience and talked about instruction… even in our free time. It had an incredibly positive effect on all of the group members.*"

Other teachers' comments also revealed that new beliefs started to emerge in the staff room about the capacity of their students and the new approaches by which

to activate their potential. While this was essential for building within-group cohesiveness, teachers' comments like for instance, "*We really got connected in our [action research] group*" revealed that collaboration did not spread across the faculty in the first years of the school's participation in the NEI's project. The action research teams remained isolated islands with vivid discussions and new relationships developing among teachers across grades only inside, and not among the teams.

Although their leaders discussed and coordinated their work in their regular school development team meetings, they were initially unable to build broader collaborative culture in the school because people were not bound together by common values and goals. As described in more depth in the antecedent/moderator section, only when the new principal and the school development team started to work strategically to achieve a unity of purpose and a climate of trust through vision building processes did the intergroup relationships and faculty's engagement at the school level start to develop.

Schedules, routines, and external requirements as antecedent to DL development. According to Lydia, teachers lacked individual accountability when the school entered the NEI's Didactic Reform Project – because they never had to fight for students, they assumed that they did not need to change their instruction. Much classroom learning was teacher-directed content delivery rather than inquiry-focused, which seemed to be the most efficient way of teaching given the structure of school day. As in other high schools across Slovenia, the school day at Linden High consisted of six to eight forty-five minute class periods per day, allowing insufficient time for teachers to encourage problem solving and deeper exploration of content. Having only two to four forty-five minute periods per week with each class, and teaching five to six classes or between 150 and 180 students per day, the individual

subject teachers operated as "knowledge-givers" rather than "knowledge facilitators." Because the aim was to cover the content, they provided clear explanations to the students and assigned them homework to practice at home, rather than engaging them in knowledge construction at school.

The new approach to teaching promoted by the NEI's Didactic Reform Project – which emphasized students' higher order thinking skills and non-cognitive skills such as communication skills, social skills, and information processing skills caused frustration among teachers because it took longer to cover the content. The dilemma between surface and deep approaches to learning was captured in the interview in Nadia's response:

> *If you use these new methods of work, you need more time. If I encourage students to use the computers, I need three hours for the same amount of content that I could cover in forty five minutes using a traditional board and chalk approach. So you have to improvise to cover the content ... because they have 'matura' in the end. I don't think it would play any role in our students' lives if we left out a chapter or two but would make so much difference for them if they also learned an important skill. But because the time is so limiting and we are required to cover everything, it's often easier to just tell them you have to do this and this to solve the problem.*

Because the results on the school-leaving exam determine whether a student can be accepted to a certain university, thus having a profound influence on students' academic trajectories, several of the teachers interviewed felt that they had to sacrifice student engagement for content coverage. They were worried that by spending time on activities they would not cover the content to prepare students for the 'matura'.

Teachers also expressed that their frustration with active teaching methods was caused by their fear that they would lose control of the learning process once they applied new methods. Manuela, for instance, explained, "*If you use the traditional*

chalk and board method, you have total silence. And when you use the new approach,

you have discipline problems."

  Schedules, routines, and external requirements as moderator of DL

development. All the teachers interviewed conveyed a shared understanding that the

quality of learning was not the same if they told the students what to do instead of

engaging them in the inquiry and problem solving process. A young teacher of

English, for example, explained, "*When you use modern approach to teaching*

everything slows down, you can't cover that much. We can be very fast if we tell the

students what they have to learn, but then their knowledge can't be as firm and deep

as with modern methods." While teachers were pleased when their students became

engaged in learning, they applied the new methods only occasionally because they

were concerned that such active learning would take too much time away from

covering the content for the school-leaving exam. Maria, an economics teacher in her

twelfth year at the school, for instance, stated in the interview, "*The subject that I*

teach can be really boring, but I've noticed that my students are not bored if I make

their learning meaningful, they are able to work really hard when they realize that it's

useful. I can engage students in different ways but I don't have enough time. We have

to cover the content for the matura exam."

  While the majority of the teachers interviewed expressed frustration because

time constraints and the pressure of the 'matura' exam interfered with the freedom of

their instructional decision-making, their comments also reflected a changed attitude

toward teaching with instructional decision-making considered part of their

professional autonomy. As Nina, a school development team member, explained, "*I*

used to be frustrated because in some classrooms I just couldn't get my teaching

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across to the students… now I try various approaches, use various strategies. I have a wider range of methods to choose from."

By building their knowledge and skills, and engaging teachers in the exploration of their own practice, the NEI's professional development program laid the foundation for changing teachers' perceptions of their work. The school development team continued that work through their systematic investment in the creation of shared vision, and by adapting standard operating procedures to provide more time for redesigned work in the school.

Curriculum as antecedent to DL development. Because initially Linden High teachers viewed the curriculum, which is centralized in Slovenia, in a prescriptive way, dictating them to cover the content, they considered active teaching methods promoted by the NEI's professional development program inapplicable, and as such a waste of their time. In the early interviews, most of them described how they grappled with the overcrowded curriculum and were forced to deliver it in a hurried way because they had to cover so much content. In spite of their awareness that when they concentrated on the content coverage, their students tended to switch off because it was mainly the teacher who was active, most of the teachers continued to use an input-driven approach to teaching after giving new methods a chance only once or twice. As one teacher shared:

> *Students bring this mind-set with them from elementary school that if we put them in groups it's time for having fun instead of learning. It's hard to change that. They don't understand that it's important to work seriously when they are in a group with their peers. Usually one student in the group works hard and the others just take the credit. It's a waste of time…We'd like them to be engaged and we look for ways to achieve that …but then we get disappointed because the end effect is worse.*

Instead of recognizing that the results may be worse because as teachers they may not have mastered the new methods of teaching yet, they blamed the students and thus let their mental models stand in the way of their continuous development and openness to learning.

While most of the teachers interviewed used the 'matura' exam and extensive content prescribed in the curriculum as the reasons why they were unable to change their teaching method from frontal to more engaging for students, the principal, however, did not share their opinion. Although she agreed that in some subjects the curriculum required too much content coverage, she also believed that as experts the teachers had to make decisions about what to cover and what to leave out, and that in every subject there was enough room for active learning. She recognized that the teachers' uncertainties were caused by their lack of understanding of active methods and the skill to apply them, and by their imperfect understanding of their subject matter.

Curriculum as moderator of DL development. Throughout the interviews of the school development team it was clear that they shared Lydia's belief and had no doubts about the didactic reform initiatives. Lydia Kos and her school development team were firm in their belief that the instruction had to activate students' thinking skills, and that changing instruction accordingly was possible if the teachers continuously built their knowledge of subject matter and their skill of teaching.

While they expressed their understanding of the stress caused by the 'matura' exam that required extensive content coverage in some subjects, they also kept the conversations going with their faculty about broad aims of education beyond the 'matura' exam. As Lydia explained, "*We were not used to thinking about these broader educational goals together but they are so important. Now that we are*

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starting a new program the time is ideal to invite teachers in these conversations again."

The principal's and school development team's firm belief that it is more important to teach students how to think than to require from them to memorize facts permeated in the faculty's insistence to present active learning as their prevailing pedagogical approach in open school days, and in the signs observed in the school that pointed to the importance of learning for life instead of memorizing pieces of information for exams.

In later interviews, two years after the Didactic Reform Project ended, none of the teachers blamed students when talking about active learning. Although nobody denied that it was important to prepare students for the 'matura', they nevertheless talked mostly about themselves and how they needed to work together to make the best use of the time available so as to help students make connections among the subject areas. Susan, for instance, explained how invested the faculty was in interdisciplinary planning, "*We present our material to each other at the team meetings and look for connections or ways in which to involve more than one subject, sometimes we involve two, sometimes three or more. ...*"

In her explanation Susan is referring to grade level meetings in which the teachers of different subjects now collaborate to prepare "project weeks" for their students. The interaction among the teachers serves for the development of interdisciplinary units that are taught over a longer period of time, and takes place both in formal grade-level meetings and informally on an on-going basis as needed.

After experiencing such collaboration in action research teams, the teachers have once again stepped outside of the boundaries of their subject departments to work in collaboration with grade level colleagues to develop and implement common

units. The school development team does not force anyone to plan and teach in an interdisciplinary fashion because, as Trudi, the new school development team leader and a biology teacher in her twentieth year at the school, explains:

> *...[teachers]have to feel the need to connect. Some subject areas fit together nicely and those teachers collaborate on a more long-term basis. Others have not found the connections and there's no point in forcing them. It's interesting that even the teachers who did not seem to be enthusiastic are now team teaching, maybe twenty percent of their time. For example two mathematics teachers decided to team teach and found that they could support their students better if they're together in the classroom ... and we support that because it's a start.*

Allowing the teachers to decide with whom they want to collaborate in planning and implementing interdisciplinary units, the school development team has created opportunities for broader emergence of leadership at Linden High. The teachers who have ideas approach their colleagues, present their ideas to them, and discuss with them the ways in which their respective subjects might overlap, thus seizing the opportunities to lead instructional change implementation. The teachers interviewed did not recall that anybody would ever turn down an offer for collaboration, which pointed to the existence of strong collegial relationships at the school.

Trust

> *Relationships as antecedent to DL development.* The reform initiatives were hardly noticeable in Linden High during the first two years because the climate of trust was missing under former principal. While teachers were not openly hostile toward each other, internal divisions and groupings existed in the staff room that drove people apart instead of bringing them together around a common purpose. The faculty's alienation was captured in Nadia's comment, "*I could be open with some colleagues, but with most of them, it was just 'hi and goodbye'.*" Instruction was not

discussed outside of department meetings, and as Maria observed, people were not

ready to speak honestly about their work in front of each other:

> *We didn't use to talk much in our staff room, so when T. [the NEI's coach] asked us to reflect individually on the quality of teaching at the end of one of the first sessions we had together [...], people made long faces and nobody wanted to speak.*

When the school development team was formed, the team members had to

work on building trusting relationships in their own group first. The NEI's seminars

taught them the skills in how to work together, and provided significant opportunities

for their collaboration and sharing of ideas. Gradually a bond developed among team

members based on their shared determination to make their school a better place for

teachers and students.

The development of trust in the team appeared to be possible because Lydia

did not just delegate leadership work from her position of authority but rather actively

engaged her team members in decision making. As she explained:

> *It's become our common practice that I call the team when we have to make a decision. And usually it doesn't take us long to come up with something which is almost always well received because the girls would tell me that something for instance won't go through because it's too much for our teachers or something similar. In short, because as a team we have so much wider perspective, and this is even more valuable now that I've become principal.*

The way the team members and Lydia interacted during the interviews revealed

equitable relationships among them. Rather than directing the conversation, Lydia

acted as part of the team. The team members alternated in leading the conversation,

and so did Lydia, sometimes taking over, and other times just adding her thoughts. As

she described, she first had to change as a person to make such equitable internal

dynamics possible, "*I had to overcome many things personally. I had to become more

open ... be a better listener. I used to be intolerant to some proposals…depending on*

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who they came from. Now I try to listen and hear everybody. I also [needed to]

acquire better collaboration skills and skills of team work." While when she first

became principal she felt that she had to oversee everything and make final decisions,

she later came to believe that the decisions made in collaboration with others were

better.

The school development team defined norms of collaboration in their team at

the start and decided that they wanted to be completely honest with each other. The

team members described feeling that their roles on the team were equally important.

They have been meeting regularly throughout the five years of their existence to

discuss the strategies of their work with their faculty, and as Trudi indicated in the

interviews, they all valued these meetings because of mutual respect and honesty:

> *The best reward for me is that I can be totally honest in this team*
> *[the School Development Team], we have this climate of complete*
> *trust. It's so precious that we can really talk to each other about*
> *everything, including problems, personal matters, illnesses, lack of*
> *time, anything…and that we are really interested in each other and*
> *take time to ask 'is your child feeling better?' I think that if we*
> *didn't feel well in this team that we wouldn't take interest in each*
> *other and talk to each other in this way. Some of my colleagues in*
> *the staff room would ask me 'do you dare say this and this to the*
> *principal?' but we don't have this dilemma here at all. We expect*
> *each other to be honest.*

In the same way that Lydia had to promote trust among the school development

team members, so too did the team members have to promote trust among teachers.

Initially, the faculty did not receive the team well. When they would try to open a

discussion about problems at the faculty meetings, the teachers would not admit they

had any, and the attitude was:"*I 'm a good teacher, I don't have problems. If you have*

them, there's something wrong with you." As the team gained knowledge and skills,

they explored ways to influence school culture and relationships. Team members

described that the expert power in particular that they exhibited as leaders of action

research teams gave them a strong basis to negotiate their work as the leadership team and their place in the school.

Relationships as moderator of DL development. Lydia put a consistent and deliberate leadership effort into managing and leading different groups and individuals toward a consensus about the direction of the school's future development. Recognizing the importance of the school development team, she empowered the members to use their own strategies to approach individuals and groups in an informal and sometimes more formal ways to share their ideas, invite their comments, and discuss the school's development with them.

Because the school was losing students, one of the priorities that they agreed upon was to make their school more recognizable through the improved quality of instruction. When they decided to organize an open day to showcase their innovative teaching to the parents and community a few teachers decided to prepare model lessons for the community together, and all teachers volunteered to participate in some way to help prepare for the event. When the open day event received a huge interest and extremely positive response from the community, the faculty became re-energized and even more eager to collaborate. Susan reported that the faculty continued to value this open day event, "*not only because we are proud to present our work to the community but because it bonds us together, the teachers that work together and the students.*"

Once they gained the faculty's trust, the school development team found it easier to use the structure of action research teams to develop the relationships among the teachers of different subjects. The small teams provided a safe space for the individuals to start opening up and being honest with each other, and laid the ground for the development of a collective sense of responsibility for "*our students.*"

The interviews with teachers confirmed that collegiality has become a norm at Linden High. Maria, for instance, who had to teach in a nearby school in the previous year to complete her full teaching load, compared the relationships in another school with those at Linden High: "*In our school [Linden High] I never feel there'll be negative reactions or consequences if I speak openly about my problems in the classroom. My colleagues listen and give me advice. The same with principal, her door is always open. This was so different in X school. I'd never discuss my problems there 'coz revealing them I'd be considered an incompetent teacher.*"

The interviews and analysis of documents generated at the site confirmed that teachers have had ample opportunities for meaningful collaboration around instructional issues, and that this has likely contributed to their strong relationships. Sharing ideas and materials at regular monthly staff meetings, weekly grade level meetings, school project team meetings, and departmental meetings has become a norm at Linden High. They have also kept the practice of learning together at their full faculty training events that everybody attends although "*nobody forces us*", which serve as food for thought throughout the year in addition to numerous other seminars that individuals and teams attend, and then share what they have learned with the faculty. As Lydia expressed, "*The quality of our work has improved immensely over the last couple of years ... we've built great relationships, and what's even more important, we've brought caring back into our practice.*"

School Culture

School culture as antecedent to DL development. When the school entered the Didactic Reform Project, the staff room was broken into factions and coalitions. When the school development team tried to use the strategies that they learned at the NEI's workshops to improve relationships, they got discouraged because as Lydia

explained "*especially male teachers always provoked us, making the climate in the staff room really bad. It was very difficult to remain encouraging, and sometimes we used humor to go beyond the general bad mood … it was really difficult.*"

Team members shared that only through their personal stamina and determination to improve the school did they manage to keep up their spirits and look for the ways to reach individuals and groups and gradually gain their confidence. As Manuela revealed in the interview, "*We were all really sensitive at the beginning and we took sarcastic comments from colleagues to heart and got really hurt. But then we realized that's just how some people are. Now we'd say 'let's leave him for another week or so, eventually we'll get him on our side'.*"

School culture as moderator of DL development. Creating school culture was a deliberate focus of the school development team when Lydia took over the principal position. By replicating the vision building process that they learned at the NEI's training with their faculty, the school development team made sure that they gave everybody an opportunity to contribute their ideas about what needed to be done to improve the current situation in which the school was losing the students.

The opportunity for creating meaning together was the first important step toward changing the school culture from resistance to engagement. The leadership team followed up by preparing a plan of action in which everybody had a role beyond their classroom work, and which was based on the agreements about responsibilities for carrying out the tasks. Since then, the faculty of Linden High has discussed the school's priorities for the following year at the end of each school year based on the evaluation of their work in the previous year. Although the school development team collects evaluation data from the teachers who have got used to collecting feedback about their work from the students throughout the year, they do the final evaluation

publicly before starting to plan ahead as part of their strategy to keep everybody involved and on the same page:

We literally ask every teacher 'what did you do, what was good, what did you want to achieve, what was not good and you don't want to do anymore, what do you want to achieve next year.' We don't force anybody but they like to collaborate. We found that such public form of reporting motivates them plus it keeps everybody on their toes – it's hard to stand in front of everybody and have nothing to present. We then require that every teacher writes down what they plan to do in the following year, where they want to collaborate, what's their strong area of expertise and where they see themselves as leaders.

The written reports that the school development team collects from the teachers serve for their planning of 'school projects' that are linked to the school's priorities. By continuously involving teachers in decisions about the direction of the school's development, the school development team has broadly distributed the responsibility for the achievement of the school's goals making every teacher accountable for the school's success.

Transition Mechanisms

While the previous section described the existing and redesigned conditions in school and how they shaped the formulation and implementation of distributed leadership, this section describes how providing opportunities for teachers to develop an understanding of the importance of the redesigned work, learn new skills required for its performance, and develop internal drive to engage in redesigned work create necessary transition mechanisms between new job characteristics and educators' engagement in distributed leadership.

Making Sense of Redesigned Work

When Lydia became the principal, she initiated a number of activities together with the school development team to help every teacher see the "big picture" of

change and understand why it was necessary. Because "*you need to believe in change to be able to implement it,*" as Lydia shared, they gave the faculty time to discuss how changing instruction would benefit students and promote the school, and let people voice their concerns. The opportunity for creating meaning together laid the foundation for teachers' engagement in the redesigned work.

As action research team leaders, the principal and team members developed deeper awareness of issues about student learning that needed to be addressed, which enabled them to facilitate the faculty's discussions about why instructional change was necessary, and to support the teachers in the process of collective sense-making. While the action research strategy of work served the school development team to establish themselves as leaders, the organization of teachers in action research groups presented the opportunity for them to develop an inquisitive attitude toward their work and create a common language to discuss it. The teachers felt that their initial work in action research groups was important for them because, as Nina summarized:

> *Action research opened up the way for us. We started to talk. And we created relationships. I still notice one of the teachers from my team, she turns to me for advice, you know, what do you think, is this O.K ... I was really satisfied with the work in these groups, especially because of the connections we made and the help we offered to each other. And it helped us become more closely attached to each other, not only at the school level but also on the personal level.*

Focusing on one common problem in action research teams helped the teachers move from talking about the problems in general to feeling empowered and actually addressing the problems by changing their attitude and their teaching. It also gave them the confidence to move away from the inertia of doing what was prescribed. All the teachers interviewed expressed appreciation for the opportunity to

learn together and try out innovation, as well as observe each other teach and then analyze what they had seen in relation to the expectations.

Motivation

The school development team members were initially discouraged in their roles of change agents because of the faculty's negative attitude toward their new role. During the first two years in the Didactic Reform Project, individual teachers would openly accuse them of "*crunching for the points for promotion*." However, once the team members established themselves in the school and were able to use their new knowledge to mobilize the faculty, they became extremely motivated by the positive results, realizing that in their new role, their contribution to the school's success could be much broader – they talked about being able "*to co-create the school's future*" – than in the past when their power was limited to their classroom work.

While the school development team members kept their full workload as teachers, they nevertheless described their work on the team as enriching because it helped them develop better insight into the organization, and empowered them to make decisions about "*things that are important for the school*." The principal retained sole responsibilities for financial management and human resources, which she did not discuss with the team. She reported that the team helped her develop a broader perspective on what was going on in the staff room and with individual teacher, and transformed her into a more responsive and collaborative person.

Despite teachers' earlier reports that they had been stressed because they "*had to spend so much time in school*" and "*work much longer hours than before*," more recent interviews conveyed a changed attitude and acceptance of extended scope of work as "*something unavoidable and necessary*." Linden High teachers have demonstrated through their actions, from volunteering to prepare school events and

initiate instructional innovation, to taking on the responsibilities as leaders of the school projects that they perceive their redesigned work as meaningful.

When asked about their motivation for redesigned work, several teachers expressed deep commitment to perform their new responsibilities as team leaders or team members. They pointed to the important role that each teacher had in shaping, development, and implementation of the school's projects that serve as a means of implementing change within four broad areas of development that the faculty decided to work on. When asked about the school's vision and common purpose, the teachers revealed that they are challenged to envision their school's future every year, and then to consider the purpose of their work in relation to the school's vision. As Maria explained, *"we talk about our school's future in great detail in late spring every year at our 'working meetings'. We're expected to contribute, and everything we say is written down and taken into consideration."*

The school development team has purposefully involved teachers in decision making about the school's development at these meetings, which was captured in Trudi's comment: *"The purpose of these meetings is to get suggestions and consensus from the whole teacher body about what we are going to do in the coming year."* The team members shared that by involving teachers in revisiting and redefining the school's vision, and in reflecting the compatibility of their educational philosophy with the common vision, they were promoting a sustained pursuit of shared purpose.

Learning

The first two years of the school's collaboration in the NEI's project were a period of intensive learning for the school development team. They attended all the NEI's meetings and seminars together as a team, describing their experience as an opportunity for increasing the team's cohesiveness and giving them a sense of power

that sustained them through the times when bad climate in their school prevented them from communicating effectively to the faculty what they were learning.

Having engaged actively in the NEI's professional training over two years, Lydia and the school development team had developed the necessary skills to lead their faculty to consensus about the necessity of instructional change after Larry's tragic death. They considered vision building process essential based on their awareness that teachers were confused and overloaded by extensive NEI's input, and "not even sure that they wanted to change anything." Once the teachers decided that the instructional change was necessary, and that the NEI's training was a means to achieve this goal, they made it their collective priority. As reported by Trudi, the new team leader, the Institute's support worked best when they first provided school-wide professional training, followed by the NEI's advisors working on the application of the same topic with small groups of teachers of the same subject over a longer period of time. When the conversations in the staff room revealed that some teachers were annoyed because they could not understand the terminology used by the NEI's experts while wanting to learn, the team member adapted some of the NEI's input and organized internal workshop to better support the faculty.

While teachers reported feeling satisfied with their increased instructional competence, they also expressed frustration. They reported that by using more active methods of teaching they felt they could better engage students, but they also described those methods as more time-consuming and not always producing better results. Initially, most teachers avoided using new methods, however, once the action research work promoted professional dialogue about teaching and learning, a culture of inquiry developed that replaced a previous attitude of blaming forces outside of teachers' control for absence of more active approach to teaching. As a consequence,

the faculty was motivated to continue looking for ways to both engage students and get them ready for the school-leaving exam. While reporting that they had reservations about the new processes, intended for supporting their learning, like for instance with peer coaching, because "*you don't want your colleague criticizing your teaching,*" they eventually embraced them as valuable learning experiences.

The school development team reported that the on-going encouragement and reassurance that there was no one correct answer to how one should teach, employed by the NEI's coach, further strengthened the climate of inquiry and life-long learning. The importance of continuous external professional and personal support that was in tune with the school's needs was stressed by the Linden High principal, school development team, and teachers as essential for the development that the school has made in five years.

Outcomes: Performance of Leadership Functions

Mayrowetz et al. (2007) define the practice of distributed leadership in terms of performance of six leadership functions: providing and selling a vision, providing encouragement and recognition, obtaining resources, adapting standard operating procedures, monitoring the improvement effort, and handling disturbances, which they consider a desirable outcome of redesigned work. The examination of the data collected for this study in terms of the leadership work, performed by administrators and teachers, revealed at least the attempts – if not the actual performance – of the following macrofunctions: providing and selling a vision, planning redesigned work, adapting standard operating procedures, working with resistance, monitoring improvement effort, providing encouragement and recognition, and buffering the faculty from outside interference. In addition to providing a description of the performance of each of the above functions, this study also considered whether the

features of distributed leadership permeated the interactions among the faculty, and if broader boundaries in leadership practices were incorporated into the routines and activities at the school.

Providing and Selling a Vision

While the school development team's knowledge and expertise grew with the on-going training, their ability to improve the school culture was initially weakened because of the former principal's inability to help clarify their role and negotiate their position in the school. Once the team members situated themselves in the school as capable leaders of reform in the third year of the school's collaboration in the NEI's project, they made it their priority to "*clarify common goals and engage the faculty in the pursuit of those goals.*" They supported Lydia in seizing the right moment after the tragic event to facilitate a discussion, letting everybody voice their concerns, which eventually helped clarify a guiding direction for the school and was then incorporated into the school's annual action plan. As Trudi recalled,

> *we [the school development team] stayed after the meeting that the NEI organized to conclude the year… and made a plan how to lead the vision building process … and then the tragedy happened …it was hard… but we were ready… all the teachers stayed at school the whole day, and we told each other a lot of things very openly…. the situation… made us a true community.*

The team members reported that after the initial process, they kept the conversations alive about the school's future and how each individual could contribute to it, thus continuously clarifying and strengthening the meaning of common purpose. While the tragedy that the school experienced served as a leverage point for initiating change, the school development team was able to sustain it by involving the faculty in the preparation of a very concrete annual action plan for change in which every teacher consented to have a role.

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According to the school development team, teachers were strongly committed to the school's development plan. They left it up to them to organize themselves to accomplish the tasks that they agreed to perform. The teachers' comments confirmed that they kept the development going because they felt the ownership of change. Susan, for instance, shared that "*we're prepared to do everything to attract students and then keep our promise to make this their best learning opportunity*."

Planning Redesigned Work

The school development team members reported that in addition to following the NEI's guidance, and using the ideas they got from the exchange of experience with the teams from other pilot schools when planning new structures and processes, they also used a trial and error approach in making them useful for their particular situation. For instance, because the majority of Linden High teachers had a habit of leaving monthly meetings early with an excuse that they commute to the school and had to catch their bus, the team decided to reserve one day in the week for meetings. On that specific day, the instruction time was shortened by two hours for everybody, and those two hours were then reserved for various meetings, for example for faculty meetings every first Tuesday in the month, for various project meetings the second Tuesday in the month, etc. By building time for meetings into the regular school schedule, the school development team wanted to show that, in Nina's words, "*we value the work that they're investing into the reform, and respect their time.*"

The team showed respect for teachers' input based on their authentic desire to include them in decisions about instructional change by asking their ideas and acting on them. After all, "*teachers are the experts for instruction, and they are the ones who put the change into practice,*" Lydia explained. They also included teachers in the preparation of the annual action plan for change "*because we didn't want to have a*

plan on the paper that nobody would follow." They wrote it together at one of the faculty meetings after previously discussing what needed to be changed and the possible activities. They reported that while they prepared strategic plans before, they had never been so concrete when distributing the responsibility.

The examination of the documentation at the school site revealed very detailed records with names of people in charge of various tasks, such as 'lead a workshop for the faculty', 'facilitate brainstorming of an idea at the faculty meeting', 'lead a team of teachers preparing for students' field trip or project week', 'prepare an evaluation report and present it at the faculty meeting', 'write a notice for the staff room information board', 'write a minutes of a meeting', 'prepare a spreadsheet for classroom observations for the teachers to complete', which is not something that the schools in Slovenia would characteristically have. Both the teachers and school development team members reported that the faculty negotiated who would do what, and with whom they wanted to collaborate. Once teachers took the responsibility, the team reported trusting them to work seriously and accomplish the expected results without imposing their control.

Adapting Standard Operating Procedures

The school development team members indicated that they made adapting the standard way of operation one of their priorities in the first years of their collaboration in the NEI's project because of their concern over increased workload imposed on teachers by the reform, and its possible de-motivating effect on them. The team's concern that the NEI's extensive input and requirements could overwhelm the faculty was caught in Lydia's statement: " *We're aware that teachers have been bombarded with a lot of new concepts… and that they need time to digest everything… the work*

for project requires bigger investment of time from everybody ... and we are aware that teachers won't be motivated if it's not meaningful."

The team reported that they adapted the schedule to give teachers time to experiment with the instructional innovation so as to allow them to "*develop a need for change,*" and supported discussions of teachers' reform work and its meaning for students at faculty meetings. They also reported repeating and adapting some of the NEI's workshops when they noticed that some teachers had difficulties understanding the new concepts.

Following the NEI's instructions but also taking into consideration that the majority of their faculty commuted to the school, they shortened the instruction time on a specific day in a week, and thus created the time for various meetings without making teachers return to the school or stay in school after they finished teaching. By providing the time for meetings during the regular work hours, they wanted "*to make sure that every teacher understood their attendance was not voluntary but part of their work obligation.*" The team also reported taking special care to keep the meetings within the planned time frame so that they "*didn't waste people's time."* In addition, they modified the school day by adding another 25-minute break to give teachers more opportunities for short daily consultations, and introduced longer block lessons to enable the use of more active teaching methods.

After the Didactic Reform Project ended, the school development team continued to work with the NEI on adapting the traditional school day to accommodate teachers' need for longer blocks of time that were gradually replacing the previous 45-minute subject slots. They reported creating a team of volunteers who attended the training seminars to learn how to plan across disciplines. At the beginning of the next school year, they then adapted the school schedule accordingly

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to allow those volunteer teachers and their teams to implement interdisciplinary planned units.

The team members provided examples to demonstrate how they also adapted their own work so that their new work was not added to their usual practice but rather became part of it. Nina, for instance, who was in charge of teacher training, explained that she used her obligatory peer observation lesson as a model in her workshop for teachers by inviting everybody to observe her teaching session and post-observation meeting with her colleague "*as a kind of double loop activity.*" After that, the whole group analyzed what they observed. Nina explained that in this way she "*completed my peer coaching obligation, and used it as my teacher training material at the same time.*"

By providing the time, space, resources, and personal and professional support to the faculty, the team wanted to make sure that teachers could focus on instructional change without worrying about organizational aspect, which was caught in Trudi's statement "*… we [the school development team]picked a day and invited teachers to teach in a different way on that particular day. We told them, 'whatever you decide – pair up with a colleague of your choice, use media, computers … just let us know, and we'll organize the time and space and provide the necessary equipment'…*" Teacher interviews confirmed that the team took care of the necessary organizational support, but also developed the school culture in which the new work was embedded. The latter was caught in Maria's comment "*…unlike in the past … it's became something normal for us … you know, nobody questions it anymore… that we all take part [in different meetings and training sessions], not just because of convenience … but because we feel the need to come together and talk.*" Maria's comment suggested that the modifications to the standard way of operation may not have been sufficient for

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work redesign to take root if the team had not previously led the faculty through the process of clarifying the organizational purpose, and supported the development of a sense of community.

Working with Resistance

From the start, part of the faculty that "*strongly opposed the idea of changed instruction … spread bad mood among teachers, making them resistant to any change,"* Nina explained. As difficult as it was "*to remain encouraging and sometimes use humor to go beyond general bad mood,*" Lydia and her team eventually built a trusting environment for open discussions about change. By keeping teachers involved in decisions about the school's future direction, they let the teachers know that they do not expect them to accept change blindly without regard for their professional opinion. "*We welcomed people to voice their opinion...we wanted things out in the open,*" Trudi recalled. The team members reflected that by inviting various perspectives they were able to demonstrate their readiness to embrace, rather than dismiss teachers' resistance, and thus showed respect for teachers' individual value and expertise. Lydia's comment "*...I said to X in the end 'look what a perfect product we created together. One person alone couldn't have done it ...',*" indicated that they welcomed teachers' participation not for opportunistic reasons, but because they really valued their contribution. The fact that teachers responded with honesty instead of with usual cynicism showed that the team created an important turning point in the school culture that started to change from resistance to engagement.

While some teachers reported remaining sceptical about instructional change, which in their opinion was not coordinated with the requirements of 'matura', their scepticism seemed to be an expression of their critical reflection rather than resistance

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to change. This was caught in Maria's observation that "*modern approach to teaching slows everything down … makes it impossible to cover the content for 'matura'. But telling students 'you have to learn this and that' doesn't help them learn for life … for this you have to use modern methods…so it's a dilemma.* "

By participating in the decision to change instruction as part of their school's future development, and by having the time and opportunity to learn together, teachers were able to take the ownership of the change they were expected to implement, which removed the causes for resistance. It was important that Lydia and her team "*stood firmly behind the idea of change*."

The team members showed developing certain maturity in dealing with resistance when explaining that they "*took their colleagues' sarcastic comments and their resistance personally"* at the beginning but that they grew out of it because they began to understand that some people needed more time to change than others. "*Now we discuss it [resistance]in our team, what may be the reasons, what are this teacher's strong areas …sometimes we just have to pair certain people up, and they pull each other forward."*

Surges of resistance still appeared again on various occasions, for instance, when Lydia made a decision to provide monthly financial reward to the team members for their extra effort and additional hours they were putting into their work on the team. Some teachers' remarks during the interview, like for instance that the principal "*keeps saying me and my girls*" and that "*we don't need them to make decisions for us,*" suggested that this caused a disturbance in the staff room, and that some teachers may have perceived the team as an elitist group. Another such occasion was when an institute that did not work in coordination with the NEI rushed the vocational part of the faculty into reform. Nevertheless, Lydia and the team reported

connecting the external requirements to their own need, and buffering the faculty

from outside pressure, which removed causes for resistance.

Monitoring Improvement Efforts

The school development team members agreed "*making sure that things get done*" was an important part of their role, however, they stressed that they avoided positioning themselves above teachers, and exerting control over their progress on the tasks. Instead, they made themselves available, or as Nina described, "*… our teachers know that they can always turn to us in case they get stuck or need guidance…,*" but also used different strategies to enable teachers' self-monitoring. The team revealed that they monitored their school's progress within the framework of their internal evaluation plan, which made writing reports for the NEI easier for them.

Teacher interviews confirmed that in addition to having the opportunity for seeking individual guidance from the school development team members, the teachers also received collegial feedback, generated from peer observations. While they practiced peer observations during their collaboration in the NEI's project, Lydia reported deciding after the project ended to make peer observations part of the school's formal structure because "*a teacher can better advise a colleague than the principal … and it's good for them to share responsibility … keeping an eye on each other's progress.*" Teacher interviews confirmed that peer coaching helped them "*push each other forward … in the same direction*" but also contributed to the development of "*a kind of readiness to help each other … knowing that we're in this together.*"

Another strategy that the team came up with was the "exhibition days" that provided the opportunity for the teachers "*to show the best they can do*" to each other, and occasionally also to the parents. The team also reported requiring from the

teachers to report about improvements of their practice in front of everybody at regular faculty meetings, and to write a report of their work for the end-of-year "working meeting." The team then put individual teacher's reports together, and used them for the evaluation of their general progress, and to adjust their next year's goals. While teachers' presentations and reports eased the team's preparation of the reports that the NEI required twice a year, the team revealed using the gathered data also in a more formative way – they made corrections and adjustments during the year, abandoning the practices that they found useless, and keeping those that were working well.

Teacher interviews revealed that the opportunities for self-monitoring had a positive effect on the school climate, and that they helped them develop a sense of community, which was caught in Susan's comment, "*I can't imagine actually showing my work ... or admitting that I have problems ... in the other school that I'm teaching...but here, we feel connected ...knowing that ...we're helping each other and keep improving how we teach for the good of the kids*."

Providing Encouragement and Recognition

Lydia explained that she took great care to extend her praise personally to the individuals who distinguished themselves in contributing to the collective effort to improve the school, "*I tell them that I'm proud, and sometimes I recognize the individuals that excel themselves publicly at our faculty meetings. Or I'd send some teachers an e-mail because I think you have to give praise immediately when it's really earned.*" While the school development team members' comments confirmed that the principal made them feel appreciated, other teachers revealed that they did not commonly receive recognition from the principal, but that a system of peer coaching

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that she institutionalized provided them with recognition and support from their colleagues.

When asked about whether they incorporated celebration into their school, the team members' comments, like for instance, "*We should socialize more but then we all like spending our free time with our families*," or "*We do celebrate New Year together, we all go out for dinner*," revealed lack of awareness about the value of celebration for reinforcing the importance of vision and common values, and for helping the school to sustain its improvement efforts.

Nevertheless, the school development team members did recognize the importance of externally organized celebration in the form of the Festivals of Best Practices that the NEI organized at the end of each year to celebrate the success of the didactic reform. They viewed those celebrations as re-energizing opportunities that also provided confirmation of their work. As Nina explained, "*I need this exchange of practice with colleagues, because this broadens my horizon, gives me ideas where to improve and I get confirmation that I too am doing a good job… our experience is … when we listen to other schools present … you realize how far we got, and it's a great feeling of achievement …makes us so proud*." Other teachers also revealed feelings of pride, like for instance Manuela, "*when I present our work to colleagues from other schools … and I see admiration in their eyes, and they ask questions because they're really interested – that's the best confirmation you can get*." She also explained how nervous she was in the first years when she had to do the presentations in front of the teachers that she did not know, and how she appreciated Lydia's call in the evening when she returned home, asking her how it went and congratulating her for the job well done. "*The fact itself that she remembered …was rewarding*," Manuela revealed.

Buffering the Faculty from Outside Interference

Lydia exhibited a critical stance toward the external initiatives from the start of the school's participation in the NEI's project by questioning the suitability of the NEI's professional development program, and being selective in bringing the experts into the school, taking into consideration teachers' identified needs. When the National Vocational Institute introduced a top-down initiative for change in the third year of the project, which disregarded teachers' expertise and prior experience, the school development team expressed their concern over its possible destabilizing effect on the culture that they had built over the years. As Lydia shared, *"They're sending us experts who want to change things very quickly by telling teachers what they must do, and it's not good for our teachers… we're worried we'll lose the momentum … we know we have to organize ourselves and prepare our own model and help teachers understand what's expected of them."* By adapting the external initiative to the needs of their teachers, and by included them in decision-making about how they were going to implement the change in a meaningful way, the school development team shielded their faculty from unwarranted external demands. At the same time, they kept looking for opportunities to support ongoing professional inquiry and collective sharing and processing of new knowledge – for instance, Lydia invited business leaders into the school to challenge teachers' mental models about the knowledge their students will need in the workplace; the team members invited the teachers from other pilot schools to talk about how they implemented innovation with the purpose of extending teachers' minds for new possibilities.

The school development team exhibited their increased level of autonomy also with regard to their own work in relationship with externally imposed demands. Manuela, for instance, explained how they responded to external demands for excessive paperwork, *"We've simplified certain things, sometimes you don't have to*

write so much but you can say a lot in a shorter passage, and we make our own

decisions about what's important, and what's essential, and what's not. Otherwise,

with all these requirements, we wouldn't survive."

<center>*Barriers to Redesigned Work*</center>

During the first years in the project, the school development team members

were frustrated by a competitive attitude among the schools that was visible during

the meetings of cohorts at the NEI's main office. The team reported that it caused

them to stress over the degree of sophistication of their slides and fluidity of their

verbal skills instead of worrying about the content of their reform work. Trudi's

comment revealed that the NEI's coach who was assigned to the school offered them

the right kind of support:

> *We got so worried, it was maybe our third or fourth meeting, but T.*
> *[NEI's coach] made it clear in front of all the teams and coaches*
> *that we were all learning and that nobody could be certain what the*
> *best way was. And that what's best for one school wouldn't*
> *necessarily work in another… We realized then that she was able to*
> *distinguish between what was just fluff and what was hard work.*

Gradually, Linden High team realized that competition among schools was a

reflection of a competitive dynamics among the NEI's experts who worked with

individual schools. They explained in the interviews that because they could read the

micropolitical dynamics at those meetings, they soon stopped obsessing about the

"*beauty of their presentation.*"

NEI's decision in the last year of the Didactic Reform Project to bring in

teams of teachers from other unrelated projects to the school development team

meetings so that they could learn from each other was perceived as another constraint

that resulted in a loss of clarity in change focus. Furthermore, due to change in the

project leadership and the new leader's unwillingness to plan mandatory meetings at

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the NEI's main office in advance made it impossible for the school to adapt their schedule, and forced them to send proxies to the meetings instead of going there as a team.

Another challenge that the school faced was external pressure for change such as the National Vocational Institute's efforts to change their vocational programs using a directive, top-down approach, which threatened to cause resistance among the teachers again. Teachers resented being rushed and forced into the implementation of a change that worked against the culture they had developed in the school.

Needs for Growth

While leadership practices at Linden High have fostered the development of teachers' professional confidence, empowerment, and their engagement to continue their collective learning, and refusing to return to their old way of teaching, there is still room for improvement. Although the school development team has put purposeful effort into distributing leadership more broadly in the school by inviting the teachers to assume leadership of school projects, they still perceive themselves as the ones who "*have to make sure the work gets done,*" in spite of their effort to incorporate the structures in the school for teachers' self-monitoring. Some teachers' comments indicated that they too perceived the school team as an exclusive leadership power in the school, which seemed to become redundant, for instance Susan's comment, "*... the principal keeps saying 'me and my girls have decided', I don't think we need a team to make decisions for us, we are a small faculty, we can make decisions together, we're all open to change.*"

In terms of systems thinking, there is room for growth as well. The principal, for instance, explained that she introduced individual meetings with teachers to discuss their progress in this academic year, but did not connect them with her

teachers' personal development plans and teachers' portfolios to help her structure the conversations. The use of portfolios that seemed "*time consuming*" and "*additional work*" to teachers, would probably become more meaningful to them had they connected them with the idea of having evidence of their growth to share with their principal. Some teachers' comments related to their meetings with Lydia, like Maria's, for instance, "*I don't know why they are useful. We just chat a little*," did reveal that those meetings lacked purpose and structure.

Case 2: Little Creek High School

School Setting

Little Creek High School is located in a rural, agricultural community in one of the most developmentally depressed regions in Slovenia. While having an abundance of rich, rural land and natural resources such as thermal water and biodiesel (alternative fuel), the area is populated by small farmers who still rely on traditional agricultural methods, forcing them to survive on a tiny income. Because the region borders Hungary, a politically very closed country until recently, the development of tourism and infrastructure has fallen far behind other regions in Slovenia. Until the early nineties, a large local textile company, known for its high quality products across Europe, provided employment to the younger generation of the inhabitants that sought to improve their low farm-income. Downsizing in recent years caused severe job losses and feelings of desperation in the area inhabitants. While the situation is bleak, there is also a bright side to it. Due to European Union regulations that require regional income to approach income levels in the rest of Europe as quickly as possible, extremely generous incentive packages have been pouring into the region. If used wisely, the region has great potential for fast

development through restructuring of agriculture and investment in organic farming and tourism.

One of eight high schools in the region, Little Creek High School offers an academic program ('gimnazija'), two vocational tracks – mechanical engineering and business – and ten diverse three-year vocational programs to the population of 318 students, 135 of whom are enrolled in the academic program. While the area has nationally mixed population due to its close proximity to the Hungarian border, Little Creek is the only high school in the region that caters to both nationalities by teaching its programs bilingually. Although the student enrollment has dropped in the last couple of years as a consequence of birthrate decline in Europe, this did not cause much anxiety among the faculty because as a bilingual school, Little Creek is exempt from the national [9]class size policy. As Tatiana Soyer, the assistant principal and the school development team leader with seventeen years of experience at the school, explained, "*We have to invest ourselves to attract a decent student enrollment. But since we're the only bilingual high school, we're not obsessing because no matter what, we have to exist.*"

The school has a total of 54 teachers, most of whom teach in both the academic and vocational programs, with the exception of those who teach specialized vocational subjects. Teacher stability is characteristic of Little Creek. The majority of teachers – who are mixed nationality – have more than fifteen years of teaching experience, and have taught at Little Creek since the start of their careers. Many of them grew up in the area and went through the school system. While the school used to occupy one of the oldest buildings in the area (now listed as one of the buildings of historical interest), the plans to move Little Creek to a new facility began soon after

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[9] The class size policy requires from all high schools in Slovenia to meet the required cap of 32 students before they can set up a new class, which has led to crowded classrooms and teacher surplus.

Slovenia proclaimed its independence in 1991. A very modern building was erected for that purpose that now provides the optimal educational environment and resources to Little Creek faculty and students – spacious staff room and offices for teachers with modern furniture and latest equipment, modern library and cafeteria, beautiful classrooms with the latest technology and internet access (the school complies with strict European e-school requirements), the latest hi-tech equipment on the shop floor for vocational programs, and a sports facility area with a modern-equipped gym.

Entering Little Creek conveys an atmosphere of professionalism. Two students greet guests and ask the purpose of their visit. The main office, located next to the staff room, is well organized, clean, and bright. The principal keeps his office door shut, and his secretary announces visitors, and brings in refreshments. The culture at Little Creek as evidenced by the observations of hallway interactions is conventional and cordial. The learning environment gives an impression of a fast-paced, compartmentalized organization where everybody has a specific, assigned job and little time for interaction. During the breaks, Little Creek teachers are observed either photocopying materials or hurrying to their offices to get ready for their next class. The staff room is mainly empty and does not seem to function as a common area for teachers to come together during the breaks to discuss the business of the school.

Little Creek students have historically performed well academically. The school results, as measured yearly through the 'matura' school exit exam, have been "*strong, with a very high 97.2 % success rate in the last two years*" according to Boris Novak, who was a teacher of mechanical engineering at Little Creek for fifteen years before he became principal two years ago. Boris, who did not try to conceal his pride, also explained in the interview that the school had the highest number of golden

graduates in relation to the number of enrolled students in Slovenia at the end of the academic year.

Developments Leading to the School's Joining the NEI's Didactic Reform Project Context

Although Little Creek High School had experienced the same consistent decline in student enrollment as other high schools across the country in the years before joining the NEI's Didactic Reform Project, this was not a cause of major concern for the administration and teachers. On the contrary, because the school is exempt from the national class size policy, they could form smaller classes, which has allowed for more flexibility and individualized instruction.

The reasons for the school's joining the NEI's project were thus not related to the concerns over student population decline or the need to improve instruction. The decision to join came from Frank Kneip, the former principal of Little Creek, who had led the school for twenty-eight years before he retired two years ago. As a principal, Frank was "made" in the old communist political system, which taught him to enforce the decisions made at the state level – and he viewed the NEI as the extension of The Ministry of Education – with a "firm hand". Being more the manager than the leader, he made the decision to join the NEI's Didactic Reform Project on his own when he found out from the Head of the local NEI's branch office, and from the principals from previous cohorts, that the schools that agreed to pilot the didactic reform enjoyed intensive and on-going on-site professional development and coaching that was free of charge for the school. He regarded joining the project as a great opportunity for free high-quality staff development on the school site. Throughout his long career as the principal, he had placed special emphasis on his teachers' professional development because he realized early on that only highly skilled and qualified

teachers could ensure high school-performance results. Trusting the NEI completely because "*they know what's best for our teachers,*" he did not examine the NEI's professional development program in relation to the faculty's needs, but decided to comply with everything that it would require just to ensure that Little Creek would be "*among the first to implement instructional change because I was sure that other high schools would eventually have to do the same.*"

The teachers of Little Creek have always been eager to learn – maybe even more so because their remote location limits access to professional development. Openness to learning was reflected throughout the teacher interviews, such as that with Viola, an English language teacher in her seventeenth year at the school, who described an "*inner drive for continuous professional growth that we all share.*" As members of a rural school community, teachers described feeling isolated and disadvantaged in comparison with their colleagues in urban and suburban schools who did not have to travel half a day to get to the professional development events organized in bigger cities. When Frank presented his idea to join the NEI's project to the faculty, he stressed that if they joined the project, the NEI's experts would come to the school regularly to provide most up-to-date professional training to them. As a result, nobody resisted his idea, and he obtained the required general agreement from the faculty.

Change Initiative

The faculty regarded the NEI's professional development program as a vehicle to keep them informed about the latest educational developments, and in line with other high schools in the country that were located closer to the information sources. Although nobody opposed Frank Kneip's initiative to join the NEI's project and pilot the instructional change, the interviews revealed that the teachers did not really know

what they were getting into, and that they agreed because that was what they always did when the principal told them his ideas. While they described him as "*an old school and completely authoritarian,*" a person "*who would never discuss his decisions with us,*" they also explained that it did not bother them that they did not have a say in the decision to pilot the instructional reform because they welcomed the opportunity for learning.

Although the teachers were open to the idea of instructional change, they initially found it difficult to meet the expectations of the NEI's experts who used an action research approach to work with them. Accustomed to complying with the top-down directions, the teachers expected to be told what they should do, and they got frustrated when the NEI's experts wanted them to investigate their practice, identify their problems, and then experiment with different approaches to find a solution that would best fit their particular context. Nevertheless, judging from what different teachers reported, the faculty took the challenge and formed action research groups in which relationships across departments started to form. As Mariana, a chemistry teacher in her sixteenth year at the school, observed, "*Working in action research teams was helpful because we got to know colleagues who taught different subjects and their work.*"

However, some school development team members who led action research teams reported that while the teachers took part in the team meetings, they were not creative or resourceful but rather waited for the leader to make suggestions, give initiatives, and do all the work. The action research teams that were led by the teacher leaders who were willing to invest a lot of work thus functioned more or less successfully, while others disintegrated in the first couple of months or never really started to function at all.

While the collaboration in the NEI's project brought many benefits to the

school, it also presented many requirements. Initially, Little Creek teachers were

willing to stay in the school longer, particularly if they worked in an action research

team that engaged them in the investigation of an "*interesting instructional problem.*"

But as soon as the team leader needed the results to show at the meetings with the

NEI and asked the team members to contribute, their enthusiasm vanished. As Katia,

who has taught history for twenty-one years, and who led one of the action research

teams, recalled:

> *We met in the afternoons outside of regular school hours. The*
> *meetings were not formally planned at the school level, and it was*
> *up to us when and how often we wanted to meet. By working*
> *together we discovered how each of us was thinking, and how we*
> *prepared for instruction, and that some of us put more effort into*
> *instructional planning than others… When I asked my team*
> *members to write things down because I needed to present our work*
> *at the NEI's meeting, we often had conflicts… and it was hard*
> *because when you do all the work for the fifth time and your*
> *colleagues still don't want to contribute, you stop being tolerant.*

What this and other teachers reported in the interviews suggests is that while

individual teachers were committed to their profession and possessed a strong inner

drive for learning, the faculty did not share a sense of organizational commitment.

Because the leaders of action research teams were driven by the external

requirements, and because general awareness that they were working toward the

improvement of the school was missing, the teachers excluded themselves from the

obligation to contribute because they did not seem to perceive the NEI's requirements

as something worth sacrificing their free time.

In addition, Frank's retirement intensified a negative culture at Little Creek. In

the last year of his principalship, Frank suddenly decided that he wanted to keep his

position for another term, but because the majority of faculty voted against the extension, he had to retire. His retirement polarized the staff room – those who were favored by Frank supported his decision, and after he was forced to retire, they started to show hostility toward the rest of the faculty by refusing to communicate and socialize with them.

When Boris Novak took the position of the principal, some teachers' comments suggested that the part of the faculty that supported the extension of Frank's principal term behaved disrespectfully toward Boris, disapproving of everything he did and implying that he was not fit to be principal. Anton, for instance, who has taught Slovene language and literature for nineteen years, described the situation in the following way:

> *Boris is democratic and open but because of that we often have anarchy – people have different understandings of what democracy means. The principal is young and makes mistakes, we cannot compare his leadership with that of the former principal who lived through different systems and gained a lot of experience. I think we have to be patient and develop a democratic dialogue.*

As the new principal, Boris was in a difficult position. While he was involved in the didactic reform as a teacher of a vocational subject, he was not considered to be an expert from whom the teachers in the academic track would seek advice. He had never been part of the school development team, and while the training program at the School for Principals that he attended before he became principal provided him with some leadership knowledge and skills, he did not seem to be equipped for dealing with the situation in the staff room. While Frank's retirement was an opportunity he could use to address the adversity by letting people voice their concerns and then pulling them together, thus providing positive closure to conflict, he decided to avoid

the confrontation and pretend it did not exist. The opportunity to build a sense of

urgency for the faculty's engagement in the reform was thus lost.

Developing Commitment to Common Goals

When asked about the common goals, Boris Novak was the only one who

seemed to believe that the faculty shared commitment to common goals. He was using

"we" when explaining the school vision, creating an impression that the teachers were

involved in its creation:

> *We want our school to be distinctive by being multicultural, that's*
> *why we*
> *emphasize foreign languages in our program. We are a bilingual*
> *school but we want students to learn other languages as well –*
> *that's why we added the third foreign language last year, and*
> *applied for funds to be able to offer the fourth. We want to build a*
> *good foundation to support our multicultural orientation. We also*
> *want our vocational program to be in tune with the needs of the*
> *local community. I'd say that's our vision, these two broad*
> *directions that we're pursuing.*

It turned out, however, that while he had a clear vision about the direction of

the school, nobody shared it with him. When asked if the flags from the European

countries, displayed in front of one of the classrooms, were connected with their

multicultural orientation, the teachers did not seem to be aware that the school had

such orientation. They explained that they brought the flags from one of the European

projects, and displayed them just as a decoration, but that as a school they had other

priorities, like for instance developing students' critical thinking skills.

According to Tatiana, who led the school development team almost from the

start, she had tried to engage the faculty in vision building process twice, the first time

after the school development team took part in the NEI's vision building training

retreat, and then again a year ago. But both her attempts failed. While she was not

prepared to comment on the reasons for her failed attempts, other teachers' reports

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revealed that at the time of her initial efforts, the faculty was too overwhelmed with all they had to do in the project and reacted impatiently to her attempt, and the second time the climate among the faculty had deteriorated so much that when she asked the teachers to share their beliefs about the purpose of education and their work, those that were in the opposition left the meeting.

The teachers interviewed maintained that while their goals may have been the same because they all wanted their school and their teaching to be good, they did not feel that they shared common goals because they never engaged in a productive dialogue about the school's future together, as a faculty.

Characteristics of Redesigned Work Under the NEI's Project

Development of Knowledge and Skills

When Little Creek joined the NEI's project, everybody attended the professional development provided by the NEI, including the teachers who taught vocational subjects. While in the past most of the teachers used five days of professional development per year to which they were entitled according to their contract to attend the seminars organized within their subject area, they were never trained together as a faculty over a longer period of time.

When asked if they initially had problems when they were suddenly expected to engage in a dialogue with their colleagues that taught different subjects, Viola explained with a cynical smile, "*At that time, no, we didn't have problems with anything. Seemingly everything was OK. The truth is that we didn't deal with the problems we had, plus I think everybody was kind of curious about what everybody else was doing.*" Other teachers' comments revealed that some action research teams were formed according to whom the team leader liked rather than according to who

shared the same interest for the instructional problem. Marianne, for instance, observed:

> *Our team leader invited us to collaborate with her I don't know why, maybe because she knew and respected our work. Or perhaps because we worked well together. I guess this may not be the best way to do action research team work, maybe people need to collaborate out of need and not only because they're friends.*

While Little Creek teachers expressed commitment to individual professional learning, collaborative learning did not develop because they decided to disregard the NEI's recommendations for how to form action research teams. Instead of forming them based on common interest for the instructional area that the NEI expected them to identify, they formed the teams based on friendships, which worked against the idea of developing new collegial relationships across faculty. Because they chose to trust and work closely with only well-liked, small circles of friends, they did not move beyond isolated "islands of excellence" – the individuals and groups that experimented with instructional innovation in the isolation of their classrooms – that had existed already before the school joined the NEI's project.

Although the school development team acquired the necessary knowledge and skills to guide the faculty toward becoming a genuine learning community, they did not apply those skills probably because they left the problems they seemed to have within their team unresolved, which was suggested by frequent changes in membership. It seems that rather than working on relationships and building the team's capacity to lead, they kept changing the teachers on the team almost as though they were hoping eventually to find the teachers that would be a perfect match. Due to lack of membership stability, the school development team could not function as a coherent team – which could have enabled them to deal with the conflict in their staff room more successfully than the school development team leader alone.

Task Significance

Based on the interviews and observations, most of the teachers in both the academic and vocational tracks, regardless of their age or subject area, considered their teaching as significant, and approached it with high degree of responsibility. As Anton shared:

> *I love being a teacher, I love working with young people. And I have always invested in my professional growth. We're all here for the students, and we want the best for them. And I know that my colleagues share the same dedication.*

However, because neither the former nor the current principal have engaged the faculty in thinking about the big picture of the instructional reform and how they could implement it meaningfully together for the benefit of their students, teachers remained isolated and disconnected from the purpose of the school and from each other. Since the work outside the classroom was not framed properly for them, they did not perceive it as meaningful. For instance, Diane, a veteran teacher in her thirty-fourth year at the school, who taught Slovene language and literature – the same as Anton – expressed her frustration in the following way: "*We are burdened with stupid things. […] I've just spent something like a hundred hours writing stupid reports. I'd be much more useful to myself and my students if I spent that time reading books and preparing for my classes.*"

Task Identity

Frequent mention of the existence of many teams and of active teamwork at the school in the interviews created an impression that Little Creek teachers moved beyond their discipline and classroom-based mentalities, which – as many of them reported – were characteristic of them under Frank's leadership, in order to perform redesigned work. Deeper probing in the interviews, however, revealed that while

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some professional interactions across subjects were genuine, most of them felt forced.
As Anton observed:

> *Increasingly we're having an impression that we're doing things for the sake of writing the reports and not for the sake of the students. And while they [the school development team] would say 'You don't have to, nobody's forcing you, but ...' there are always these three dots at the end.*

Lacking common vision and a clear sense of direction, the teachers did not seem to be driven by their understanding of the importance of their work for the school and students, but rather by top-down pressures to produce the results that they did not feel committed to. Being overwhelmed and under time pressure to produce evidence of their work to the external Institutes that financially supported the projects, the school development team members often made people collaborate in interdisciplinary teams, often without asking them for their consent. As a result, instead of increased motivation, teachers showed a weariness and wariness toward school change efforts.

Assuming Leadership Roles

Tatiana Soyer, who took over the leadership of the school development team from Frank Kneip at the end of the school's first year in the NEI's project, and has been the leader of the team ever since, was described by the teachers as a strong leader. Working as an assistant principal for twelve years under both, the former and the present principals, she was recognized as an authority by the staff members. Before becoming assistant principal, she taught Slovene language and literature at the school, and had a reputation of being an innovative teacher always up to date with new developments in her area of expertise. She kept a couple of hours per week of teaching in her role as the assistant principal, and she led one of the most successful action research teams during the school's participation in the NEI's project. During

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the interviews, her voice was strong and the team members frequently looked at her, suggesting their perception of her as their leader.

Tatiana's power derived from her formal authority as the assistant principal, and from her expert knowledge as a teacher, and she made it clear in the interview that she "*takes the front in decisions*". Both the former and present principals indicated that they left the decisions in the area of instruction up to her, trusting her expertise and judgment completely, which enabled them to focus on management tasks that they both perceived as the principal's main responsibility.

But while Tatiana held a superior position of authority in the team, the interactional relationships between her and the team members, observed during the interview and afterwards while she and two team members were finalizing a report in her office, seemed to be relaxed and equitable. During the three days of my school visit, I observed that the door of her office was always open. It was as though she was open and democratic but because of her responsibility for instruction and pressures of time she often had to assume a more directive and less collegial attitude.

Although the team members indicated that they all had an important role in leading the instructional innovation that was going on in the school, they were able to define their roles only in terms of what results they had to produce, like for instance, "*We are in charge of preparing an annual report*," or "*We monitor all the projects that are going on at the school making sure that the work is done*," and were unable to distinguish between the strengths of individual team members and what each of them brought to the team. While the impression was that they co-performed their leadership work, it also seemed that the team members did not act unless given direction by Tatiana. As a team, they did not feel that their role in the school had changed over

five years except that their workload kept growing due to increased external requirements for paperwork.

The team members also indicated that they had been widening leadership boundaries at the school and had, for instance, encouraged those teachers that proposed the topics for the interdisciplinary school projects to take over the responsibility for leading those projects. The interviews with the teachers revealed, however, that those who took over leadership of the newly established project teams were experiencing so many problems with getting their colleagues to collaborate in planning and teaching the interdisciplinary units that people became wary of getting involved in leadership.

Balancing Autonomy and Interdependence

Little Creek teachers reported that they were experiencing more work, increased regulation of their work, and more distractions from teaching children, which they regarded the core of their work. While they had an "*overwhelming amount of the opportunities to collaborate,*" most of the collaboration was experienced as forced upon them – not for the benefit of the students but because the administration had to send a report. As Anita, who has taught math for the tenth year at the school, observed:

> *When they tell me that I have to work on a team and I don't see what the students would gain from our work, I have difficulties giving my consent. That's been really bothering me. Because if I understand it correctly, all this interdisciplinary fuss is supposed to help students make connections among subjects, and is not intended for us to practice teamwork.*

Some teachers' comments revealed that they perceived the administration's pressure to which they were often exposed, namely that unless they worked in certain teams they would not be able to fulfill their required workload, as professionally

demeaning. While they were not opposed to the practice of interdisciplinary teaching because they believed that it was beneficial for students, they maintained that artificially imposed connections among the subjects that undermined opportunities for them to initiate their own joint projects stripped them of their creativity and spontaneity, which they considered part of their professional autonomy. Some teachers also felt that their subject syllabus limited their instructional decision making by prescribing how much content they had to cover, and by rushing them into content coverage.

The interviews also revealed that some teachers felt the administration's encouragement to attend the professional development seminars geared toward the content of their school projects as the pressure that robbed them of the opportunities to attend the seminars within their subject areas which may not have had immediate application in the classroom but which "*inspired us and fed our souls*".

From the start of the school's inclusion in the NEI's project, Little Creek administration exhibited total compliance with the external initiatives, making every effort to put them in practice according to directions. Not only the former but also the new principal relied on the external directions without attempting to make the initiatives meaningful to the faculty. As Boris explained, "*We follow the NEI's guidance and plan our development within the areas that are well supported by them. We don't want to improvise too much*." They both lacked a necessary critical stance that would enable them to evaluate the external initiatives with regard to the faculty's readiness and teachers' needs. Consequently, the initiatives, like for instance action research, were implemented without understanding and thus only on the surface. Similarly, because teachers were forced into collaboration, the instructional innovation such as interdisciplinary planning and teaching seemed to have lost its

meaning and was implemented for its own sake instead of for the benefit of the students.

Feedback

While individual teachers reported that they occasionally used questionnaires to get feedback from their students about their work, collecting data was not something that all the teachers would do on a regular basis. The interviews also revealed that they received none or very little feedback on their practice from adults. Although both the principal and assistant principal indicated that they considered observing each teacher at least once a year necessary, it turned out that they were simultaneously focusing on so many things that they kept postponing teacher observations.

While Little Creek faculty experimented with peer coaching during their participation in the NEI's project, the practice did not take root in the school because as Marianne shared, "*the time schedule does not allow it*." Consequently, the teachers reported that they judged their work with students based on the success their students achieved on the "matura" exam.

When asked about how they evaluated their school's success in instructional change, the school development team members expressed appreciation of the annual Festivals of Best Practices and explained that sharing their achievements with the colleagues from other schools and getting feedback from them was the most rewarding experience that inspired them and gave them the energy to continue.

While appreciating the NEI's idea of exchange of practice and feedback among the schools, the school development team did not seem to develop the strategies for generating feedback in their own school. A habit of collecting data to make decisions about the innovation at the school seemed to be missing. When I

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asked the team members, for instance, to describe how they changed the open school

day that they traditionally organized once a year for the prospective students and their

parents, each of them expressed a different opinion about the event. It turned out that

they did not formally evaluate the event by collecting feedback from the teachers who

showcased innovative approaches to the visitors or from the students and parents that

observed the instruction, but that they were making conclusions based on their

individual impressions.

Throughout the interviews, the administration and the teachers used a lot of

"*we should've been doing this and that*" as though my questions made them aware

that while they had been overloaded with numerous extraneous tasks, the time to do

important things slipped away.

<p style="text-align:center">*Antecedents/Moderators*</p>

Organizational Structures

Hierarchy as antecedent to DL development. The former principal, who was

described as "*an autocratic leader who made all his decisions without referring to

anyone, not even his assistant principal,*" explained that he sought the faculty's

agreement to join the NEI's Didactic Reform Project because the NEI required it from

all the pilot schools. The teachers revealed that they knew he made the decisions

before seeking their agreement because "*that's just how things work in our school.*"

While he supported the establishment of the school development team, and acted as

its formal leader for a year because in his opinion "*as the principal I was

automatically the leader,*" he did not seem to understand the purpose and role the

team was expected to play at the school. He perceived the team as useful in a sense

that he could "*rely on them that they'll write the reports, and make sure that the

teachers change instruction as they are expected to [by the NEI],*" but did not express

<p style="text-align:center">188</p>

feeling that they contributed to his leadership work in any way. He fully supported

their work as long as it complied with the NEI's instructions, because "*they [the NEI]*

always make sure everything is according to regulations."

Frank led from the top and did not feel the need to engage the faculty in

conversations about the school's future or bind people together around common

purpose. Although the faculty seemingly accepted every change that the NEI's

professional development program encouraged, the initiatives often seemed to have

been implemented without proper understanding and zest, like for instance action

research teamwork that should have served for broadening collaboration across

faculty, but because teachers reported that the teams were formed based on friendship,

they did not seem to leverage their engagement in a meaningful inquiry process that

could potentially create new relationships among them, and improve the school's

climate.

Hierarchy as moderator of DL development. When Boris assumed the

principalship, he carried on the same hierarchical structure as his predecessor

although the teachers reported that he was much more democratic in his relationships

with the faculty. When asked about his relationship with the school development

team, he explained that he was careful "*not to impose or put myself over them as an*

expert." While he indicated that he was well informed about the team's work, he

never suggested that he wanted to be on the team. His comments revealed that he did

not recognize the team's leadership potential, and that his perception of the team's

role differed from Tatiana's. While she described the team's responsibility as "*leading*

all the development work in our school," he described them as "*a body that gives*

suggestions and coordinates the pedagogical activities at our school." His comments

suggested that he considered himself as the sole leader, "*responsible for good results*

on the 'matura' exam," who had to monitor everything, including the work of the

school development team and their suggestions, "*to ensure that everything complies*

with the 'matura' requirements and is financially feasible."

The teachers described Boris as a manager who "*represents the school to the*

external stakeholders and communicates with local businesses," and Tatiana as an

instructional leader. Tatiana's comment that "*Boris never taught in the academic*

track, he was a teacher in the vocational program, and so he leaves instructional

matters to us," suggested divided leadership responsibilities, with the principal and

assistant principal each performing in their specific area of strength. While Tatiana

reported that she regularly informed Boris about the team's work, the communication

did not seem to be reciprocal. Data results thus reveal that Little Creek has kept a

hierarchical structure, with the principal on the top and Tatiana immediately under

him.

Although Boris invited suggestions from teachers and was described as being

open and supportive, he nevertheless used "*soft*" pressure to coerce people into doing

what he thought was necessary, like for instance when he planned the schedule so that

the teachers were forced into interdisciplinary teams in order to fulfill their workload.

As for Tatiana, while she used a democratic leadership style when working with her

team, she often employed top-down decision making approach in her work with the

faculty, particularly when she was under time pressure. The teachers reported that the

state directives, national curriculum, and the directives of the assistant principal and

her team guided their instructional decisions, and that this reduced the latitude of their

own pedagogical decisions.

Departmental structure as antecedent to DL development. When the school

entered the NEI's project, they had a strong tradition of departmental collaboration

within the school and with other schools in the region. When the NEI initiated cross-departmental collaboration within the school by encouraging action research work, the practice developed only to a limited extent and never spread across the faculty. With no release time planned for the team meetings during the first year of the school's collaboration in the NEI's project, most of the teachers perceived them as burdensome, with many of them resigning the team work in the first couple of months and returning to the isolation of their departments. Katia, for instance, who has taught history for twenty-one years at the school, recalled, "*We were used to doing our job in isolation from each other, behind the closed door, making sure that the students had good results in the subject you were teaching.*"

Neither the school development team nor the action research teams seem to have been conceptualized as an important part of the school's organizational structure, but rather as the externally imposed structures necessary for "*doing the work for the projects, like for instance preparing plans and writing reports.*"

Departmental structure as moderator of DL development. When forming the school development team, the former principal first approached the assistant principal and put her on the team, and then assigned the department chairs of the [10]"main subjects" and the school counselor to join the team. Although Frank stated in the interview that "*he didn't have much say in what the team decided,*" the team members and the teachers reported that he remained in charge of everything.

The interviews with the teachers revealed that they were not aware of the existence of the school development team until they started to meet in action research teams, which were led by the school development team members, although they

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[10] The main subjects are the obligatory subjects included in the 'matura' exam: Slovene or Hungarian language and literature, Math, and English.

remembered that the former principal informed them soon after they joined the NEI's project that he formed a team that would coordinate the faculty's work in the NEI's project.

The interview data suggest that the school development team members never really situated themselves in the school as leaders but rather functioned as an extension of Tatiana and her formal position of power. The team members consistently presented their work in terms of assisting, like for instance Milan, a physics teacher in his eighteenth year at the school, who recently became a team member, and who described his contribution as "*I help with technology when we write reports*".

Tatiana gained considerable power in the school when Frank retired. As Viola explained, "*The assistant principal is in charge of all the instructional matters in the academic track. So I have a feeling that I have to consult her if I have a question related to instruction.*" Marianne's comment, "*It's the assistant principal who mainly initiates conversations at the faculty meetings because she's in contact with outside institutes and all the communication about the projects and various offers for collaboration to our school go through her*" confirmed that Tatiana established herself as a strong leader. It also suggested that her empowerment may have prevented the school development team members from perceiving themselves as leaders, and from feeling the need to build their leadership capacity.

School development team structure as moderator of DL development. Although the school development team members reported that they took part in all the training seminars and meetings organized by the NEI during their participation in the NEI's project, the team did not report trying to adjust and use what they had learned for the improvement of school culture and relationships. Only Tatiana on her own

attempted to use her newly acquired knowledge to initiate a vision building process with the faculty – neither she nor the team members indicated that she invited anyone to work with her on that attempt or on any other leadership work with the faculty.

Based on what the team shared with me, there was no indication that the experience of monthly travels to the capital and their work related to the meetings and training sessions brought the team members closer together and helped build their internal coherence. The composition of school development team membership changed three times in five years, with three members being on the team from the start. While Tatiana insisted that the former members participated in the interview together with the present members of the school development team, this seemed to have created a lot of uneasiness on the part of the former members. When asked, for instance, why they decided to resign, only one former member answered "*I stepped out voluntarily because I was overworked,*" all the others refused to talk. They hardly spoke during the interview, and they left early explaining that they had work to do.

While the new membership seemed to be on friendly terms, they created an impression of being constantly under pressure to produce various reports, which seemed to be their main preoccupation. As Tatiana explained, "*We get directives from the Consortium and from the Ministry in addition to the NEI now, and because they are not always in sync, we have much more paperwork.*" Although they reported that they met at least once a week and often stayed in school till late at night, it seemed that their meetings were not meaningful opportunities for the team's creative thinking about the school improvement, or for addressing the team's purpose in the school. As Pat, a math teacher in her fourteenth year at the school and one of the stable school development team members explained, "*We know that we should've worked with the*

faculty and included them in conversations about the school's direction. But we

haven't done it yet."

As for the manner of their work with the faculty, the school development team members' comments suggested that while they were trying to do the right thing, such as involving the faculty in decision making, they were rigid in their attempts. For instance, they tended to repeat the same thing even if it did not produce the results, which often caused them to lose a sense of purpose in the process. Amanda, the school counselor and psychology teacher in her nineteenth year at the school, explained, "*Once we put together our annual plan, we make it available in the staff room for the teachers to look through it and provide comments, perhaps make suggestions, before we seek the majority approval.*" When asked if the teachers had ever provided comments or suggestions, the answer was negative. Nevertheless, they continued to do the same thing for four years without attempting to work on teachers' values and build common purpose.

The teachers perceived the team as "*coordinators of meetings who keep us informed*" and who "*raise our awareness that change is necessary.*" They did not report that they perceived the team members as leaders – when they sought advice or had a suggestion, they would seek Tatiana for approval. For instance, as Viola explained, "*If I have an idea for an interdisciplinary unit, I'll approach Tatiana and she'll organize everything.*" Some teachers indicated that they disliked the manner in which "*they decided and implemented changes.*" When asked who "they" were, they explained that they were referring to the administrators and not to the school development team members. Anton, for instance, shared:

> *It's as if they made certain deals with god-knows-who. And while they preach democratic decision-making and consensus building, they then force us into changes as they see them [....] I believe that*

interdisciplinary planning is a good idea but it shouldn't be forced upon you.

Although Tatiana and her team had good intentions, claiming that "*we all want what's best for our school*," they seemed to be frequently overwhelmed with extraneous requirements and under pressure to meet the deadlines, and they constantly "*ran out of time*", which prevented them to consider the interests of teachers and students before making decisions.

Action research team structure as moderator of DL development. The action research team leaders described their experience of leading the teams in very different ways. While Samantha, a Hungarian language teacher in her seventeenth year at the school, reported that "*in my team, teachers were very resourceful and active,*" Tatiana shared that "*it was hard work for the leader because the teachers expected that I'll do everything.*" As for the teachers, their views varied as well. While some found action research teamwork "*intensive and interesting, going on for four years in our school,*" others could hardly remember that it existed. Viola, for instance, reported that "*action research didn't really start to function in our school. I know that we started to work in a team but very soon collaboration stopped completely.*" Or, as Melissa shared, "*I think the purpose was good. But how this then works in practice depends ...because some people just don't want to collaborate.*"

The interview data suggested that the school development team members, who became leaders of the action research teams, mostly formed their teams based on friendship rather than on common interest for the research problem as instructed by the NEI's coach. When asked about the reasons, they explained that they "*wanted to ensure we didn't lag behind other schools when presenting our action research results at the meetings with the NEI.*" They expressed their concern that working on

engaging the teachers who did not want to collaborate would slow them down. The leaders who seemed to have followed the NEI's instructions reported that they had conflicts in their teams and that they stopped working together when initial enthusiasm, fueled by curiosity about each others' work, wore off.

The school development team members and the teachers reported that the action research teams remained isolated from each other. Tatiana's attempts to build broader collaborative culture by including the presentations of the teams' work in the faculty meetings at the end of the school year did not breed success. Without strategic engagement of the faculty on building a unity of purpose and a climate of trust, action research was perceived by many as "*additional work*" in which only those teachers were ready to engage who wanted to show off "*how great they are.*" In such a climate, action research strategy of work did not seem to affect the intergroup relationships or faculty's engagement in a positive way.

Schedules, routines, and external requirements as antecedent to DL development. While Little Creek teachers exhibited a high degree of individual accountability and internal drive for continuous professional development when the school entered the NEI's project, they seemed skeptical that the instructional innovation the project promoted would work within the existing school-day structure. As in other high schools across the country, the school day at Little Creek consisted of six to eight forty-five minute class periods per day, which teachers described as not providing sufficient time for them to encourage students to explore the content. Because dedication to their profession seemed to be widespread at Little Creek, teachers were really struggling with the dilemma between implementing the new methods of teaching, which were more time consuming but also more in tune with the needs of their students, and the traditional frontal teaching that was geared toward

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ensuring success on the "matura" exam. The dilemma seemed to be even more acute because of a very small, closed rural community in which the school was located. Diane, for instance, shared:

> *In a small town like ours, if one student is not successful on the 'matura' exam, everybody will blame the teacher. In [11]Ljubljana, the parents can hire a private tutor if their kid has problems getting it. Here, we can't afford to fool around – if one or two students don't pass 'matura', they'll put us in the local newspapers.*

As the result, teachers found themselves increasingly preoccupied with coaching students for the "matura" exam, which may have been the reason why they reported that they could not "*find time*" for working with their colleagues, and why they seemed to be retreating back to their departments. Also, they seemed to have kept their perception that teaching for "matura" was the core of their work, and experimenting with active methods of teaching and action research that the NEI's project encouraged was "*additional work*".

Schedules, routines, and external requirements as moderator of DL development. While most of the teachers' comments created an impression that they would like to teach differently and that they considered collaborative cross-disciplinary planning and active methods of instruction better for the students, they claimed that external pressures did not allow such "*extravagancies.*" The principal agreed with them when he stated:

> *'Matura' is a whip over our teachers' heads – after all it's our duty to ensure that students pass it as well as possible. It's the reason why our teachers are questioning modern approaches to teaching, I'm sure they would've embraced them with more zest if we weren't so concerned about the results on the 'matura'.*

The interviewed faculty and the principal expressed shared understanding that teaching differently was impossible in the given circumstances, creating an

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[11] Ljubljana is the capital of Slovenia.

impression that they were waiting for the 'matura' exam to change before they were

prepared to put the new methods into practice. However, because the subject syllabi

were reformed two years ago and the Ministry required cross-disciplinary planning,

Little Creek administration responded to the mandate by voluntary extending their

collaboration with the NEI to implement cross-disciplinary team planning and

teaching. But although they reported that they had cross-disciplinary project teams at

the school, the teachers that led those teams expressed their frustration because they

often could not do their job because people did not have time to collaborate. Viola, for

instance, shared:

> *I'm literally begging a couple of colleagues to work with me. I'm in charge of a project that should bring together teachers of different subjects to plan and teach together and that needs to be done this year. And I'm so frustrated because I have to invest so much energy into persuading my colleagues. I can't do the project without them.*

Marianne related a similar experience:

> *People don't want to accept any additional work except their work in the classroom, stating that they have the right to their private lives, which start the minute the bell announces the end of school day. I think that that's what needs to be sanctioned.*

By contrast, Anita, who has taught math for ten years at the school,

presented a different picture, blaming lack of coordination and time management

at the school level for her unwillingness to collaborate:

> *It's simply not enough time to connect with everybody that wants you on the team. I'm a math teacher, and they want me to work with mechanical engineering teachers, cooks, waiters, business…it's too much. It's not that I don't want to, I can't. We have small classes but a huge diversity of programs.*

Some teachers expressed their doubts that teachers really wanted to change

their instruction, and that by avoiding collaboration and blaming external pressures

for not allowing them to spend more time on active methods, they in fact tried to keep

things as they were. Anton, for instance, observed:

> *I don't think that people's mindset really changed. They've been*
> *used to the old ways for so long, and these new approaches that*
> *we're using are just some sort of a play for them, but in fact they*
> *don't believe in real change.*

Because teachers engaged as isolated groups in exploration of their own

practice through action research during the school's participation in the NEI's project,

the majority of Little Creek faculty seemed to have kept unchanged their mental

models about instruction. While the school development team reported that they

eventually followed the NEI's instructions for building sufficient time into the

organizational structure for redesigned work, it remains unclear how skillfully that

was done.

> *Curriculum as antecedent to DL development.* Slovenia has always had a

centralized educational system, and because teachers have to use the syllabi that

prescribe educational aims and objectives, content, and time allocations in broad

terms for different subject matter domains, some teachers reported that these

prescriptions limited their opportunities to lead in the area of curriculum. Many

teachers also referred to the 'matura' exam, re-introduced in Slovenia in 1994, and its

content orientation as a reason for their lack of autonomy in instructional decision-

making. Marianne, for instance, observed:

> *I don't think that we have the autonomy to make decisions because*
> *if we did, we'd have more freedom in planning the learning*
> *objectives for the subject that we teach. I, for instance, joined a*
> *school project for an interdisciplinary unit, and planned my part*
> *according to the topic that we selected, everything was great. But*
> *because my syllabus prescribes the topics I have to cover in the*
> *second grade, I couldn't include what I planned in the project.*

Many teachers offered the explanation that because their syllabus prescribed so much content they were hesitant to apply active methods of teaching for fear that they would run out of time, and be forced to leave out some content that may be required in 'matura'. While they felt the pressure to get through the curriculum, which gave them "*clear conscience*" that they "*covered what they were supposed to,*" they also felt bad because they were not sure that they gave the students enough opportunity to understand the material and to develop skills. Diane, for instance, explained:

> *I'd like to use debate in my subject but I can't. Our students have to memorize 70 bios for 'matura', and I don't think debate can exactly help them do that. So I don't use these interesting techniques because I'm expected to make sure that they achieve good results. And because students know what's on 'matura', they don't see the meaning in debating anyway and probably wouldn't take it seriously.*

Although Diane described the school leaving exam as a straightjacket that prevented her from being creative in her teaching, some other teachers described feeling more empowered to make decisions about how to mold and shape the curriculum to fit the needs of their students, although they all agreed that they did not have any say in the content of the syllabi. They also agreed that everybody's preoccupation with external requirements and particularly their concern about the 'matura' results seemed to have a stifling effect on most of teachers' creativity and on their sense of freedom to experiment with new instructional techniques.

Curriculum as moderator of DL development. The interviews revealed that neither the principal nor the teachers really believed in the instructional innovation that the NEI's project promoted. In spite of the fact that all the subject syllabi were revised after the NEI's pilot project ended to support active methods of teaching and cross-disciplinary connections that became obligatory, the principal and the faculty

still had doubts about their use as regular instruction because they prioritized content coverage. As Boris explained:

> *Because 'matura' still measures more or less memorization, and the Didactic Reform Project promotes more experiential learning ...we still don't have a feeling about what the knowledge gained through these methods would be like, we're not sure.*

As Diana explained, the "*community expects us to do everything to prepare students to pass 'matura' as well as possible,*" and so the faculty remained preoccupied with teaching for the exam, even staying "*after school, on Friday afternoons, working with students who have problems.*" The cross-departmental collaborations that were described by some teachers as forced seemed to occur for the sake of preparing project weeks that the state required in all high schools, and were considered as something "*added to our regular work*".

Those teachers who volunteered to lead the project teams reported that they were burnt out not because of too much work but because they had to deal with their colleagues' resistance to collaborate before they could even do their job. The school development team explained that they "*monitor the projects and collect data that we need to prepare the reports for the NEI,*" never mentioning that they may have considered using the gathered data for evaluating their own progress and discussing it with the faculty.

Trust

Relationships as antecedent to DL development. When asked about relationships among the faculty under the former principal, teachers' opinions were mixed. Samantha, for instance, indicated that teachers seemingly got along better because at that time they were still in the old building which forced them to socialize more due to limited physical space, "*We didn't have separate offices for teachers, all*

we had was a common staff room where we all came together during each break and before and after school, and so it was easier to communicate." But in reality, problems were lurking under a seemingly smooth surface. As Viola explained:

> *The former principal made all decisions on his own. He for instance selected the people whom he thought were appropriate to lead the projects, and he decided who got bonus payments for their work. And because some peopleenjoyed better treatment than others in the past, those frustrations have surfaced now.*

When the faculty started to work together in cross-departmental action research teams that the NEI's project encouraged, the problems became visible when some teachers did not contribute to the teamwork and eventually stopped coming to the team meetings. But because the climate of trust was missing under Frank, they did not address those problems at the faculty meetings, and the school development team seemed to have taken an indirect and avoidant approach, such as when they formed most of the action research teams based on friendship in order to be efficient rather than actively considering working in teams with many different colleagues, regardless of possible disagreements.

The school development team members did everything that the NEI required from them, but they did not describe working on building relationships, not even within their own team. This was evident when Tatiana insisted that the former team members participated in the interview with the researcher, making an impression that they had nothing to hide, but in fact they made very little eye contact with one another. While no one openly discussed any problems, the very composition of the focus group interviews suggested tensions within the team. Although the focus group was intended to include six to eight teachers for the interview, Tatiana scheduled four teachers for an hour, followed by three more teachers. Although she explained that the purpose was to avoid interrupting instruction, the composition of the groups indicated

that the two groups belonged to the opposite sides of the internal division that existed in the staff room.

Relationships as moderator of DL development. Modest attempts to involve Little Creek faculty in a productive dialogue about the school's future failed because some people refused to collaborate and left the meeting. Some teachers' comments reflected the strained relationships that interfered with the faculty's willingness to commit to continuous improvement and work together as a community. Viola, for instance, explained:

> *People who felt neglected in the past refuse to collaborate now. Relationships are our biggest problem, not our knowledge. Because our faculty has always been very open to learning [...] It's so bad right now that we walk past each other without even looking at one another let alone communicate. And it's not connected with who's Hungarian and who's Slovene at all. It's not because the present principal is not Hungarian but because he was not selected by the community of teachers who are in the opposition now.*

In spite of general awareness that the problem existed, nobody seemed to have time to deal with it, although the comments in the interviews suggested that it was nonetheless emotionally draining for everyone. The school development team's main preoccupation seemed to be doing the work required by their external partner institutions – an expectation of both the former and the present principal. While the team members' comments revealed that they were aware that relationships among staff members were strained, they did not report spending any time on looking for ways to address the problem. When asked about what the school leadership team intended to do to improve relationships, Tatiana's response, "*I sometimes feel I can't do it anymore … sometimes I wonder …is it worth killing myself over … do they even appreciate it, I wonder …*" suggested that the problem was draining her energy but that she was not ready to deal with it because she felt offended, as though the teachers

betrayed her in some way. Other team members did not say anything but just looked down. Boris reacted in a similar way as Tatiana although with less emotion. Although he indicated that he was "*very approachable and that anybody can always come to my office with proposals, requests, and problems, and I'd do my best to accommodate their needs*," he also made it clear that he left it to teachers to take the initiative to communicate with him, rather than approach those "*that rather stay in their offices behind closed doors*."

Some teachers' comments revealed that they also felt betrayed but in a different way – while they understood that changes such as interdisciplinary planning were required by the state, they disliked that the administration imposed collaboration top down, thus dumping the problem of relationships on the teachers to resolve on their own. In addition, teachers perceived constant reminders from Tatiana and her team to produce results as a sign that the administration did not trust them. Anton, for instance, shared:

> *I don't feel that this work [interdisciplinary team planning] is meaningful to me. All I wish is that we could do it without constant control… that the administration would trust us. And that they'd keep the focus, you know, that it's for the students… and not that we're constantly reminded 'have you done this? Where's the report? Did you submit the data? I don't know. I'd like to make my own decisions how to teach, and approach a colleague or two because I want to, and invite them to work with me. What I miss is spontaneity and trust. I'm an expert and I need this trust that I can and want to be creative and excellent.*

While the teachers reported that communication has improved with the existence of the school development team because they "*inform us about everything and ask us about what we want*," they also shared that a meaningful, honest and regular dialogue about their achievements as well as about tensions and concerns was missing in their school. In the absence of trusting relationships, some teachers were

under increased stress to finish the projects they started, begging people to work with them, others initiated collaboration on their own, outside of what the administration prescribed, and the rest retreated to the safety (and isolation) of their classrooms.

School Culture

   School culture as antecedent to DL development. Before Little Creek became engaged in the NEI's project, teachers did not collaborate across departments – they were used to teaching behind closed doors of their classrooms. Although they seemed to be content at that time because they were free to choose how they wanted to use their professional development days and to teach as they saw fit, as long as they had good results on 'matura', they reported that a sense of connection and a common purpose were missing.

   The first signs of negative culture patterns appeared in the school's first year of collaboration in the Didactic Reform Project, when some teachers were working hard in action research groups, and others remained passive, sabotaging the success of action research work. The former principal, who seemed to have viewed change as a technical, neutral process of pressure and support, did not address teachers' values or involved the faculty in discussions about common goals and how they could achieve them successfully as a community. The school development team's comments suggested that, in spite of continuous training they received to develop their leadership capacity, they did not feel empowered enough to address the problem because under the former principal, nobody was entitled to take on a leadership role except for Frank. As Tatiana related:

> *We had the school vision written down but we did not build it together. We didn't deal with that or attempted to change anything. Frank was in charge of everything […] We joined the project because we were half forced, not because of our vision.*

As for Frank, while he regularly took part in the NEI's professional development program, his comments, like for instance, "*I took part in all the training because as the principal I couldn't let teachers know more than me, could I?*" indicated that he was unable to comprehend the NEI's intentional broadening of leadership practice through training because he kept his autocratic leadership mindset.

School culture as moderator of DL development. When Boris became the principal, he focused on maintaining good results on "matura" and making sure that teachers included modern methods of teaching without "*go[ing] into extremes and have[ing] only projects and fieldtrips.*" In addition, he established links with local businesses to ensure that the school vocational programs were in tune with the needs of local economy. While his comments suggested that he was aware of the negative culture that prevailed in the staff room, he made an impression that he was expecting things to resolve "*without his interference.*"

Boris's comments suggested that he approached his work from a business perspective, and did not realize how important his role as principal was in shaping the school culture. In his interview, he did not refer to teachers' values and emotions, and did not imply that he considered it important to share his vision of the school's future with the school community or to include the faculty in developing the school vision together. He did not have anything to say about Tatiana's attempts to engage the faculty in the vision building process, probably because as he explained, he understood her role and the role of the school development team more in a sense of "*planning and coordinating school time schedule and instructional innovation*" than dealing with people and their emotions.

When asked about the purpose of "*weekly counseling meetings*" with the school development team and program teacher teams that he introduced when he

became principal, he explained that they discussed "*how to implement innovative approaches to teaching, and make sure they comply with state legislation and requirements, and to decide where we need to intervene,*" but did not mention any attempts to encourage discussions about how to address dysfunctional patterns of communication in the staff room.

Instead of addressing people's values and emotions or using teachers' evident common dedication to the teaching profession to build a more collaborative, trusting culture, Boris decided to use "*soft pressure*" to overcome resistance, forcing people to implement the change as he understood it, and letting them grapple with their emotions and conflicts on their own. The school development team seemed to have accepted the role of report writers and instructional change monitors that both the former and the present principal delegated to them.

Transition Mechanisms

Making Sense of Redesigned Work

The NEI's Didactic Reform Project anticipated and trained the school leadership teams to provide opportunities for the faculties to engage in deliberate, focused dialogue about teaching and learning through action research and vision building processes, in order to create meaning together and get engaged in the redesigned work. Data findings indicate that Little Creek faculty made little use of those opportunities. The school development team members, who were trained to engage the faculty in those processes, hurried through the action research process, and gave up trying to enact the vision building process, because as they explained, they were concerned that they may lose too much time, which would put them behind other schools in the project.

In the absence of common values and objectives, and with individual mental models unchanged, the teachers perceived redesigned work, such as action research collaboration, as additional work that took their time away from their many responsibilities in the classroom. Although they had a number of school projects in which teachers were expected to collaborate across subjects to prepare for instructional change, all the interviewed teachers agreed that nothing has changed in how they managed classroom curricula. Anton, for instance, observed, "*All the instruction is done in the old way, and these projects…they're just some sort of enrichment. Nobody considers them part of instruction, they're just added. That's why we're all so overworked.*" While some of the teachers' replies during the interviews suggested that they embraced the redesigned work because they perceived it as meaningful, most of them made an impression that they considered it to be a temporary thing, implemented on top of their regular work to comply with external requirements, which would eventually pass away.

Those teachers that embraced the idea of shared instructional planning, and volunteered to become school project leaders, described their disappointment because they, as Viola explained, "*have to beg people to work with me.*" While Little Creek teachers reported that they were free to make decisions about which topics they planned in an interdisciplinary way and with whom they wanted to collaborate, they reported that this freedom soon became a burden because those that were ready to lead the teams could not really exercise their leadership but instead had to spend considerable energy to deal with the faculty's resistance to collaborate.

When asked if they discussed those dilemmas and broader educational goals beyond the 'matura' exam at the faculty meetings, which occurred as often as twice a week, Marianne said, "*These meetings are about all sorts of things […] and then we*

run out of time to discuss matters like this that are important. I think that there's so much of everything that we're forgetting our students, literally." Like Marianne, other teachers also described a loss of purpose in their work as well as a shared feeling that they were pressed to do things for the sake of reports, and not for their students' benefit.

Motivation

Lack of common purpose and shared values, focused on improvement of student learning as the central goal, were probably among the main reasons why many Little Creek teachers indicated that they relied on their personal and professional selves for motivation to engage in redesigned work, thus seeking to benefit individually rather than pursuing and using their knowledge and skill for both an individual and collective good.

When the school development team members were asked what motivated them to be on the school development team on top of having their full work load in the classroom, Pat, who has been on the team from the start, explained, *"Being only in the classroom can become boring. Working on this team is something different. Plus we get to be the first to learn new things."* Other members offered similar replies, referring to their personal benefit, with none of them mentioning the long-run benefits of their work for the students or school.

As for the teachers, instead of expressing commitment to their new work as team leaders or team members, they shared their feelings of frustration caused by negative relationships in the staff room that corroded their capacity to collaborate. In addition, their comments suggested that because the school's priorities did not shift from their traditional internal priorities of curriculum and teaching for the test, the majority was still more motivated to coach students for 'matura' than to engage in the

projects – which also meant dealing with resistant colleagues. Because instructional innovation did not become embedded in the instructional practice at the school level but remained added to the existing practice, the teachers that were still motivated to engage in the new work in spite of everything reported that they felt tired and overworked.

While the school development team members reported that they perceived bonds with other educators outside the school, created through the networks encouraged by the NEI as "*a significant source of stimulation*," they did not report establishing a similar ''source'' inside the school that would energize the faculty and motivate them to engage in continuous improvement of their practice.

Learning

Because the school development team did not apply the knowledge and skills that they were expected to acquire from the NEI's training sessions in which they engaged for three years, it remains unclear whether they developed their leadership capacity. Their descriptions of how they made use of the external support of the NEI's coach that was available to them throughout the duration of the project suggested they used the NEI's support more instrumentally rather than systematically and strategically.

From what they reported about their work, the team members did not seem to perceive themselves as leaders of change, but more as liaisons with external institutes, or, as Amanda explained, "*making sure that reports are prepared and sent on time, sometimes preparing evaluation protocols, and in general making sure that all the requirements are met.*"

As for the teachers, while they expressed appreciation for what they learned in the Didactic Reform Project, not much from what the project offered seemed to take

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root in school. While individual teachers reported that they possessed core skills to implement active methods of teaching, they also revealed that most of the time they still used frontal teaching. Because they did not have opportunities to reveal and discuss their concerns and potential misunderstandings of the reform, it remained unclear whether they stuck to the old practice because of lack of knowledge and skills or because of lack of agreement about the value of innovation. In spite of frequent team meetings – Pat, for instance, reported that "*we have meetings now practically every day and usually with different teams*," cross-departmental teamwork in particular seemed to cause a lot of frustration because of bad climate and problematic relationships. When asked about peer coaching, the teachers described vague memories of it, suggesting that it was not used in a way that permeated their practice.

Outcomes: Performance of Leadership Functions

Providing and Selling a Vision

Interviews with the former and present principal and with the school development team suggested that no one attended to developing common direction for the school's development. They imposed the externally introduced change on the teachers without linking it to their specific needs or to the school's goals, thus requiring the teachers to change their practice before changing their beliefs. Other than Tatiana's failed attempts at vision building with the faculty, no one reported involving teachers in discussions to clarify common goals, or providing opportunities and a safe space for them to voice their beliefs and concerns about the instructional innovation and the work of reform, such as various teams, that they were expected to implement. While Frank relied on the NEI for direction, trusting their judgment to determine what was good for the school, Boris expressed his belief that teachers shared his vision although he did not include them in the process of building it

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together. As a result, teachers described lacking a sense of common purpose, and worrying about negative relationships. Melissa, for instance, observed, "*I think it would help if we had a common vision ... maybe then we'd be able to go beyond personal dislikes and work together for the good of the students.*"

While some teachers expressed skepticism about the new instructional practices that the NEI's project encouraged because they did not see how they could help students "*cover the content for 'matura,'* some of them were willing to take risks and try new practices. However, they also indicated feeling uncomfortable experimenting with innovation because a supporting vision from formal leadership was lacking – in prioritizing results over the process, Boris even expressed his concern about "*extremes,*" which suggested that he did not really believe that the change was necessary. Because a clear vision of what the school stood for was missing, teachers were losing a sense of purpose, which in their opinion should be focused on students but in reality everything seemed to be driven by external pressures for results.

Planning Redesigned Work

The school development team reported that they eventually started to plan various meetings ahead of time because "*the same teachers were on different teams, and we had to prevent overlap.*" The team members occasionally needed to stay in school late at night, especially when various plans and reports were due, which became their responsibility because "*our teachers hate to write....they are allergic to the word 'report'....and we couldn't go to the NEI's meetings unprepared, could we?*" as Tatiana explained. Teacher interviews revealed that planning was not the team's strong area, which was caught in Viola's comment about her volunteer work for the reform *"because I feel that we need to change how we work with kids,"* and

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her disappointment that the reform "*work is poorly planned …. some people can get away with doing nothing … while more and more work gets dumped on the fools like me who believe we need to change …*"

Although the principal and school development team reported that they had meetings "*practically every day*," the interviews also revealed some inconsistencies, for instance, while Boris claimed that he held short daily meetings with the faculty "*to keep everybody on the same page*," some interviewed teachers confirmed that that was true and others could not remember having such meetings with the principal. A possible conclusion may be that the daily "*catch-up meetings*" did not become part of the general school culture since some teachers felt obliged to take part in them and others did not. Also, while longer faculty meetings were planned ahead of time, they did not seem to support collaboration throughout the organization because, as Samantha observed, they were "*nothing more than one-way communication from the formal leaders about our duties. And when we get a chance to speak, it's like 'hurry up, time's up'… and some people just leave before they end … and don't even say why, so we don't know what exactly bothers them …*"

While the team claimed that they included teachers in preparing their annual action plan for change, the interviews revealed that it was the team who wrote the action plan to comply with the NEI requirement, and then put the final product in the staff room for comments. None of the teachers recalled providing any comments, "*why would I, it wouldn't make any difference,*" as Marianne remarked. The examination of the school's annual action plan showed that it was very general in nature, without the names of who was expected to do specific activities and when, which suggests that the team followed the NEI's guidelines without making the plan serve the teachers' needs, and without getting their consent for particular tasks. Weak

planning was therefore probably the reason why some teachers, including the school

development team members, reported suffering from work overload, and why others

expressed their uncertainty about their work obligation, while still others avoided any

new work, claiming that nobody could force them to work over their "*obligatory 25*

hour- per- week work contract."

Adapting Standard Operating Procedures

While the school development team members agreed that their own and

teachers' workload increased considerably because of project requirements, they did

not express their concern over its possible de-motivating effect on teachers, which

was caught in Tatiana's statement "*… we're all overworked. They'll [teachers] have*

to accept that times when they could go home after they finished teaching are over."

Tatiana reported organizing daily meetings in the second long break by reorganized

the school day to have two long breaks instead of one, and also after the instruction

time, requiring from the teachers to stay at school, often until late at night. The team

also reported following the NEI's instructions in introducing longer interdisciplinary

instructional blocks instead of the usual 45-minute separate subject lessons to enable

teachers to apply active methods of teaching. Teacher interviews revealed, however,

that frequent meetings and the adaptations of standard operating procedures did not

increase teachers' motivation for redesigned work. Samantha's comment "*we never*

have enough time [at various meetings] to address things that are important, such as

our concerns about change and its effect on student achievement," provided insight

into the nature of various meetings, and why they could not solve the staff conflict.

Other teacher comments, for instance Viola's, that "*our schedule has been adapted so*

that we can team-teach in longer blocks … but I've had huge problems because some

colleagues … don't want to collaborate," pointed to deeper relational issues that

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prevented the redesigned work to take root, in spite of organizational modifications. The interview data also revealed uneven distribution of reform work and lack of collegiality among the faculty – the teachers who were willing to work outside of their "*regular hours*" carried increased workload while others, who refused to collaborate, could get away with no additional work.

Melissa's comment "*I think that our priority should be what the students will gain from all this … I'm sure all this [redesigned work] is not meant for us teachers to practice teamwork,*" suggested lack of appropriate leadership action – common purpose and vision of the reform were missing. The formal leaders' reports that they followed the NEI's instructions when adapting their standard way of operation strengthened the impression that they failed to build a sense of community before requiring teachers to change their practice, and that they lost sight of students while enforcing external requirements. Anton's statement "*all that we do in the project … is just some sort of enrichment … but in fact our work hasn't changed a bit 'cause I don't think people believe in real change… that's why we're all so overworked…,*" revealed that because of general lack of belief in the necessity of change the reform work at Little Creek remained a surface addition to the existing practice instead of becoming a new way of functioning for the entire faculty.

Working with Resistance

Little Creek teachers reported that initially nobody openly resisted the instructional change and redesigned work that the NEI's project encouraged, however, their comments suggested that they had "*hidden resistance*" from the start, which became visible when Boris became principal. As Susan explained:

> *Now that we have more decision making power, we quarrel a lot and it's almost impossible to reach consensus about anything. Maybe this is a normal reaction to the authoritarian way in which*

we were led before. But I think it's far from democracy if some people just refuse to do anything, and criticize others who are willing to work. I don't mind constructive criticism but their criticism is without any good intention.

Susan's statement suggests deeper relational and communication issues that eventually led to teachers' open resistance to change. From formal leaders' comments in the interview, it became clear that they did not work with resistance – while Boris created an impression that he was waiting for resistance to eventually expire by itself, Tatiana seemed to be offended by the teachers who were unable "*to show respect,*" to their formal leaders – her expectation that the teachers would give in to their formal leaders' demands was also visible in her assigning work to the teachers without seeking their agreement.

Viola's description of her experience pointed to deeper causes for growing resistance, "*I volunteered to lead a project but then had to beg people to work with me… What can I do if a colleague doesn't … want even to talk to me? It's so unfair that they [the administration] leave it to me to deal with these problems….*" Her comment also suggested that teachers expected their formal leaders to assume the responsibility for solving the resistance problem, and that they did not think of leadership practice as distributed.

Boris' remark "*… I guess some teachers may be resistant …some of them approach me with their ideas while others prefer to stay behind closed doors. I can't be responsible for that…*" revealed that he was not aware of his role as the principal in the build up of negative school culture. In the interview he indicated that he preferred avoiding confrontation with resistors, thus denying teachers the opportunity to voice their concerns. Rather than enabling a discussion about the change in the staff room, he – the same as his predecessor – shifted the responsibility for the results of

the reform on the NEI "*because I trust they know best what we should be doing*." At the same time, he revealed his lack of trust in the proposed change, stating "*I personally think 'matura' has to change before we could play with all these innovations*," but also reported exerting "*soft pressure*" on teachers by making it impossible for them to fulfill their teaching obligation unless they had a certain number of cross-disciplinary lessons, which, "*the Ministry requires.*"

Some teachers interpreted his concern that instructional innovation "*may go into extremes*" if left unmonitored as lack of trust in their professional judgment, which stifled their commitment to improvement. Others, like Katia, who observed that "*he [the principal] keeps reminding us of the 'matura' results… as if we …of course we don't want to threaten high achievement results,*" became cautious to preserve the status quo. They expressed annoyance that they were then pushed into the change that the NEI's project required, without being sure that it would not threaten their 'matura' results.

By failing to attend to the culture and address teachers' concerns, the principal and the assistant principal communicated lack of their regard for teachers' individual value, which deepened resistance. Some teachers resisted by starting their own private projects, like Anton, for instance, who reported starting a team teaching project with a colleague "*not because we are required to but because we want to try*." Others refused to have any part in the change, and retreated back into the isolation of their classrooms.

Monitoring Improvement Efforts

The school development team members reported having to "*constantly remind teachers to write reports about their reform work … because the NEI requires evidence that the teachers are doing what the project requires.*" Their comments

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suggested that the team monitored the innovation sporadically so as to comply with the external requirements, rather than from their concern to ensure that the school was making progress, or that changed instruction was beneficial for the students. Teacher interviews revealed that they disliked constant pressure from Tatiana and her team to write reports, because they felt that they did not serve them or students. Samantha, for instance, expressed feeling that "*… we're writing reports all the time… for the sake of writing reports, and nobody thinks about the students anymore*." The interview data further revealed that the team did not come up with any strategies for teacher self-monitoring, and that peer coaching, which they "*tried out*" because the NEI required it did not work well in their school and was abandoned before the project ended.

While Boris stated that he would never "*impose or put myself over them [school development team] and their decisions,*" he expressed feeling responsible for monitoring the reform work with regard to the financial feasibility. He reported making final decisions about what the teachers were allowed to implement based on his judgment "*whether we can afford it or not.*" He also revealed seeing his role in preventing "*extremes …so that we don't have only field trips and projects …because I have to make sure that the students are prepared for 'matura'.*" He then added that because the school development team "*followed the NEI's guidance faithfully*" he was sure that "*nothing could go wrong.*"

Providing Encouragement and Recognition

Neither the teachers nor the school development team members described having been recognized for their work in a way that would make them feel appreciated. While the school development team members explained that they received payment for their work "*over our regular workload*", they also indicated that they missed occasional verbal praise and encouragement. The only occasion that they

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could recall feeling recognized for their effort was at the Festivals of Good Practice, but once they returned to the school, their feelings of exhilaration soon vanished. They reported trying to evoke the same feelings in the faculty, hoping that they would become more energized, by inviting the teachers that made especially strong impression on them at the Festival to present at their school. To their disappointment, the faculty's reaction was lukewarm and even hostile. A possible reason for such a reaction was expressed in Samantha's comment, "… *yeah, yeah, they were great ... but what does that tell us ... about us…that we're incompetent ...or that we could achieve so much more if only we could get along and work together …*" which also revealed how naïve the school development team was in their expectation that they could provide encouragement to the teachers by means of external intervention while having internal problems unresolved.

The teachers could not recall any internal occasions when their good teaching was honored, or when any of them was recognized either for their efforts in the classroom or their contribution to the school. As Anita, a math teacher in her tenth year at the school, explained, "*Actually I don't even expect anything. I don't feel the need to improve myself because I want a bigger paycheck. My biggest reward is when I see that my students are successful.*" Some teachers, such as Viola, expressed their frustration because "*the colleagues who invest minimal effort into their teaching get away with it, and that's not right. This gives you a feeling ... as if ... it's all the same whether you bust your ass to improve your work or do nothing ... nobody cares.*" Viola's comment again pointed to deeper relationship issues that were probably related to a lack of competent leadership action, and of shared accountability for the school's improvement.

Buffering the Faculty from Outside Interference

Since both Frank and Boris exhibited a compliant attitude toward the NEI, taking for granted that their experts knew best what was good for the school, they did not attempt to align the external initiative with their teachers' identified need for change. Frank, the former principal, who remained entrenched in his middle management mindset, enforced the external initiative for instructional change without questioning its value for the needs of teachers and students, and without allowing the teachers to discuss the meaning of instructional change for their work. Boris, the present principal, revealed that he felt safe as long as the school development team followed the NEI's guidance as closely as possible. Instead of buffering the faculty against multiple directives, they exposed them to the conflicting demands, expecting their compliance with the NEI's initiative to implement active methods of teaching while having no guarantee that they would not threaten the very achievement results they wanted unchanged. In trying to comply with both requirements, the teachers described burnout and lack of meaning in their work. These feelings were caught in Diana's comment:

> *I feel like the creativity has been taken away from my work…and all the things that made me love this profession. Now, everything is dictated …and the principal says that's what the Ministry requires, and the Ministry says follow this program, but then it's you who are responsible if you have bad results.*

Because the formal leaders did not create a safe space for teachers and show regard for their professional judgment, their willingness to do the reform work diminished. Anton, for instance, expressed his resentment for being forced into "*impossible combinations*" without getting a chance "*to feel the need to connect with other subjects…. it shouldn't be forced upon you … you have to do it for the benefit of your students.*" While the teachers expressed their belief in the importance of

innovation, such as grade level interdisciplinary planning, its value was diminished for them because they were not allowed sufficient latitude in deciding what exactly they wanted to change and how.

The school development team members expressed similar frustration related to their lack of influence on decision making regarding external requirements. Because both principals emphasized the importance of "*following the book*," the team members did not seem to feel empowered enough to make decisions about what paperwork that they were required to prepare for external institutes was important and what could be neglected, thus experiencing enormous work overload.

Barriers to Redesigned Work

A number of internal barriers seemed to have prevented redesigned work to take root in the school, the most important being lack of common vision and sense of direction. Because school leaders did not work with the staff and community to build and articulate a clear vision of what the school stood for, people got lost in their emotions and personal grudges instead of focusing on what was important.

Another barrier seemed to be lack of honest, open communication. Little Creek faculty did not seem to have developed their capacity to work together and engage in open discussions about difficult issues. Teachers' reports revealed that temporary surges of teamwork under pressure existed at Little Creek, but that collegiality was often missing because people were forced into collaboration. Some teachers reported that they collaborated on their own initiative because they felt that it was beneficial for their students' learning, however, such internal drive for excellence in teaching and learning seemed to be characteristic only of some exceptional individuals.

Although some teachers' comments suggested that some people tended to react impatiently or refused to contribute at the meetings, others revealed that while they had the courage to voice their opinion honestly, people were "*weary of complaints*" and did not appreciate when people tried to share their concerns.

Although teachers appreciated that after Frank, "*we have been informed about everything and we're asked about our opinion*," some of them also described how much they disliked that the administration kept pushing them to produce reports, and did not make time for decision making or decisions were already made before they were presented for discussion at the meetings, which they perceived as lacking in professional respect.

Another significant barrier to the redesign work seemed to be the formal leadership's lack of awareness that school improvement could not be achieved by means of quick fixes, but instead through a consistent effort to build a positive culture. Instead of recognizing and addressing the negativity in their culture, Boris avoided confrontation with resisters, while Tatiana did not feel sufficiently empowered to deal with negativity and instead took offense at the lack of teachers' engagement. None of the leaders seemed to realize that improving the culture would require slowing down and addressing teachers' core values in order to clarify what they really wanted to change and how they wanted to work together.

Needs for Growth

In their preoccupation with external requirements and competition with other schools, the principal and the school development team exerted immense pressure on the teachers to perform well and produce the required evidence of their reformed work, while neglecting school's internal capacity building. The manner in which the reform was decided and implemented – by the administration exerting pressure on

teachers to change instructional practice without really believing in its benefits, created internal tensions among teachers, and their resentment because the administration chose to pretend that the problems of relationships did not exist instead of creating the opportunities for the problems to surface and be addressed. Teachers felt betrayed and left alone in dealing with some of their colleagues' resistance to change, which sapped their energy for creative work.

Although Little Creek teachers exhibited immense internal drive for learning and deep love of their profession when the reform started at Linden High, most of them described their reactions to the reform initiative four years after they joined the NEI's project in terms of loss of purpose in the work of teaching. They referred to the administrations' lack of investment in building a climate of cooperation and trust, and to their lack of consideration for teacher-generated innovation and improvement within the school as the main reasons. Several teachers described how the quality of their work was unrecognized by the administration, and how they disliked that some of their colleagues could get away with poor performance and lack of commitment to improvement.

Since neither the former nor the current principal recognized the potential of the school development team for addressing the issues that emerged during the instructional reform process within the school, they failed to empower the team members to assume leadership and replicate the activities, such as vision building process, which they practiced as part of the NEI's training. The team was unable to put their newly acquired leadership capacity into practice to renew, restructure, and enhance existing and new structures within the school. The team eventually took on the performance of control and surveillance of the forced redesigned work within the

school, which intensified the deterioration of relationships rather than improving them.

CHAPTER SIX

ANALYSES

This study used a multiple case study approach (Yin, 2003) to explore the development and implementation of distributed leadership in two schools that participated in the same professional development program intended to promote broader school capacity building for instructional change.

The first section of this chapter provides the analysis of the NEI's professional development program, examined against Mayrowetz et al.'s (2007) framework to determine the extent to which it reflects the authors' conceptualization of redesigned work under distributed leadership reform. By using a summary table (Miles & Huberman, 1994) to compare the requirements of each dimension of the model with the NEI's professional development intervention characteristics, I was able to concentrate on the most significant – and not just most obvious – aspects of gathered data about the NEI's program, and draw well founded conclusions (Yin, 1994) about the degree to which the NEI's intervention reflected Mayrowetz et al.'s conceptualization of redesigned work under distributed leadership reform.

The next section of this chapter presents within case analyses, examining how distributed leadership developed in the immediate context of two schools and in relation to the key learning that each school's development teams, teacher teams, whole faculties, and individuals acquired from their participation in the NEI's professional development program, and from their own internal investment in their capacity building for change implementation. By means of vertical within-case

analysis, I combined and interrelated the themes and inferred the relationships among them (Miles & Huberman, 1994) so as to support a complex investigation of distributed leadership development through multiple perspectives within the boundaries of each school. Mayrowetz et al.'s (2007) model of the development of distributed leadership offered a framework for analyzing how the process of restructuring and re-culturing, which required a redefinition of roles, broadening of skills, and extending of scope of role and responsibilities, developed in each school, taking into account the conditions that created the context and determined the extent to which distributed leadership could be formulated and enacted.

The final section of this chapter provides a cross-analysis of the two cases of schools, and discusses the data across cases in focused ways to answer the research questions. It considers differences and similarities in how the performance of leadership functions evolved, the meaning that the principals and teachers made of their new roles and new tasks, and whether people's involvement in the redesigned work improved their job motivation and satisfaction with their work, and their motivation for learning. It also compares and contrasts individual and organizational factors in each school and across schools, and how they predicted and moderated the development of distributed leadership.

NATIONAL EDUCATION INSTITUTE'S

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM ANALYSIS

Before I could examine the development of distributed leadership in two schools, I had to determine the degree to which the schools redesigned their work and implemented distributed leadership as defined in Mayrowetz et al.'s (2007) model, given that the NEI did not follow the distributed leadership as work redesign model directly. In this section, I therefore analyzed the NEI's professional development

program design and implementation against Mayrowetz et al.'s model to answer my

first research question: *What are the characteristics of the national initiative design,*

and to what extend do they reflect Mayrowetz et al.'s conceptualization of redesigned

work under distributed leadership reform.

Characteristics of the National Initiative Design

Redesigned Work

According to Mayrowetz et al. (2007), putting distributed leadership practice

in place in schools requires collective work redesigns to foster collaboration and

reverse the tradition of teacher isolation in schools, meaning that teachers need to

assume nonteaching responsibilities, which in turn requires that they build new

knowledge and skills, and may ultimately lead to more satisfaction with their work.

When the NEI conceived their instructional reform initiative and designed a

professional development program (PDP) to support school's internal capacity

building for instructional change implementation, schools in Slovenia were

hierarchical systems with the principal as the main authority, responsible to the

external institutions and stakeholders for the successful operation of the instructional

program and student achievement. The NEI's PDP design for the third cohort of

schools exhibits the NEI's experts' growing understanding that successful, whole-

school instructional reform requires both, structural (establishment of a leadership

team and action research teams, changes in organizational arrangements) and cultural

change (establishing common norms, developing common vision), as well as a

continuous professional support to teachers and the principal for their building of

knowledge and skills, necessary for the performance of their new roles in the school.

Skill Variety

Table 2. Redesigned Work: Skill Variety

	Mayrowetz Model	**NEI'S PDP**
SKILL VARIETY	**Administrators** – shift their work from influencing followers to activating the motivational and educational potential; coordinate redesigned work; manage boundaries; participate in teams; build coherence – <u>change mental model</u>; <u>learn how to perform these tasks</u> plus <u>communication techniques, interpersonal, motivational skills</u>. **Teachers** – <u>change their perceptions</u> of their roles and responsibilities, increase scope of role; learn how to <u>perform leadership tasks</u>; <u>interact</u> with colleagues and administrators – learn <u>communication techniques</u>.	• Discuss the project with the principal, inviting principals from prospective pilot schools to previous cohort Festivals of Best Practices; • Organize a workshop on school quality indicators for faculty of prospective school to discuss – and make the faculty aware of – the school's need and readiness for change; • Once the school consents to participate, establish school development teams (SDTs) (principal is part of the team), and define their purpose and role, including the team in the process; • Bi-monthly meetings of SDTs from the third cohort schools to exchange info about progress, with added workshop each time on building different leadership capacities; • Two-day retreat for SDTs on vision building; defining SDT's vision. • Workshop on action research strategy of work first for SDTs, then for faculty in each school; • Establishment of action research teams (cross-departmental teams of teachers around the research question), preparation of action research plans – facilitated by SDT and the NEI's coach; • A list of didactic and other skills workshops (communication skills, peer observation and post-conference discussion, working with resistance) offered to schools to choose from. • A coach available for consultations with SDT and support of SDT in their work with faculty, and personal and professional issues on on-going basis.

Taking into account the tradition of hierarchical school structure in which the principal was a solo leader, who was preoccupied with management work, the NEI recognized that both teachers and principals need the necessary skills for the performance of leadership tasks, such as vision building, data gathering and evaluation, and working with resistance. While requiring from the schools to create new structures and adapt standard operating procedures, the Implementation of

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Change Project (ICP) team provided the school development teams with the training to build their capacity for supporting teachers in learning and implementing new classroom practice strategies. They used modeling and scaffolding, and encouraged reflection, as well as provide opportunities for teachers to practice carrying out their new roles. By providing opportunities for collaboration and collegial interaction within the school teams and between school teams, the NEI enabled the teams to practice collaboration, share their knowledge and ideas, and build their confidence as leaders.

The principals were encouraged to rely on the team members, engage them in conversations about changed classroom practice for which they were experts, increase their confidence for leadership by seeking their participation in decision making, and advocate and support their risk taking while providing encouragement and safety nets in case of failure.

Task Significance

The NEI's project administrators reported putting the principals in charge of selecting the school development team members, and alerting them to the importance of framing new leadership work appropriately to the teachers so that they would not perceive it as additional burden but as something worthwhile and significant for the improvement of the school. They also advised the school development teams to be tactful in assuming their leadership roles to avoid the impression that they were superior as leaders, and retain their humility in their work with and for the faculty. By suggesting to the school development team members to take over the leadership of the action research teams, the NEI planned to ensure better information flow, and provide the school development team members with an opportunity to build their credibility as instructional experts.

Table 3. Redesigned Work: Task Significance

	Mayrowetz Model	**NEI'S PDP**
TASK SIGNIFICANCE	**Administrators** –create opportunities for teachers to develop desire and capacity to engage in leadership practice. Build awareness and let people know that leadership distribution does not threaten their power and authority. Set the stage for redesigned work, sell its significance. **Teachers** – build their leadership capacity and take responsibility for leadership tasks; awareness building that their work outside classroom is significant for success of all students. Build their servant attitude toward faculty.	• Put principals in charge of selecting leadership team members (advise them to use criteria such as faculty's respect, instructional expertise, skills to work with adults) and frame leadership work as important; Make them aware that they have to let go of their power due to formal role (not necessarily team leaders; • Awareness building of leadership team's servant role rather than superiority; • Put leadership team members in charge of action research teams (have to be excellent teachers – expertise stressed); • Engage teachers across disciplines in inquiry around instructional issues of their interest; help them connect their inquiry with vision and common goals; • Provide continuous training to SDTs on performance of leadership functions; • Expect the SDTs to meet regularly in school between bi-monthly meetings of cohort, and present experience and results at bi-monthly meetings with third cohort SDTs at NEI's headquarters.

The purpose of action research teamwork was to involve teachers in a meaningful, regular, and on-going professional dialogue with their colleagues that shared the same instructional problem. By engaging teachers in inquiry around the instructional issues that were interesting to them, action research was used as a means of building collaborative practice and developing trusting relationships. In addition, the process of action research inquiry was intended for providing teachers with a different lens by which to examine the efficacy of their teaching, thus helping them overcome the climate of shifting the blame for lack of student motivation for learning to the students and the society.

The NEI experts reported that this was their first project in which they encouraged teachers to form new groupings across grades and departments inside the school, based on the instructional problem that they identified and wanted to improve.

The purpose of inviting teachers to research their practice and select a problem that concerned them was to tailor the reform initiative to their need, thus motivating them to perceive the reform work as meaningful for their own professional growth. While Slovenia had a strong tradition of study groups used for departmental networking across schools for the exchange of ideas, lesson planning, and discussion of policy issues, interdisciplinary and cross-grade groupings were practically unknown in high schools before the NEI's implementation of the reform initiative.

Task Identity

Table 4. Redesigned Work: Task Identity

	Mayrowetz Model	**NEI'S PDP**
TASK IDENTITY	**Administrators** – engage and empower others to lead. **Teachers** – climb out of their discipline and classroom-based mentality, widen understanding of their role and develop system-level view through opportunities to create meaning together and develop commitment to common goals.	• Require formation of school leadership team to broaden responsibility for decision making in school; • Making it obligatory for the principal to be part of the team but not leading the team; • Including the team in clarifying the team's role and responsibilities – which were school-wide decision- making oriented; • Support inquiry process in action research teams by providing a coach and offering workshops and seminars on skill building according to the teams' choice; • Model vision building process to SDTs in a retreat, have them experience the process, build awareness that it has to be a collective engagement and that teachers have to be included; • Offer support in implementing the process with the faculty: • Offer guidelines for development of school action plan (again with inclusion of faculty). • Organize exchange of experience among SDTs.

By engaging teachers to work in teams to understand, implement, and evaluate new instructional strategies, the NEI's PDP aimed at establishing professional learning communities in schools. The purpose of the NEI's establishment and support of the inquiry process in action research teams was to help teachers move beyond

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their traditional 'egg-crate' discipline- and classroom-based mentalities, and start working together on the improvement of the educational experience for their students. It then depended on individual schools how their school development teams scheduled the time for professional collaboration and how they engaged teachers in out-of-classroom activities.

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Being aware that engaging in the didactic reform requires a consensus about common goals, the ICP team sensitized the school development teams that the members of the school community should not be just recipients of someone else's vision but had to have a voice in the vision building process. It is important to point out that the practice of vision and mission building was not common in Slovene schools, which was probably due to the heavily centralized education system in the communist times when the state made all the decisions about the schools' operation and educational programs, thus eliminating the need of the schools to plan their own future.

The NEI's school coaches modeled a vision building process to the school development teams in a two-day retreat in which they reported scaffolding the process

of the teams' own vision building to develop their capacity to lead their faculties through the same process. They left it up to the school development teams to implement the process with their faculties at their discretion but made themselves available to be present as facilitators or observers, indicating that they wanted to enable the school development teams to decide on the degree of autonomy in their work with faculties.

Balancing Autonomy and Interdependence

Table 5. Redesigned Work: Balancing Autonomy and Interdependence

	Mayrowetz Model	NEI'S PDP
BALANCING A & I	**Administrators** – let go of their control and allow teachers autonomous decision making; **Teachers** – need to sacrifice individual autonomy for the sake of collective decision making; Proper organizational conditions need to be built and provided: trust, healthy micropolitics, organizational stability.	• Involve the faculty in each school in considering the necessity of change (quality indicator workshop, SWOT analysis) • Require establishment of new structures, such as leadership team, action research teams, determine their roles and responsibilities through discussion, reflection, continuous awareness raising; • Model the inclusive way in which the SDTs were expected to work with their faculties; • Provide a list of professional training seminars to SDTs to discuss with faculties and select according to their identified need. • Have a coach available but only on request.

The NEI encouraged the establishment of new structures – the school development team, the action research teams, peer coaching, common, cross-curricular instruction planning time – with the aim of building the capacity of the faculties for informed instructional change, and increasing their autonomy in making decisions about their own development. By involving the faculties in thinking about the necessity of instructional change and indicators of school quality at the beginning of the project, the NEI wanted to support individual teachers to become aware of their mental models, thus beginning a process in which teachers' understanding of

pedagogy and didactics started to shift to become more up to date and consensual.

The continuing discussions in the teams and among the full faculty were intended for

the creation of a unifying whole school instructional reform model to provide a

common purpose, and allow the teams to work autonomously and interdependently.

Finally, giving the school development teams a list of available workshops that their

faculties could choose from instead of providing them with the training that the NEI

considered necessary was the strategy that they adopted in the second and third

cohorts to make the schools more accountable for their own progress.

Feedback

Table 6. Redesigned Work: Feedback

	Mayrowetz Model	**NEI'S PDP**
FEEDBACK	Accurate and productive feedback – greatest potential to activate learning among educators; Can be attained through action research and collective inquiry, embedded in culture of inquiry and organizational learning. Use evaluation data, gathered throughout the process of change implementation.	• Train the SDTs and school faculties in action research strategy of work. • Support action research process throughout the duration of the project (organize workshops according to expressed school's need, provide professional advice by NEI's experts and school coaches); • Train SDTs and faculties in peer coaching, support peer coaching process (NEI's advisers present at classroom observations and pre- and post-observation conferences); • Give SDTs guidelines for collecting evidence of change implementation, discuss indicators of success, have them present their reports and evidence at bi-monthly meetings; • Organize annual two- to three-day retreats called Festivals of Best Practice at which the SDTs and teachers from all cohorts present and discuss their achievements, and then celebrate together.

Throughout the duration of the Didactic Reform Project, the school

development teams had the responsibility to collect evidence about their school's

growth in order to write the reports for the NEI and present their development at the

regular cohort meetings, which created a pressure for the teams to make sure that they

continuously collected the data. Consequently, the team sensitized the teachers in their schools to the importance of continuous data gathering from the students and parents about their progress. While exerting a top-down pressure, the NEI also wanted to build a bottom-up need in the school development teams as leadership bodies for on-going evaluation by encouraging them to embed evaluation in the planning and enactment of their school's operation.

In addition to data-based inquiry in action research teams, the ICP required from the teachers to acquire feedback through peer observation and post-observational discussions of the observed lessons. After the NEI's subject advisors worked with individual teachers and groups on lesson planning, the school development team members were usually the first to open the door of their classrooms to their colleagues putting the prepared lesson plans in practice, and allowing their teaching to be critiqued. The NEI's experts reported that this was not easy for the school development members because peer observations were not common in Slovenia. Introducing the practice of peer observations, and training the school development teams on how to lead post-conference discussions was among the strategies that the ICP team used with the aim of facilitating the development of learning communities in the pilot schools.

Antecedents/Moderators

Recognizing that schools are developmentally different, Mayrowetz et al. (2007) claimed that individual and organizational factors unique to each school represent antecedent and moderating variables that affect how distributed leadership work is perceived, formulated and enacted.

Individual Factors

In the process of working with pilot schools, the NEI administrators indicated that they realized that school improvement required individual change as a necessary prerequisite to a change in school culture. In the third cohort, the project teams decided that instead of training teachers on how to use new instructional techniques, they would rather take time in the first year of working with schools to focus on individual mental model transformation and building shared meaning. After helping the teachers to identify the need for change at the individual level, they invited them to visualize their desired practice in the future, thus teasing out their individual assumptions about the meaning of knowledge and the nature of learning, and encouraging them to confront their assumptions with those of their colleagues. The aim was to create cognitive dissonance in teachers, making them start questioning their assumptions and thinking about alternatives.

The next step was to bring together the teachers that identified similar instructional problem that they wanted to research, and organize their work in action research groups with the purpose of providing them with a safe space for practicing their communication skills, learning from one another, voicing their individual concerns and fears, and trying out new approaches to teaching, in which they were supported by the NEI's experts.

The NEI also worked with individual principals in the first and second cohort on changing their perceptions of their role, using discussion and networking with the principals from other pilot schools for that purpose. When asked why they stopped using the same approach in their work with the principals in the third cohort, the NEI's experts indicated that the reason was not because they doubted the usefulness of their work but rather because they lacked time and personnel to do the task.

Organizational Factors

In the first cohort, the NEI organized teachers in subject-specific groups that worked with the NEI's subject advisors, which further strengthened the subject area collaboration that had been strong before the project. Since there was little coordination among subject team leaders inside the school, the NEI's project team noticed that the groups of teachers from the same department kept operating as isolated units. In the second and third cohorts, the NEI decided to organize teachers into vertical (across content areas) and horizontal (across grade levels) action research teams around instructional issues of their choice, and invited the school development team members to serve as action research team leaders, which provided more coordination of teachers' work and opened the boundaries of leadership. By creating more networked school structures, the NEI achieved freer information flow, and facilitated the development of a sense of collective accountability.

The ICP team expressed being aware that building structures was not sufficient, and that productive interactions and collaboration would not have developed if teachers were not willing to use the time afforded to them to talk and share with each other. They organized a workshop on group dynamics, and a two-day retreat on vision building process for the school development team members to provide them with guidance on how they could start building school culture and relational trust. They also assigned a coach to each school for advice and assistance to the school development teams in their work with their faculties.

While reporting that they were aware that the schools were starting from different initial levels of effectiveness, and that some schools needed more help to create their internal conditions before they could engage in further development, the ICP team members revealed that they were overloaded with other responsibilities at the NEI, which is why they could not offer more support to those schools that

exhibited the need. While they reportedly asked the NEI's administration to relieve

them of other obligations so that they could invest more time in supporting the

schools, the NEI's formal leaders refused to take their request into consideration on

the grounds that they had other work to do.

The NEI's project administrators showed awareness of the need for creating

cross-departmental relationships to overcome departmentalization and teacher

isolation by creating new groupings of teachers across grades and departments, and

provided professional training for the development of collaborative and community

building skills. However, they failed to follow up to make sure that the processes that

they encouraged were really implemented, and to provide additional support to the

schools with less favorable initial conditions, such as lack of administrative support

and persistence of hierarchical decision making.

Transition Mechanisms

Mayrowetz et al. (2007) hypothesized that the redesigned work will make the

educators' work experience more stimulating by developing their collective

understanding of its meaningfulness for school improvement, and by enabling them to

learn how to perform the new work competently and with mutual support.

Sensemaking

Table 7. *Transition Mechanisms: Sensemaking*

	Mayrowetz Model	**NEI'S PDP**
SENSEMAKING	Encourage collective sense making by drawing on the organizational culture and creating a new collective set of beliefs.	• Involve the faculty in big picture of change (SWOT, vision building, action planning); • Break up the faculty in subject teams to clarify reform initiative with subject-specific NEI advisors; provide suitable professional training and support; bring the faculty together to share new insights and create collective understanding; • Enable identification of the change that they wanted to implement in action research teams – create cross-departmental teams; enable inquiry into instructional change interest; provide appropriate professional training and support.

The NEI's experts indicated that by involving the entire school faculties in the big picture about the need and relevance of the change that the Didactic Reform Project promoted, and then breaking the faculties into teams to work with NEI's advisors on the content of reform and its implementation, they encouraged changes in teachers' knowledge about their subject area, teaching strategies, and their beliefs about how students learn. They provided opportunities for the teachers to discuss in subject groups and in action research teams what they had learned in the NEI's seminars and workshops with the aim of helping them make sense of the proposed educational solutions, and adapting the theory to their own classroom circumstances. In this way, the NEI's project team aimed at developing a collective understanding of the material that needed to be implemented, and at making teachers feel more confident in changing their practice.

Learning

Table 8. Transition Mechanisms: Learning

	Mayrowetz Model	NEI'S PDP
LEARNING	Learning at the organizational and individual level through different initiatives and forms of support on a continuous basis; Applying new knowledge and skills in safe environment.	• Provide professional development on a continuous basis to the faculties – plenary sessions, then break the faculty into subject groups that apply the plenary input with the help of the subject advisors. The groups get homework that they perform until the next meeting, having the subject advisor's continuous support. Individual advising according to request available. • Peer coaching –teachers plan instructional process in the subject group with support of NEI subject advisor. Individual teachers volunteer to teach the unit, observed by colleagues and subject advisor. Post-observation discussion of instructional plan and process in relation to the project goals. • Cross-departmental subject teams get professional input from NEI on request on the instructional issue they decide to research. • NEI trains school development team on action research strategies, vision building, communication skills, problem resolution, how to deal with resistance.

The NEI's experts believed that the strength of the NEI's professional development program was that it supported knowledge acquisition at both the individual and collective level. They described the program as continuous, shared, job-embedded professional development delivered at the school site, followed by advising and coaching adapted to the need. While before the project, individual teachers would go to different professional training seminars that were organized outside their school by subject, or attend study group meetings where they worked with colleagues from different schools that taught the same subject, the NEI organized continuous on-site professional learning over a long period of time for the faculty. Previously the teachers would reportedly return to the old practices when they came back from the professional development seminars because there was no collegial support and time provided at the school level to encourage them to transfer the theory into practice. The NEI's professional development program enabled the teachers to study the same material in the subject and cross-subject groups after they took part in the training, thus providing for collegial support and collective sensemaking.

Motivation

Table 9. Transition Mechanisms: Motivation

	Mayrowetz Model	**NEI'S PDP**
MOTIVATION	Creating work conditions (teaming) and building capacity - increases teacher professional commitment and satisfaction with their work.	• Subject teams of teachers working on didactic change supported by the NEI on a continuous basis; • Action research teams across departments inquiring into instructional issue of common interest, supported by the NEI and school development team in structuring work; • School development team members leading action research teams, getting continuous professional support from NEI plus mutual support in the team, discussing their work with the teams.

The NEI's experts planned their professional development program so that it attended to the need to help teachers climb out of their academic department loyalty and subject-specific mentality by inviting full faculties to analyze their teaching at the beginning of action research process, and identify the most pressing instructional problems around which the teachers then formed action research teams. The teachers analyzed their teaching on the basis of multiple data that they previously gathered from their students, parents, and colleagues.

By encouraging teachers to work on the instructional issues that represented pressing problems to them that they themselves identified, the NEI project team planned to increase teachers' motivation to engage in the process of action research inquiry. By enabling the school development teams to request the workshops of their choice that would directly address their teachers' needs identified in the inquiry process, the NEI's project team wanted to make the NEI's didactic training meaningful to the faculties.

The NEI's project team indicated that the NEI's professional development program aimed at increasing teachers' motivation to change their instruction, and at opening them up to collaborative practices in order to build their collective professional confidence. They explained having a holistic support to the schools in mind when designing and implementing the PDP – it did not focus only on teaching content knowledge and pedagogical skills, but also on coaching the school development teams on how to build a climate of collaboration and inquiry in schools to ensure pooling of the collective knowledge, expertise, and capacities of teachers within and across subject areas.

Outcomes: Performance of Leadership Functions

Table 10. Performance of Leadership Functions

	Mayrowetz Model	**NEI'S PDP**
PERFORMANCE OF LF	- Providing and selling a vision; - providing encouragement and recognition; - obtaining resources; - adapting standard operating procedures; - monitoring the improvement effort; - handling disturbances.	- Two-day retreat for school development cohort teams to learn hands-on vision building process; Provision of coach for continuous support in vision building process; - Workshops on evaluation, dealing with resistance, communication, teamwork, plus continuous support by school coach (NEI's expert). - Requiring reports and presentations from school development teams at bi-monthly meetings of cohort schools at the NEI's headquarters; - End-of-year Festival of Best Practices to showcase and celebrate achievements plus encourage networking between pilot schools.

Mayrowetz et al.'s model (2007) that guided this study promotes the function-based view of leadership (Heller & Firestone, 1995) that defines school leadership capacity as the performance of specific leadership functions by many people across school rather than by the formal leader alone. Based on their belief that by strengthening inner leadership capacity in schools through dispersing responsibility for instructional reform among techers they would increase the chances of a school'wide instructional change implementation, and shift the responsibility for instructional improvement from the NEI to the school, the ICP team encouraged the principal of each pilot school to compose a school development team, and then provided an on-going professional support to help the teams perform leadership fuctions effectively.

Especially in the third cohort, the ICP team reported that by investing more time at the beginning of the school year into facilitating the discussions among the team members about their role in their respective schools, and about the roles and responsibilities of individual team members, they laid the ground for the development of mutually supportive, close working relationships in the teams.

The NEI addressed the need to develop school development teams' capacity for the performance of leadership tasks by organizing bi-monthly meetings and professional retreats for them to broaden their leadership skills and build their repertoire of resources. In addition, each team had a coach that was available for advice, school visits, and work with various teams in the school.

The topics that the ICP experts selected for the professional development of the school development teams, and the manner in which they implemented the training attended to the capacity building to perform all the leadership functions included in the Mayrowetz et al.'s model (2007), except for the functions of obtaining resources, and adapting standard operating procedures, which the schools reported figuring out on their own.

Conclusions

The NEI's instructional reform initiative focused on the whole school instructional change implementation through the provision of continuous, on-site professional training and coaching of individuals, teams, and the whole faculty. New structures and processes were put in place to accommodate the schools' internal leadership capacity building with the aim of ensuring school-wide implementation of instructional reform, and sustainable instructional improvement.

The NEI's professional development program attended to most of the elements of work redesign as described in Mayrowetz et al.'s model (2007), from activating a wider potential for leadership that existed in schools through establishing various teams, such as the school development team, action research teams, and later also interdisciplinary instruction planning teams, and engaging them in meaningful collaboration, to developing new skills in the educators for the performance of

redesigned work by modeling and scaffolding the performance of their new roles, and encouraging their reflection on the learning process.

While the NEI's professional development program addressed most of the elements of Mayrowetz et al.'s (2007) Distributed Leadership as Work Redesign model, this did not carry across all aspects of its work. The ICP team, for example, did not follow through to make sure that the school development teams actually implemented what they were learning – two out of three schools in the third cohort reported that they did not implement the vision building process, which had important implications for the climate in those schools and for their teachers' readiness to collaborate in implementing instructional change. By neglecting to follow through to make sure that all the elements of their program were faithfully implemented, the NEI failed to ensure that the conditions conducive to change were in place before requiring from the schools to present the evidence of their implementation of the reform ideas.

In addition, a strong emphasis on external testing in Slovenia reportedly worked against the NEI's efforts, and slowed down inquiry-based teaching and learning in pilot schools. While many teachers reported to be interested in assuming leadership responsibility and in using the new instructional strategies because they noticed that they could better engage their students, they had difficulties accepting the uncertainty about the results of their changed instruction, and the possibility that it may threaten high achievement results on the "matura" exam. How they dealt with the uncertainty about the results of the change depended on the individual school's context, especially on the level of trust between teachers and the principal.

CASE ANALYSES

This study presents two cases of the schools – the best and the worst, – included in the third cohort of schools that piloted the NEI's instructional reform

initiative. The NEI's project participation required a three year commitment from each school, based on the majority agreement to pilot the instructional change process under the NEI's guidance and support. Piloting instructional reform required from the schools to restructure their work – which meant restructuring the roles and processes of school leadership away from traditional norms of hierarchy, and toward distribution and functional expertise, – take part in an on-going professional development, and implement and evaluate instructional change. Instructional reform initiative worked against teachers' academic subject orientation and commitment, and traditional grammar of schooling, and thus implied the necessity of changing their mental models, as well as shifting the culture from isolation to mobilizing collective power for improving teaching and learning.

Mayrowetz et al.'s (2007) model of the development of distributed leadership offered a framework for the exploration of the process of restructuring and re-culturing, which required a redefinition of roles, broadening of skills, and extending of scope of role and responsibilities within the school, developed in each school. As the theoretical proposition for this study (Yin, 1994), the model also directed toward the examination of the conditions in each school that created the context for the development of distributed leadership.

While following the theoretical proposition of Mayrowetz et al.'s model (2007) to structure the vertical analysis of two cases, the researcher also included the themes that emerged from the relevant data from each case. Using a common reporting format, she presented the vertical analysis of the cases subsequently under each set of headings and sub-headings – each furnished with a short explanation to demonstrate how the section informs the issue of work redesign and its relation to the

development of distributed leadership – to generate the explanation of the phenomenon under study.

<div align="center">Perceptions of the NEI's Reform Initiative</div>

Perceptions of the NEI's reform initiative are a kind of meta-variable, related to whether people's understanding of the changes in their schools positively influenced their attitude toward engaging in new redesigned work. While the NEI provided professional training and on-going support to the schools to support their work redesign with the aim of facilitating leadership capacity building for school-wide instructional improvement, individual and organizational variables ultimately predicted and moderated how the intended changes were actualized. Examining perceptions thus adds considerable depth to the understanding of work redesign characteristics at each school, and how they either supported or impeded distributed leadership development.

<div align="center">***Linden Tree High School***</div>

Initial Perceptions of the NEI's Reform Initiative

Linden High teachers reported that the faculty's initial perceptions of the NEI's reform initiative were mixed. Upon receiving the invitation to join the Didactic Reform Project, Lydia recalled that Larry, the previous principal, perceived the NEI's offer for collaboration as a means to stop a trend of falling student enrollment. While there is no evidence to suggest that he saw it as an opportunity to develop leadership capacity for school improvement, the data suggest that he embraced it with the aim of re-building the school's reputation for offering rigorous educational program through improvement of instruction school-wide.

While the majority voted for participation in the NEI's project, some teachers remained resistant and caused tensions among the faculty, which was vulnerable due

to lack of vision for the outcome of the reform. Although teachers did not express sharing Larry's enthusiasm, the interview data indicated that most of them initially perceived the NEI's initiative as an opportunity to enrich their daily routine of teaching, which they sensed was necessary given the demographic changes in student population that brought more troubled and academically alienated students to their school who were not easily motivated for learning. The resisting part of the faculty, however, that reportedly voiced their doubts and discontent in an extremely impatient manner at the faculty meetings, prevented a productive dialogue and increased general negativity toward the program.

Catalyst for Change in Perceptions of the Reform

Lydia and her team reported that after the faculty experienced the tragedy, they seized the moment to generate collective sense making about the reform and its possible contribution to the school's more recognizable image in the community. According to the teachers, the process ultimately unified the faculty and set the stage for building their common understanding of the work of the reform.

Lydia's candidness about the urgency of change, and her inclusion of the faculty in decision making about how to make the reform suitable for their unique context, had implications for the faculty's initial perceptions of the reform and how they changed over time. Teachers reported that from initial skepticism the faculty eventually started to identify the reform principles as a way of thinking, developing, and conducting business. While initially they complied with the NEI's requirements placed upon them, they then searched for solutions that were meaningful for them by scrutinizing their actions and internalizing their responsibility for the success of the reform.

School Development Teams' Perceptions of their Role and Implications for Teachers'

Perceptions of Reform

Being entrusted with the responsibility to build their capacity for the performance of their new role while undertaking their new work, the team members recalled investing themselves fully in learning to justify Lydia's expectation, while also feeling that they were making an important contribution to the school improvement. Although they initially perceived themselves as project coordinators, over time each team member exhibited some special leadership ability that contributed to the team's growing leadership identity in the school. Over the course of the reform, the team members situated themselves in the school also as formal leaders through the authority of their knowledge and skills, – additionally acquired from the training provided by the NEI, and built through their ongoing effort within the team – which they could exhibit as model teachers and action research team leaders. In addition to occupying positions of formal leaders, the team members indicated approaching their colleagues also informally to make the case for change.

Realizing that the teachers lacked a critical stance toward their work and the way they functioned as a faculty, Lydia and the team members reported that they ultimately made the faculty aware of a link between the quality (or lack thereof) of their instructional practice, the culture among the faculty members and their relationship with the community, and the trend of falling student enrollment.

Over time, by taking full advantage of the NEI's active and consistent direction and support, and by investing on-going effort into the development of a common understanding of the urgency of change, the faculty exhibited grasping the value of the NEI's professional guidance: They fitted the structure of action research

into their daily work, using inquiry as a lever for changing instruction, and

participated voluntarily in the preparation of the whole-school events.

Teachers expressed appreciation for not being rushed into the reform, although

it took more than two years before they were ready to take the ownership of the

change it promoted. They revealed that if the school development team had not been

as thoughtful and deliberate about their decisions, taking into consideration teachers'

ideas and concerns they raised at the faculty meetings, and giving the teachers who

had doubts time to build their readiness, the faculty would not have developed trust in

their leadership, and ultimately embraced the reformed work so readily.

The school development team became a strong catalyst of change in the third

year of the project. The members explained that the stability in their membership and

the time they invested in learning and planning their work together contributed to the

team's internal coherence, which empowered them to structure work processes and

cultivate norms that enabled teachers to engage in collective inquiry, and eventually

develop into a professional community.

Lydia and the team members recognized that without developing a firm belief

in the necessity of instructional change within their team before seeking teachers'

agreement, it would be impossible to mobilize the faculty. They revealed that they

overcame their doubts and uncertainty about the reform results through studying

literature on the proposed change in their team, and discussing its possible benefits for

their students' knowledge. Building their collective understanding by consulting each

other helped them build their confidence in dealing with the faculty's skepticism.

Role of Formal Leaders in Broadening Leadership Capacity

As the assistant principal, Lydia embraced the idea of school development

team right away perceiving it as a potential change agent in the school. While Larry

did not, as Lydia recalled, perceive the team as a leadership body per se but more as a support to her as his assistant principal, Lydia grasped the importance of broader leadership capacity building, which she demonstrated by immediately embracing the opportunity offered by the NEI to engage in the training, and motivated her team to do the same. She reported considering building the team's collective leadership capacity as essential due to her awareness that changing the school systemically would require capable leadership.

Once she became principal, Lydia additionally strengthened the team's leadership identity by inviting and acting on their initiatives to influence teaching and learning at the school. The team reported that their perception of their growing leadership competence was continuously reinforced by positive feedback from Lydia, which she provided regularly and with sensitivity to the team members' individual differences and contributions.

Little Creek High School

Initial Perceptions

Little Creek teachers reported that the faculty agreed to join the NEI's project out of compliance with the principal's decision, which Frank made before asking the faculty to participate in a vote, and recalled being rather vague about the expected change upon entering the project. In spite of being excluded from decision making, teachers initially accepted the change that the NEI's reform encouraged without resistance, and collectively attended on-site training, which the interviewees ascribed to intrinsic desire for excellence that the faculty shared, and their concern over their restricted access to information and training.

Frank, who explained perceiving the NEI's reform initiative as an opportunity to ensure continuous, on-site professional development to the faculty, thus saving him

the money and reducing teachers' absence, enlisted his teachers in piloting the didactic reform without indicating that he had a clear idea about the degree of change that the reform initiative required, and the way it could be implemented within the school setting. Keeping his position of power and authority over all aspects of school operation throughout the school's collaboration in the project suggests that he did not (want to) understand that the reform initiated broader leadership distribution.

Catalyst for Change in Perceptions of the Reform

The teachers reported that while Frank's autocratic leadership style discouraged their voice and shared decision making, and led them to internalize the perception that the areas related to the school as a whole were outside of their realm of control, it also reduced their stress load and enabled them to focus on the most important task, classroom instruction. While in the initial stages of their collaboration with the NEI they were willing to invest their time in out-of-classroom activities as part of the reform requirements, they did not perceive those activities as meaningful since they were not directly related to their work with students.

Because as a faculty they were excluded from making decisions about the school's future, the teachers indicated remaining unsure about the meaning and purpose of the reform work. Since they were unused to voicing their opinion, they assumed a passive role in the NEI's training, reporting that they felt uncomfortable when asked to co-create the learning process, and rather expected to be told what to do instead of putting the reform to their own use.

Lacking common goals, teachers indicated being unable to adapt the reform initiative to their needs, and starting to perceive the work of the reform as additional burden, taking their time away from students. Constant reminders from the administration that the changes should not threaten student success on the 'matura'

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added to teachers' reluctance to take on additional work. Because the school already had high achievement results, most of the faculty kept their practice unchanged, although the interviewees indicated that such practice may not have been in the best interest of students. However, since they felt that there would be no safety nets in case of lower achievement result, they experimented with instructional change on top of their regular work, which led to their feelings of burnout and reluctance to participate in redesigned work.

School Development Teams' Perceptions of their Role and Implications for Teachers' Perceptions of Reform

By remaining the final arbiter of all decisions, Frank demonstrated that he perceived the school development team as having a coordinating, rather than leadership role. The same as Frank, neither Boris nor Tatiana seemed to grasp the value of broader leadership distribution, which was visible in their attempts to enact some leadership functions, such as vision building (Tatiana) and working with resistance (Boris), on their own.

Under Frank's autocratic leadership, the team members appeared reluctant to even describe themselves as leaders. In addition, because of frequent changes in their membership, the few members that were stable had difficulties filling the gaps in the new members' knowledge and skills, and the team struggled to establish trusting relationships. Given the limited opportunities that the team members had for engaging with each other, they could not develop their internal coherence, which was visible in their lack of assertion and agreement about the reform and its possible implications. Functioning as a group of individuals instead of a team, they expressed lacking the empowerment to extend influence on decisions at their school.

Unchanged hierarchical structure and a culture that did not encourage participative decision making constrained the school development team's ability to establish their leadership identity – the team members did not express perceiving themselves as a leadership body within the school, neither were they perceived as such by the teachers. Although training was readily available for them to develop their leadership capacity, the team reported lacking motivation for fully embracing the training opportunities because they seemed meaningless to them since they were not able to function as leaders.

In their work with teachers, the school development team revealed lack of vision for the school by pushing teachers into engagement with the change process for the sake of producing desired results for the NEI's review while not really expecting deep instructional change. They admitted that they rushed the faculty through the process from fear of lagging behind other pilot schools, and failed to attend to the process of building collective values and beliefs, which the teachers perceived as professionally demeaning. As the result, the teachers reported feeling overworked, which stemmed from their perception that they had to give up something meaningful (their time with students) for something they perceived as a waste of their time (meetings and writing reports).

The interviews revealed that the faculty reacted to the overwhelming work they had to endure, and to the mixed messages they were receiving from the administration in different ways: While some teachers protected their time by ignoring the requirements for collaboration, others tried to make the reform work meaningful by altering change initiatives to fit their own and their students' needs.

Role of Formal Leaders in Broadening Leadership Capacity

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While Frank exhibited being interested in the work of the school development team by attending all the meetings and training organized for them at the NEI's main office, he did not indicate recognizing the team's leadership potential and how it could complement his own. Instead, he revealed that his engagement came out of his concern that the team members could become more knowledgeable and better informed than him. Rather than considering the team as an asset, he revealed perceiving it as a threat to his authority, which he wanted to keep at all cost.

Although claiming that he was sharing leadership and decision making with the school development team, he revealed his unchanged belief that as a formal leader he had the right to absolute decision-making power. The team members confirmed that this was true when stating that they could not act without his permission. Until Frank's retirement, which coincided with the end of the NEI's project, leadership boundaries remained impermeable at Little Creek.

As Frank's successor, Boris kept himself detached from the school development team and from instructional matters. He revealed perceiving himself as a capable manager but incompetent in the area of instruction. Both he and the teachers indicated that due to his previous position of a vocational teacher at the school he lacked credibility in front of the faculty to express a firm opinion about instructional change – which was in tune with general perception in Slovenia of vocational teachers' lower professional status compared to that of the teachers of academic subjects. Although he reported supporting the team's exerting pressure on teachers to produce evidence of change, he also revealed his role in holding teachers back to prevent too much change, which, in his opinion, could threaten high achievement results. Inherent ambiguity of his attitude increased the faculty's stress load and

decreased their confidence in the benefits of the reform– teachers reported feeling inhibited in their creative potential and unwilling to take risks.

Tatiana's formal role as the assistant principal and her considerable expertise, which she reportedly exhibited as an academic subject teacher and leader of one of more successful action research teams, empowered her for possibly instilling a positive perspective toward the expected change in the faculty. Nevertheless, since she exhibited the same lack of trust in the reform initiative as Boris, putting the results on the 'matura' over instructional experimentation, while at the same time pressurizing teachers to produce evidence of change for the NEI's evaluation, she evoked deep feelings of disappointment in teachers. They indicated perceiving her attitude as lacking in integrity, causing them to lose the meaning they initially found in their work for the reform. Receiving mixed messages from the administration, teachers complained about lack of leadership, and loss of a sense that the reform served the benefit of students.

Neglecting to provide opportunities for the faculty to develop shared understanding and commitment to change, the formal leaders modeled a perception of the NEI's initiative as a short-term commitment, rather than on-going, fundamental change in the way the school functioned. This then affected teachers' perceptions of the reform work as something that was added to their workload, which in turn reduced the sustainability of change.

The Development of Distributed Leadership (DL)

In examining the overall development of DL practice, I considered (1) the meaningfulness of the new structures and processes that the NEI encouraged as a means of building broader leadership capacity for change for the faculty, and (2) how

the responsibility for redesigned work was shared, which in turn affected distributed leadership development.

Linden Tree and Little Creek belonged to the third cohort of schools in which the NEI changed from their initially more prescriptive approach of providing direct training to the faculties for instructional change to school's internal capacity building for tailoring the proposed instructional change to their need. The NEI encouraged the schools to create new structures, such as the school development team and action research teams of teachers and provided training for them with the aim of building the faculty's capacity for sharing the responsibility for the reform work, and developing understanding of new forms of leadership.

Piloting the instructional reform in the third cohort, the NEI thus decided to intensify their work with the school development team – a strategically selected group of teachers and the principal – to build the team's capacity for the performance of leadership functions before providing didactic workshops to the faculty. The next step was involving teachers in action research of their practice to provide them with the opportunity to identify the areas of their work they wanted to improve, and engage them in the change process. The last step was offering a menu of options for the expansion of teachers' knowledge and skills for the improvement of teaching and learning, which left the schools a choice of how and what they wanted to improve based on their identified need.

By reversing the order of training and moving from a more prescriptive to a more client-oriented stance, the NEI provided the schools with an opportunity to set their own goals and prepare their own action plan, and fit the redesigned work that was part of the reform requirement to their individual school's context.

Linden Tree High School

Meaning of New Structures and Processes

Linden High school development team did not only take full advantage of the NEI's initiative and tangible support to build their leadership capacity, which in turn helped extend teachers' instructional expertise, but over time assumed ownership of the reform by inviting teachers into the preparation of their own reform agenda, based on the identification of their need, thus making the reform serve their needs rather than the other way around.

While teachers reported that initially new structures and processes were implemented for the sake of satisfying the NEI's requirements, the school's strategic documents, such as their annual school development plans, indicated that they used the new structures, such as school leadership team, action research teamwork, and peer coaching, meaningfully and in service of improving the instructional areas that they identified as needing improvement. The same documents also confirmed that most of the faculty, and not just isolated individuals and groups, were involved in the efforts to improve teaching and learning. Their use of action research strategy of work two years after the NEI's project ended can serve as evidence that the school embraced inquiry as a method of work. Leadership for change thus grew out of the inquiry process that became embedded in the school's normal operation.

Sharing Responsibility for the Work of the Reform

Lydia, who played a key role in keeping the overall vision and maintaining the focus of change throughout the school's participation in the project, stepped aside a year after the project ended, giving others the opportunity to step forward. While handing the team leadership to another member, she nevertheless remained an active member of the team.

Throughout the school's participation in the NEI's project, the teachers that served on the school development team also acted as action research team leaders. After the project ended, they shifted the responsibility for leading various teams to the teachers who exhibited appropriate expertise and leadership capacity. The teachers reported feeling comfortable in their new leadership roles, and indicated that collaborating and sharing expertise made their complex work of teaching more exciting and engaging.

Summary

By giving teachers the responsibility for building their leadership capacity for dealing with the instructional issues that they identified as problematic, Linden High demonstrated perceiving broad leadership distribution as a means of the whole school's continuous instructional improvement. The data confirm that leadership became broadly distributed at Linden High, with various members of the school community participating in making decisions ranging from classroom-based to school-wide. The principal provided a catalyst for change throughout the duration of the project, the school development team oversaw decentralized administrative tasks, such as time schedule, faculty meeting agendas, annual planning, action research, peer coaching, and interdisciplinary instructional planning teams, and the teachers indicated feeling responsible for contributing their ideas for instructional change and professional development topics, for providing collegial feedback, and for preparing model lessons and evaluation reports about their work. After the project ended, the team reported perceiving their role more in terms of focusing the project work on what was important, and framing the potential problems, while encouraging the teachers who exhibited appropriate expertise to assume the leadership of the new teams created for further instructional innovation.

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Little Creek High School

Meaning of New Structures and Processes

While Frank's authoritarian leadership style confined the boundaries of leadership, Boris' detachment from instructional matters made the faculty uncertain about who truly had decision-making authority. Mixed messages about the direction of the reform that they received from their formal leaders had implications for teachers' trust, collective sensemaking, and their willingness to take risks. Teachers described their own efforts to implement the NEI's initiatives, such as action research, in ways more analogous to compliance for the NEI's review than meaningful practice that could potentially contribute to their development.

Lacking the opportunity to discuss uncertainty about the outcomes of the reform, and feeling unsupported, teachers kept adding the work of reform on top of their already overwhelming workload out of fear that changing their practice might threaten students' achievement on the 'matura'. They felt overwhelmed by the growing amount of work, and annoyed by their colleagues who refused to take on additional work. Even those teachers that kept their commitment for change throughout the duration of the project started to retreat away from collaborative teamwork and back to their immediate work in their classrooms after the project ended.

Sharing Responsibility for the Work of the Reform

The school development team admitted that none of the new leadership structures introduced in the project as a lever for building broader leadership capacity for instructional change remained in use at the school after the NEI's project ended. Failing to de-center decision-making and accountability away from traditional leadership roles, and create a collegial culture to support broader involvement in the

work of reform, the school development team reported suffering from a huge work overload because they had to take the responsibility for leading new projects in which Tatiana assigned the faculty, and which teachers refused to lead. The teachers explained being increasingly reluctant to perform leadership work, having to spend more time trying to get their colleagues to collaborate with them than actually working on instructional improvement, which, in addition, was not supported by their formal leaders.

Summary

The data gathered at Little Creek suggests that a more collective form of leadership, distributed across the broader school community, failed to evolve for a number of reasons. Because the formal leaders did not recognize the value of broader leadership distribution, they did not frame leadership work as important for the teachers, who perceived it as additional burden instead of meaningful practice in support of student learning. Working in the climate that did not promote risk and change, the teachers that were committed to change reported implementing the work of reform on top of their regular workload, thus adding the new instead of replacing the old practice, which led to their continuous feeling of being overworked, spreading themselves too thinly across too many tasks while losing the sight of students. Instead of modeling distributed leadership practice within their team, the school development team revealed functioning as a micro hierarchical system within the broader school hierarchy, with Lydia on the top delegating work to the team members, who in turn enforced the required tasks to the teachers. The data thus indicate that the school did not move beyond narrow, role-based perception of leadership.

Performance of Leadership Functions

Distributed performance of leadership functions is a desirable outcome of redesigned work since it presumably increases the likelihood of school improvement (Mayrowetz, et al., 2007). In addressing my second research question: *How did the performance of leadership functions evolve in the schools over their engagement in work redesign*, I considered if the leadership functions (providing and selling a vision, implementing redesigned work, working with resistance, adapting standard operating procedures, monitoring improvement effort, providing encouragement and recognition, and buffering the faculty from outside interference) were performed as collective actions in pursuit of common goals (Mayrowetz, et al.), and also if broader boundaries in leadership practices were incorporated into the routines and activities at the school (Copland, 2003).

Linden Tree High School
Providing and Selling a Vision

As a process for building whole staff consensus in establishing school priorities (Silins & Mulford, 2001), vision building is essential for providing a sense of direction, and for fostering organizational learning (Leithwood, Leonard, & Sharratt, 1998a). Heller and Firestone (1995) define providing and selling a vision as the first function that needs to be performed for successful school change.

Linden High principal and the school development team reported that by involving teachers in vision building process, they provided a catalyst for building their readiness for change in their school. Recognizing that teachers' buy-in was essential for their engagement in the NEI's reform initiative, Lydia reported making a number of important provisions before inviting the faculty into vision building process. First, she took advantage of all the training provided by the NEI to build her own and the school development team's capacity, thus empowering herself and the

team members to take the lead in a complex change implementation process. Next, she built a strong support system for her endeavors by establishing trusting relationships with her team members who shared her beliefs about the need for change and the direction it should take. And finally, she used her knowledge and skills when the right moment presented itself after Larry's tragic death to invite teachers, including the resistors, to share their emotions and voice their concerns.

By actively seeking to surface the problems she enabled the faculty to confront them, and then supported them to look for creative solutions. By giving teachers voice, she helped them become aware of their tacit assumptions and values, which laid the ground for the development of a productive dialogue, – and implies the creation of an environment characterized by trust and respect for the voice of each participant, as opposed to previous power imbalance due to hierarchical organizational structure.

Lydia was able to relate to and understand teachers' concerns because (1) she was one of them (a former teacher at the school, she kept minimum hours of teaching in addition to her principal work, and successfully led one of the action research teams); (2) she attended all the NEI's training for teachers, in addition to the training organized for the school development team, and (3) she discussed, planned, and shared her leadership work with the school development team members, who – because they had better insight into daily challenges of teachers – could keep her up to date on teachers' efforts, and on the climate in the staff room.

While Lydia's successful leadership was partly due to her personal attributes, the interviews revealed that the way she built her own capacity and credibility as a formal leader, and supported others to lead was informed by her growing knowledge and skills gained in the NEI's on-going training and support, and also by her belief in

the benefit of involving the faculty in leadership work. From perceiving herself as a learner and demonstrating rigorous instructional knowledge and skill, to being able to read the situation and start the process of transforming the culture, and supporting others in assuming leadership positions – these were the capacities that placed Lydia in the center of the reform.

Consistent with the findings of teacher leadership and educational effectiveness research that Mayrowetz et al. (2007) refer to in the description of their model, which point to the central role of the principal as a catalyst for the development and implementation of distributed leadership, Lydia assumed the central role in setting the climate that encouraged leadership capacity building and eventually its broader distribution.

While she provided teachers with the opportunity to voice their concerns, Lydia also revealed bringing herself into the process by openly voicing her deep concern about the school's future, and showing her commitment to the school improvement. She was direct about her expectations, making it clear that improvement could not happen unless it was a collaborative effort – and that every single teacher's contribution was necessary, prepared and delivered in the spirit of collegiality and open communication. She thus confronted the impulses of privacy of teachers' work, making the faculty aware that they needed to transcend their individualism, and start viewing the instructional improvement as a collective good. With her honest and straightforward communication she modeled to the faculty how they were expected to work together to achieve their common goals.

Supported by the school development team, Lydia then followed through by involving teachers in a process of vision building, which continued with identification of the school goals for the coming academic year to clarify common purpose. Since

then, the team reported making sure to revisit their vision at least once a year by inviting the faculty to re-consider the school purpose, re-address their goals, and reshape them to suit their changing needs, which evidenced their awareness that while creating vision collaboratively was important, sustaining it collectively bore equal importance.

The team indicated that over the years, the teachers who were not on the leadership team began to share in performing the function of providing and selling a vision by reminding and encouraging each other within the school community of the common purpose and values to sustain their instructional reform work.

Implementing Redesigned Work

While following the NEI's directions and requirements in planning new structures and processes, the school development team also linked the redesigned work to the developing school culture that supported inquiry-based reform work. Once the faculty defined their own clear goals in the third year of their collaboration in the project, the school development team followed up by involving teachers in the preparation of a detailed action plan under the expectation that every teacher would volunteer to have a responsibility for an out-of-classroom task that was necessary for the achievement of those goals. The interviews revealed that most of the teachers actually volunteered, and that those that did not were given some responsibility that capitalized on their strong areas of expertise and personal attributes. The aim was to boost their self-esteem, and empower them for contribution toward the goals that they collectively agreed to pursue.

Using the strategy to have the action plan evolve through interaction with the faculty after collectively creating the school vision and defining the goals, the school development team reported that they successfully engaged the faculty and encouraged

their ownership of redesigned work. The teachers confirmed that they felt engaged in the new work, and that positive feedback that they received from students, parents, and the community increased their engagement. The team followed up by writing down the annual plan, and making it visible in the staff room, letting teachers know that they trusted their individual responsibility to contribute their share.

The school's strategic documents, such as their annual development plans, confirmed that they planned the implementation of the new structures and processes meaningfully to enhance collaboration and improve instructional areas they identified as needing improvement. The same documents also confirmed that most of the faculty, and not just isolated individuals and groups, were involved in the whole-school improvement efforts. The interviews and the documents confirmed that the team found an efficient way to keep the teachers accountable for the work of reform, based on their feelings of ownership. Once teachers saw success piled up, they reported feeling even more eager to participate.

Adapting Standard Operating Procedures

The school development team reported considering adapting standard operating procedures one of their priorities to prevent possible work overload as a consequence of project requirements. Teacher interviews confirmed that the team encouraged gradual implementation of the changes in how teachers worked with students and each other, and provided resources such as time, space, equipment, and internally and externally designed training geared toward supporting the enactment of agreed upon tasks.

The team built time for various team and faculty meetings and for training sessions into the organizational structure with the aim of ensuring regular attendance, and showing their consideration for teachers' needs. Given that most of the teachers

were commuters, the school development team exhibited respect for their free time by shortening instruction time on one specific day to make room for meetings and professional development activities, which eliminated the need for the teachers to spend the whole day in school, and had a positive effect on the school climate. In addition, the introduction of the second long break during the school day added the opportunity for daily instructional planning team meetings, which – as the school development team indicted in the interview – became more focused and efficient.

The school development team members, who kept their full workload as classroom teachers, reported modifying their work by connecting their new work with their classroom work as much as possible to avoid work overload. A team member who provided internal training, for instance, reported including peer observation of her teaching and her classroom work as a model to demonstrate and discuss active methods of teaching with her colleagues, thus making it part of her peer observation obligation.

By adapting standard operating procedures, the team created opportunities for frequent interactions among teachers, which increased their commitment to collaborative work. Teacher interviews revealed, however, that those modifications would not have been sufficient for teachers' engagement in redesigned work if the principal and her team had not first strengthened the culture and clarified the common purpose.

Working with Resistance

Faced with strong initial resistance from part of the faculty that planted deep seeds of doubt among the rest of the faculty in the NEI's change initiative, Lydia and the team put sustained effort into building a foundation of trust to lay sufficient groundwork for engaging teachers in the reform, and for promoting broader

leadership responsibility. An example of such an effort were opportunities provided within the school day for sharing and discussing possible ways to accommodate both teaching for understanding (which was non-negotiable at Linden High – both Lydia and her team had no doubts that it was necessary), and preparing students for the 'matura'. Another example was when they organized a discussion between teachers and business community about the knowledge and skills necessary at the workplace.

These discussions helped clarify why new methods of teaching were important, and why they needed to be implemented in spite of insecurity as to their impact on the "matura" exam results. Other such efforts were involving teachers in defining the purpose of the school's redesigned work, enabling them to determine their own need for learning and providing suitable training, and giving them plenty of opportunity to put their new learning into practice while respecting their autonomy for instructional matters.

By inviting them to express their perspective the team made teachers feel valued, and then used strategies to keep them accountable for the change that they agreed to implement, while also providing opportunities for external feedback. By working with resistance instead of against it, especially by inviting teachers' participation in decisions concerning the school's future, the school development team leveraged the development of teachers' sense of ownership and empowerment, thus eliminating causes for their resistance.

Monitoring Improvement Efforts

Linden High school development team reported encouraging teachers to self-monitor their work rather than providing top-down control. While they revealed checking in frequently to make sure that everyone was on track, they were cautious not to impose themselves over the teachers, telling them what they should do. They

explained that that was their way of exhibiting their respect for teachers'

professionalism, and their trust in their responsibility for self-directed learning.

The team reported using different strategies to hold teachers accountable

(which helped create a balanced bottom-up and top-down pressure), for instance, by

organizing "exhibition" school days to create opportunities for every teacher to

demonstrate what they had learned in the NEI's professional development program by

teaching in a different way, peer coaching as an opportunity for collegial feedback,

regular discussions about the reform work at the faculty meetings, and report sharing

about their work at the end-of-year faculty's "working meetings," which served as a

basis for revisiting school vision, re-addressing the school goals, and planning their

next year's development work. In this way, they made individual development part of

a coordinated and collective process that enhanced the faculty's sense of community.

Providing Encouragement and Recognition

The interview data gathered at Linden High indicated that Lydia was aware of

the importance of her encouragement and recognition of teachers' work to sustain

extra effort that they put in the innovation and performance of redesigned work,

which exceeded the scope of their regular classroom work. But while the school

development team members recognized her encouragement and recognition as a

source of their increased inner motivation and self-esteem, other teachers could not

recall getting special attention from Lydia, which suggested that her support was

limited to the cadre of teachers who were involved in leadership work.

Although Lydia acknowledged that she considered verbally supporting

teachers' effort and celebrating success her area of growth, and that she and the team

planned to focus more on this function in the future, the interview data suggested that

by institutionalizing peer coaching, she enabled teachers to provide encouragement to

each other, and monitor each other's development work. In addition, teachers cited their colleagues from other pilot schools, who provided them with feedback and ideas about teaching strategies and lesson plans at Festivals of Best Practices, as the main source of inspiration and energy.

Buffering the Faculty from Outside Interference

Going through tough times when trying to build positive climate in their staff room, Lydia and her team exhibited a vigilant stance to protect the culture they had created, which strengthened a sense of internal security, thus enabling the reform efforts to deepen. When organizing professional training, for instance, the faculty discussed and selected the potential topics, followed by the school development team's careful screening of the available professional training before admitting external experts into the school to maximally support teachers' needs.

Following a clear vision and pursuing their commonly agreed goals, the school development team members exhibited high degree of autonomy in their decisions about what was important for the school and their students, and what could be neglected, which enabled them to buffer themselves and the teachers from work overload.

While employing buffering strategies to protect the existence of their positive culture, they also kept a watchful eye to scan for opportunities, such as resources and feedback that they imported from other schools to enrich their practice and energize the teachers. Lydia, for instance, exhibited a proactive stance when she invited community business representatives to the school to talk to the teachers about the knowledge and skills that the students would need once they entered the job market.

As a result of these efforts, teachers' awareness about the necessity of changing instruction in ways that would enable students to develop appropriate

knowledge and skills increased, with the majority of the teachers recognizing that while they had taken for granted that their instructional strategies were efficient, this may not be the case.

Summary

While the NEI provided the training and on-going support necessary to develop leadership capacity within the school, it was important that Lydia recognized early on that by using multiple sources of expertise within the school to perform leadership functions rather than assuming all the responsibility for the reform on her own, the school would be better equipped to meet the complex challenges associated with whole-school instructional improvement. After being more active during the first years of the school's collaboration in the Didactic Reform Project to catalyze the redesigned work, establish the vision and common purpose, and support building leadership capacity within others, Lydia then encouraged others to perform leadership functions by intentionally seeking their input and support, and finally by handing over her formal leadership of the team.

Although disturbances kept erupting at Linden High, the interviewees indicated that they were successfully resolved through a combination of clear purpose and sustained vision, and opportunities for open communication about the dilemmas surrounding the innovation, which encouraged the development of collegiality among teachers, and a climate that supported risk taking.

Data results from this case study provide evidence that a set of leadership functions was not performed by the principal alone but to a large extent by the principal in collaboration with the teachers who served on the school development team, as well as by those teachers who were not assigned any particular leadership role. Distribution of leadership work across faculty was possible because the school

embedded the processes into its structure that allowed broader performance of leadership functions, and because the school culture fostered collegiality and continuous learning. The faculty's use of action research strategy after the conclusion of the NEI's project suggests that teachers have internalized the inquiry attitude, and built their capacity to seek evidence and utilize their experience when making decisions about instructional change.

The example of Linden High suggests not only that distributed leadership requires "active cultivation and development of leadership abilities within all members of the team" (Harris, 2008 p. 174), and that the team needs time "to develop internal mechanisms to practice leadership" (Mayrowetz, et al., 2007 p. 87), but also that the principal's personal attributes, and her leadership capacity acquired through suitable training in combination with the factors within the school determine how shared leadership develops, i.e., how prospective leaders define their roles and responsibilities and establish their credibility. Some factors that seemed to have leveraged the team's capacity for performing leadership functions in the case of Linden High are the training that they received and its relevance to building their leadership capacity, the opportunity to use their newly acquired knowledge and skills and exert their leadership in meaningful ways, and principal's support and value that she attributed to the team's contribution to leadership practice.

Little Creek High School
Providing and Selling a Vision

When asked about vision and common goals, the teachers reported absence of common purpose, and a growing sense that the reform work was not benefitting the students. While Boris assumed that teachers shared his vision although they did no participate in building it, Tatiana expressed being aware that the faculty lacked

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common purpose and vision but indicated that she gave up trying to engage them in the process of vision building after two attempts that both failed.

By relying on her individual action to involve the faculty in vision building process instead of investing herself in collective leadership capacity building, Tatiana failed to build a support system for her endeavors, which diminished her leadership potential. She overlooked subtle cues in the staff room that indicated people's dissent, and rushed the faculty into the process without first addressing the increasingly problematic relational issues, which provoked teachers' resistance.

Failing to employ her team's potential capacity to build the faculty's readiness for the process in which she attempted to engage them, Tatiana reacted defensively to the faculty's reluctance to share their views on the proposed change, and suppressed teachers when they tried to voice their concerns. Not willing to deal with problematic relationships in the staff room that got increasingly worse over the years, Tatiana decided to use coercion when under pressure to get the results, and sometimes grouped together the teachers without regard to their hostility toward each other.

Both the former and the present principals took the observer stance during Tatiana's attempts to involve people in the vision building process, which teachers ascribed to their doubts about its value, and which in turn dampened Tatiana's and the team's readiness to assume leadership responsibility. With their attitude, formal leaders implied their lack of support to new patterns of leadership, and contributed to the build up of a negative climate in which straightforward communication about how the faculty was expected to work together and what their common goals were became virtually impossible.

Implementing Redesigned Work

While Little Creek established new structures and processes, such as various teams and arrangement of time, to allow for team meetings, they did not build the culture that would support collaboration and shared practice, which ruined the work of reform for the faculty. Because teachers refused to "*write reports*", the team was forced to extend their work day and do the work of reform on their own to keep face while reporting about their progress at the NEI's meetings. Also, they assigned more and more work to the teachers who volunteered, thus making them feel overwhelmed and exploited. The manner in which they planned and implemented the reform work thus worked against its intended purpose. Instead of distributing leadership responsibility more broadly, they implemented new tasks as short-term compliance exercises and not as fundamental changes to affect the school's functioning in a more profound way.

When preparing their annual action plan, for instance, the school development team reported including the faculty in the process. The interview then revealed that they just circulated the finished plan in the staff room, and asked teachers for comments. While teachers confirmed that they were asked for opinion, they also indicated that they never provided it. Their comments suggested that they perceived the team's gesture as a formality rather than their honest attempt to seek advice from colleagues. Because of its general nature, the plan was not helpful in defining the tasks and making teachers accountable for their implementation. Those teachers that were internally motivated and volunteered to carry additional workload thus felt betrayed because their colleagues could get away with no additional work. As a consequence of weak planning, teachers reported being unsure what their work was and who controlled it.

Adapting Standard Operating Procedures

While the school development team reported creating frequent opportunities for various meetings, teacher interviews revealed that they did not find them meaningful, and experienced them as additional workload. Tatiana and the team did not report making an effort to accommodate the teachers' needs when organizing the work for reform, just following the NEI's instructions. In addition, in spite of their frequency, the way that various meetings were led prevented real interaction, which turned out to be detriment to professional culture. The team's attempts at modifying the existing operation, like for instance extending the 45-minute subject lessons to longer interdisciplinary blocks, were unsuccessful because the school culture did not support collaborative work. The interview data revealed that the formal leaders enforced the implementation of new structures and processes as a compliance exercise while neglecting to make sense of the reform individually and as a faculty. The interviewed teachers felt that they performed additional work for the wrong reasons – to please the NEI rather than to benefit the students. Teachers' reports that longer instructional blocks were abandoned even before the Didactic Reform Project ended can serve as evidence that structural change without prior commitment to redesigned work, based on common purpose, is insufficient for the development of broader involvement in the work of the reform.

While at first data gathered from the interviews seemed to suggest that lack of collegiality among teachers was the main reason why this and other leadership functions could not be successfully performed, the analysis of interviews revealed that the root of the problem was absence of appropriate leadership action. For instance, in spite of frequent meetings, collective sense making was not possible because of the manner in which those meetings were led; formal leaders' open expression of doubt in the necessity of change caused teachers to either dismiss the redesigned work as

impossible in their situation, or made them feel overwhelmed because they had to carry the responsibility for the results of their reform work on their own, without having a safety net.

Working with Resistance

The teachers reported overt resistance during Frank's leadership, but that the current principal's approachability and his more democratic stance enabled them to show their dissent more openly. Boris' remarks, however, showed that he was not prepared to face the resistors and reveal the reasons for their dissent, which caused teachers to channel their energy into contemplating the problems of the past instead of making future plans together. In the absence of a common purpose, part of the faculty grew increasingly resistant toward accepting new work to contribute to the school beyond their formal job requirements, and the part that was willing to contribute grew resentful toward their resistant colleagues, particularly because they could get away with their non-engagement without any consequences.

Failing to work with resistance and cultivate trust and respect, the principal and the school development team further fueled teachers' resistance by pressurizing them into compliance with external demands. Frequent meetings served for discussing obligations, without leaving room for questioning the meaning of the reform work for the school, which increased negative culture that in turn disabled an honest professional dialogue. Without clarifying external expectations and linking them to a clear collective and individual purpose, the teachers that were originally motivated for change started to feel that redesigned work was taking their time away from their valued work with students, which was the reason why their initial enthusiasm started to wear off.

Interpreting the principal's concern that changed instruction may threaten achievement on the 'matura' as lack of trust in their professional judgment, some teachers started to retreat back to the isolation of their classrooms, which made it possible for them to sustain some meaning in their work. Others revealed initiating their own projects simply because they wanted to serve their students better and not for any reports that had to be written. Loss of collective engagement undermined the school's overall capacity for developing into a learning community. With the best teachers backing into privatized practice, collaborative deliberation about how to improve instructional practices through collective inquiry became impossible.

Little Creek faculty's initial eagerness to learn, which they demonstrated by regular attendance of the training that the NEI organized, started to dampen because of hierarchical demand for urgent results and compliance, and lack of opportunity for building trust and deep understanding of change. Using externally inserted structures, such as action research and peer coaching, as compliance exercises without taking time to question and critique their value for their practice, teachers reported finding the training to transform their practice of working together meaningless since they failed to connect the goals of the reform with their internal annual plan, which was prepared without their input.

Inconsistent implementation of the new structures resulted in more isolated groups instead of more collaboration – action research teams, for instance, which were intended for building relationships across grades and subjects, were formed on the basis of friendship instead of common instructional concerns, which further set teachers against each other and created a culture of competitive individualism instead of collegiality.

Monitoring Improvement Efforts

Little Creek school development team expressed being under pressure to monitor the implementation of the reform work in order to report to the NEI about their progress when required, rather than because of their concern for the direction of the reform at their school, and its benefit for the students. While neither the team nor the teachers reported having any strategies in place for monitoring the direction of the innovation in their school, both groups indicated that the team exerted top-down pressure on the teachers to make them produce the reports of their reform work while not really supporting the change.

Teachers' comments revealed that they perceived the team's pressure as a diversion from their work in the classroom, and the principal's reminders that they had to keep high achievement results as an expression of his lack of trust in their professional judgment. The principal confirmed that the latter was true by stating in the interview that he trusted the NEI and their judgment more than he trusted his teachers. Because the school seemed to pursue the NEI's goals instead of using the reform to achieve their own goals, teachers were not held accountable for implementing the innovation in a meaningful way but rather for producing surface evidence to meet external requirements, which ate away at the school's collective capacity for improvement.

Providing Encouragement and Recognition

The interviewees indicated that some teachers more than others were under pressure to engage in out-of-classroom work, which was not recognized in any special way. Because their colleagues, who refused to participate, did not suffer any consequences, the teachers who volunteered to lead projects, expressed feeling betrayed. The structures and processes, such as peer coaching, which the NEI promoted with the aim of enabling teachers to provide encouragement to each other,

and monitor each other's development work, did not take hold at Little Creek due to their negative culture and lack of expectations for school-wide improvement. The teachers indicated feeling recognized mostly through their students' performance results on the 'matura' exam, which was probably why most of the faculty were retreating back to the isolation of their classroom work.

When asked about the reward for their work on the team, the school development team members reported receiving monthly payment for extra hours but added that they got energized and motivated at the annual Festivals of Best Practices, where they presented their work and learned about other schools' development. Contrary to their expectations, external partnerships and exposure to new ideas and practices did not have the same stimulating effect on their faculty. The team reported lukewarm and occasionally even hostile response from the faculty when they invited the teachers whose presentations at the Festivals they found inspiring to their school. The teachers' comments suggested that hearing about the success of others made Little Creek faculty acutely aware that without a vision to guide their efforts, and without trust in each other and in the administration, they were sliding backward while other schools were moving forward.

Buffering the Faculty from Outside Interference

Giving no indication that they questioned the value and suitability of external change initiatives to their school's needs, the formal leaders exhibited compliance and lack of critical stance toward external initiatives for change. Instead of buffering teachers from external pressures and creating time for them to craft their own vision of change, they required from them the same compliance as they exhibited in fulfilling the NEI's requirements while also expressing their doubts that the proposed change was feasible in the present situation. The formal leader's lack of a critical

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stance toward the external initiatives made it difficult for the school development team to distinguish between what was important for the school and what was less relevant. By doubting the value of change for the students but still requiring its implementation, the formal leaders increased teachers' anxiety and diminished their willingness to experiment with innovation.

Providing no buffer against external pressures, and reserving no time for teachers to link their own needs with the reform objectives, the formal leaders failed to create the supporting conditions for the development of distributed leadership. By rushing teachers through the process, the school development tem members revealed their desire to do things right instead of doing what was right for their school. While they claimed that they wanted the teachers to become more critical consumers of external initiatives, and were disappointed, for instance, with their lack of input when they invited them to suggest potential topics for on-going professional training, they failed to recognize that by modeling compliance to external requirements, they discouraged teachers' creativity and innovation. By expecting from teachers to implement external requirements superficially, they exhibited a lack of respect for their own value as leaders, and for their teachers' professional judgment.

The interviews with teachers revealed that they were aware that the administration did not believe in the change that the NEI was promoting, and that they forced them to implement it for the sake of keeping face in front of the NEI and other pilot schools, which took the meaning out of redesigned work for them. In addition, being constantly reminded that the "matura" exam results had to remain high, teachers reported that they felt 'personally exposed', lacking the feelings of safety necessary for experimenting with instructional innovation.

Although some of them continued to consider the work of reform as fundamental to determining how to support their students' learning better, they nevertheless perceived it as an addition to their already heavy workload due to the stress placed on the "matura" results. Every one of them expressed their resentment toward the requirements to produce evidence of change and write reports, interpreting them as lack of trust on the part of their leaders in their professional judgment.

Summary

The attempts of the formal leaders to perform certain leadership functions on their own or simply to neglect performing them suggest that while their own leadership capacity was limited, they also failed to grasp the importance of broader leadership capacity building, and how it could complement their own. Although both principals assigned the responsibility for instructional change implementation to Tatiana and her team, they simultaneously sabotaged their potential enactment of instructional leadership – Frank by keeping all the decision making power to himself, and Boris by failing to create the supporting climate to enable the team's productive functioning.

Because organizational and professional norms in support of broader leadership capacity development were not nurtured, teachers reported experiencing the work of reform as additional burden and a distraction from what they considered the core of their work (teaching children). The structures and processes that the NEI encouraged as a means of fostering broader responsibility for instructional change disappeared once the immediate pressure of implementation passed, which can serve as an evidence that they were implemented on the surface and without prior commitment, thus having no enabling effect on broader performance of leadership functions.

Transition Mechanisms for the Development of Distributed Leadership

Mayrowetz et al. (2007) hypothesized that the transition mechanisms or interactive drivers, such as sensemaking, motivation, and learning, could help broaden leadership practice through making the educators' experience in their work place more stimulating by increasing their feelings of being productive and satisfied in their work. In addressing my third research question: *How has the redesigned work influenced the transition mechanisms for the development of distributed leadership: the meaning that the principals and teachers make of their work, their motivation for work, and their use of learning opportunities to improve their knowledge and skills,* I considered how the implementation of the NEI's reform initiative within and across the two schools affected each transition mechanism – thus either promoting or impeding teachers' increased feelings of satisfaction with their new work.

Linden Tree High School

Making Sense of Reform Work

In the absence of established cultural norms and expectations for instructional improvement school-wide, most of Linden High teachers did not see the sense in changing anything about their current practice in the first two years of their inclusion in the NEI's project. Since the culture initially did not support teachers' involvement in decision making, teachers lacked the system view of the school, and expressed feeling disengaged from what the reform was trying to promote. By engaging faculty in collective sense-making of the reform initiative, and building their consensus about the particular areas in need of change in their school, based on teachers' identification of instructional problems, the school development team enabled the teachers to grasp the usefulness and meaning of redesigned work.

After initial resistance, Linden High developed into a site of inquiry through their action research strategy of work that involved full faculty into efforts to improve teaching and learning, and helped establish the school's better relationship with the community. Once the faculty got the opportunity to identify their need for change and start working on its implementation, the teachers reported realizing that the reform was aligned with their own values and corresponded to their collective commitments, which led them to embrace the redesigned work promoted by the NEI.

While they remained torn between the requirements of subject-defined, content-loaded 'matura' exam – the results of which remained an important measure by which parents and the community judged the school's success – and the student-oriented, cross-disciplinary teaching promoted by the NEI's reform initiative, the culture of collaboration allowed them to take the paradox as an incentive to experiment with innovation and determine its benefit for the students. Throughout the process, Lydia and the school development team assured them that they as the experts had to determine what was best for their students, thus reinforcing the idea of expert rather than hierarchical authority, and then provided them with firm assistance for the development of their own solutions.

Motivation

While the change was initially stimulated from the outside, Lydia and her team nurtured it internally, creating a culture of inquiry that enhanced teachers' motivational potential for embedding classroom-based research into their work. By promoting exchange of experience at the faculty meetings, they linked individual inquiry to overall school goals. By giving teachers time to learn and practice their skills within a small circle of peers in action research teams, and by promoting their critical yet non-judgmental attitude toward each other's changed practice, the school

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development team supported building their capacity before inviting them to exhibit their changed practice to the community. Extremely positive feedback and enthusiasm that the teachers received from the community strengthened their trust in their own ability and professional judgment, and increased their motivation.

Lydia and her team also allowed themselves the time to learn and build their confidence in their leadership capacity before they decided to guide the school in improving instruction, which made their conduct self-assured in spite of the difficult context in which they were working. It was important that they took time to build internal coherence in their team, which made it possible for them to support each other unconditionally throughout the change process, and reinforced their motivation to persist.

Learning

Because Linden High teachers initially experienced the reform in isolation, and felt an increased sense of uncertainty about its possible outcomes, instructional change did not make sense to them, which discouraged their broader involvement in the work of reform. By scaffolding candid conversations about the meaning of change and engaging teachers in researching their practice, which culminated with their identification of the areas in need of improvement, the school development team created the need in the faculty for expanding and deepening their knowledge and skills, which in turn motivated them to take part in the training that was readily available.

While on-going assistance that the NEI provided to support individual and organizational learning was crucial for successful school capacity building, the strategies that Lydia and her team reported to employ seemed to be equally important. First, by taking part in all the NEI's training, and by being the first to open their

classrooms for observation and critique, Lydia and her team modeled the learning they expected from others. Second, the strategy of targeting specific professional development to the needs of teachers appeared to be critical in making the learning meaningful to them according to what they reported in the interview. Third, they then provided teachers with opportunities to put their new knowledge and skills into practice, and also to receive support from their peers and providing their support to them – receiving and providing critical feedback – which further deepened their understanding of what they were learning.

At Linden High, the teachers expressed understanding that the higher order change they were implementing produced complex problems for which solutions were not readily available. Both teachers and the school development team indicated in the interviews that they believed they needed to develop their own solutions to the problems that they identified by employing inquiry and collaboration, and that they were ready to sustain their commitment and persistence to stay with the problem until they got somewhere. In the climate of trust and mutual support, even one-shot training events that individual teachers continued to attend after the NEI's project ended added value to the faculty's expertise because they were brought back, shared, and discussed. Individual knowledge thus became a collective resource at Linden High.

Summary

Gradual implementation of the reform, meaningful professional training, on-site support that enabled effective transformation of teachers' practice, and involvement of teachers in decision-making about their own development and the school's future were important mechanism that helped Linden High faculty make meaning of the reform work. By twisting and channeling the reform to advance the school's own purpose, the school development team promoted teachers' ownership of

change, and made the redesigned nature of work meaningful to them, which in turn motivated them to increase their knowledge and start to rely on their own internal resources to generate new practices and ideas for the reform.

By expecting from every teacher to exhibit their newly acquired knowledge and skills for the benefit of students, and by making their efforts visible, the school development team held everybody accountable for the school's success, thus adding to the faculty's increased need for learning and collaboration.

The case of Linden High shows that external reform initiative and training have to be in sync with internal efforts to develop collective sense-making of the value of change for the school's own development. By using the external initiative and training to advance their own goals, and by giving themselves enough time to build their internal readiness for change, Linden High increased the probability that the reform led to broader leadership capacity for sustainable instructional improvement.

Little Creek High School
Making Sense of Reform Work

From the beginning of the school's collaboration on the NEI's project, teachers felt rushed to produce results without having time to develop their understanding of the reform, and its possible significance for their work. A hierarchical demand for urgency and compliance with externally inserted initiative caused teachers to understand the redesigned nature of work that the NEI initiative proposed on a superficial level. The teachers that were willing to experiment with innovation indicated that they attempted to implement change before changing their beliefs.

Instead of taking time to focus on the process and engage teachers in a dialogue so as to clarify their need for change, and link that change to overall school goals, the school development team pressured them to produce the results, while the principal cautioned against too much change to avoid threatening high 'matura' results. With their own tensions and needs unresolved, teachers were additionally confused by the conflicting requirements of the content-driven 'matura' exam and those of process-oriented reform initiative, which prevented them from becoming invested in learning and collaboration.

Motivation

Since formal leaders presented instructional transformation as potentially threatening to high performance on the 'matura', they took the meaning out of the work of reform for the teachers and discouraged their motivation for learning and collaboration. While making their lack of commitment to the proposed change explicit, the formal leaders nevertheless required from teachers to perform new tasks for the sake of compliance with the NEI's requirements, which diminished teachers' trust in their leaders and in the process of change that they encouraged yet failed to support. Lack of personal support from their leaders, no positive feedback from colleagues and no recognition for their work on various committees and teams outside of their classroom lowered teachers' motivation for the work of reform.

Because the new school structures, encouraged as part of redesigned work in support of broader leadership capacity development, were implemented as short-term groups to perform certain tasks to fulfill the NEI's requirements, teachers were unable to form trusting relationships and develop a sense of common purpose that could reinforce their motivation for changing their practice. Because teachers were sometimes forced into collaboration with their hostile colleagues that refused to

communicate with them, the faculty felt increasingly reluctant to perform the work of reform.

Learning

Little Creek teachers were initially eager to learn, which they demonstrated by regular attendance of the training that the NEI organized. However, because of continuous signals from the principal that the innovation might threaten high performance on the 'matura', they became doubtful about whether it was wise investing their energy into new ways of working with their colleagues and with students. Because true collaboration, based on mutual trust, was missing, teachers had to deal with uncertainty about whether the reform would produce a positive outcome on the 'matura' in isolation, which reduced their readiness to observe, research, and write as required by the NEI on top of carrying their full teaching load.

With their decision to ignore increasingly dysfunctional relationships instead of putting a deliberate effort into their improvement, the principal and the school development team gave up the opportunity to build a supportive environment for teachers to discuss their practice openly, and to identify the areas in need of change. Deprived of a trusting environment that could potentially provide sources of collegial feedback, teachers' lost their initial drive for learning.

Encouraging superficial implementation of reform strategies and processes, and defining the school's success in terms of high achievement scores, the formal leaders caused teachers to disengage from inquiring into their own practice since their teaching was already defined as successful due to their high results on the 'matura'. Without the opportunity to question and critique the value of the new structures, such as action research and peer coaching, teachers reported finding the training to transform the practice of their working together meaningless since they could not

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connect the goals of the reform with their internal action plan, which was prepared without their input. Leaving it up to the teachers to decide if they wanted to change anything or not set teachers against each other because some teachers were carrying a heavier workload than others.

By ascribing teachers' reluctance to change their practice to their lack of technical skill without realizing that it may be related to their lack of agreement about the value of the reform work, the new principal failed to realize that instead of exerting "*soft pressure,*" he should have provided opportunities for teachers to question and critique what they, as professionals, were expected to change. In addition, by tightly prescribing and controlling teachers' reform work – because they needed reports for the NEI, and not because they believed in the necessity of reform – the school development team exhibited lack of trust in teachers' professional judgment, which had a damaging effect on their sense of professional pride and competence.

Summary

Feeling rushed to implement the work of reform without having the opportunity to question its value and meaning for their work with students, teachers were unable to develop the ownership of change. While they welcomed professional training and on-site support, they were unable to make a connection between their own personal learning and the collective benefit that their potentially changed practice – as the result of their learning – might produce for the school.

By making their high-performance expectations superior to the results that the work of reform might produce, the formal leaders promoted the proposed change as a superficial endeavor serving to satisfy the external requirements, which the teachers found professionally disrespectful. Feeling unsupported by their leaders in dealing

with new and difficult challenges, and unable to discuss complex issues with their colleagues due to increasingly negative culture that corroded their capacity to collaborate, teachers experienced loss of meaning in the work of reform, which lowered their morale and satisfaction with their work place.

Organizational Structures and Formulation of Redesigned Work

While the development of distributed leadership requires the establishment of new structures, which need to be linked to the simultaneous development of the school culture that supports broader involvement in leadership work (Copland, 2003), the existing organizational structures do not disappear but exert a strong impact on how the redesigned work is perceived and understood (Mayrowetz et al, 2007). In addressing my research question four: *How have the existing organizational structures shaped how the school leadership teams in conjunction with the NEI formulated the redesigned work at their schools,* I considered how the structures that typically dictate the division of labor and use of time in Slovene high schools, such as the hierarchy, the departmental structure based on discipline specialization, schedules, routines, and external requirements, and the centralized national curriculum, affected the formulation of the reform work in each school.

Linden Tree High School

Hierarchy

Linden High had a hierarchical division of labor when the school entered the Didactic Reform Project. As a formal leader, Larry considered himself responsible for making decisions at the school level. He viewed teachers as subject specialists responsible for their classroom practice whom he wanted to shield from the intensifying external pressures. Due to absence of free information flow, and the

faculty's lack of involvement in school-level decision making, deeper problems were not discussed.

While Larry provided opportunities for the teachers at the faculty meetings to contribute suggestions and comments about their work, they mainly voiced their complaints on those occasions about conditions that they perceived as the school management's responsibility. Given their limited opportunities for meaningful professional discourse, teachers' impatient reaction to Larry's proposal to join the Didactic Reform Project was not surprising – in the absence of clarity about the common school improvement purpose, they perceived his proposal and the work that it implied as additional burden to their already full work day, with little relevance to their immediate practice.

Departmental Structure

The NEI deliberately encouraged the formation of new groupings of teachers across subjects to diminish departmentalization and promote broader, cross-disciplinary collaboration. As the only teachers with some leadership power in the school, and with experience of working with their peers, the department chairs seemed the most suitable to Larry, who invited them to become members of the school development team. Assigning department chairs on the leadership team and then giving them additional responsibility to lead action research teams increased their work load to a large degree, nevertheless, the strategy functioned well at Linden High because the department chairs perceived their new role as meaningful and beneficial to their professional growth. They reported seeing it as the opportunity for providing their input and affecting change at the school (and not just subject) level, and for building their leadership capacity.

Schedules, Routines, and External Requirements

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When the reform started at Linden High, the school had a typical "egg crate" structure, which perpetuated teacher isolation and a private nature of their work. Teachers were used to working and learning alone, attending separate training seminars of their choice after school, and applying a trial and error method behind the closed door to improve their practice. Taking the existing schedules of forty-five minute class periods for granted, most of the teachers a priori resisted the NEI's instructional reform initiative on the grounds that the instructional methods it promoted were too time consuming and did not fit the limited time they had available for their subject. Because teaching to the test was the norm, the fact that the 'matura' exam still tested content coverage consolidated most of the faculty's rejection of instructional change.

Only after receiving extensive external support in the form of on-going professional training, and internal assurance from the new principal and school development team that the redesigned work was valuable for the students, as well as mutual encouragement in the newly formed professional relationships with colleagues, were the teachers able to break with the existing routines, and put the benefit of the students above their commitment to ensure high achievement results on the 'matura'.

Curriculum

Teachers initially aligned the subject-based national curriculum with the content-driven 'matura' exam, and considered their lecture-style teaching highly efficient. Because of their concern for content coverage to ensure that their students could pass 'matura' exam, most of the teachers at Linden High perceived the redesigned work, which encouraged collaborative inquiry with the colleagues who taught different subjects, as irrelevant to their practice. Nevertheless, some teachers'

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(including Lydia's) perceptions stretched beyond such tunnel vision of education. Once the school development team created the culture of open dialogue and collaboration, different viewpoints became articulated. With more professional confidence, teachers started to perceive the curriculum as less prescriptive, realizing that it can be better covered in a shorter time by applying cross-curricular connections, which made redesigned work meaningful.

Summary

The existing hierarchical and departmentalized school structure that perpetuated the culture of isolation initially represented a barrier to collective sensemaking of the reform initiative at Linden High. In the absence of a culture of open dialogue and collaboration, the school development team found it impossible to shift the predominant mental models, embedded in the school culture that blamed students for their lack of motivation for learning. Although Larry supported the team's work, his lack of understanding of their new leadership role delayed their ability to establish themselves as a formal authority in the school, capable of building a positive climate for the understanding of the reform.

The team needed two years, during which they acquired the necessary expert knowledge by making full use of the NEI's training, to build their own understanding of the reform initiative, and establish themselves as leaders through their action research work, before they could engage the faculty in developing common vision and goals and aligning them with the goals of the reform, thus making the reform meaningful to them. It remains unclear whether the school development team could have carried out their leadership work as well as they eventually did had Larry remained the principal, which would probably make it more difficult for the school to

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move from a hierarchical to a more heterarchical structure with more dispersed and fluid leadership responsibility for instructional reform.

Little Creek High School

Hierarchy

Throughout his extensive term as principal, Frank maintained a hierarchical structure, expecting teachers to ensure high student performance on the 'matura' exam while excluding them from making decisions about the school's future. Accepting Frank's authority as non-negotiable, teachers trusted to make decisions in their interest, and focused solely on their work in the classroom. Consequently, they did not resist his decision to enlist the school in piloting the NEI's reform initiative.

Being unused to having a voice, the newly established school development team members could not establish equitable relationships with Frank, who pronounced himself a leader of the team. When Tatiana took over the leadership of the team, the team members remained entrenched in the old hierarchical system, and did not act unless directed by her. She was the only one among the team members who was comfortable with taking the lead in bringing reform to the school, and applying what she had learned in the NEI's seminars – probably because of her formal role of assistant principal. However, because she failed to take into consideration the preexisting structure and relational issues, her attempts at engaging teachers in discussions about a vision for the school were unsuccessful.

As an authoritative leader of twenty-eight years, Frank revealed being unable to grasp the concept of distributed leadership – instead of supporting broader leadership capacity building, he felt defensive and in competition with the team members out of his concern that they might gain power because of their growing expertise. By persisting in his authoritarian style of leadership and holding on to his

positional power, he limited the team members' ability to mobilize and use their new

knowledge and skills and develop into capable leaders of reform. Because power

relationships remained unchanged, the team was not able to carry out their leadership

work, for which they were trained at the NEI's workshops. When Boris became

principal, power relationship started to shift because the climate became less coercive,

however, Tatiana ironically reinforced the pre-existing hierarchical structure by

occasionally using coercion when under external pressure to get the required results

from the teachers, with which she discouraged the faculty from developing a shared

responsibility for the work of reform.

Department Structure

Upon entering the project, Little Creek teachers communicated mainly with

their colleagues within the same departments and less frequently across them. When

forming the school development team, Frank assigned the department chairs of the

main subjects on the 'matura' to the team, in addition to Tatiana and the school

counselor. While his decision could have potentially encouraged cross-departmental

collaboration, and opened up communication channels, Frank's failure to frame the

team's work as significant for the school made the department chairs – who kept their

full work load in the classroom – feel overburdened because the new work was added

to their existing work without adding value to it. Because Frank retained all the

decision making power, the team members did not have opportunity to exert influence

and carry out leadership work that they prepared for in the NEI's workshops. Member

after member resigned soon after they started to work on the team.

Schedules, Routines, and External Requirements

As with other high schools across Slovenia, Little Creek had fragmented

schedule, consisting of forty-five minute class periods that forced teachers to work in

isolation and under constant time pressure. Because of an isolated culture and an absence of trusting relationships, the faculty reported that they struggled with the NEI's initial requirement to develop consensus around instructional problems that were expected to guide their inquiry. Having difficulties articulating their concerns, it was impossible for the teachers to align the NEI's expectations to their own needs. However, since they welcomed the opportunity to learn and be in the center of progress, which was a large step forward from their previous detachment from innovation due to their isolated geographical position, they did not resist the NEI's initiative for change. But instead of using the initiative as an incentive to transform their practice, they added the work of reform on top of their already heavy workload.

Curriculum

Working in a rural school, Little Creek teachers prided themselves on high 'matura' results because they helped them maintain their distinctiveness. Because 'matura' required content coverage and was aligned with the subject-based national curriculum in Slovenia, the traditional lecture-style of teaching and subject isolation that prevailed at Little Creek were actually supportive of high student achievement on 'matura'. In spite of that, the majority of teachers revealed that they aspired to teach better and wanted to relate more effectively with students, and that coaching students for 'matura' was not rewarding enough for them. However, inherent incongruity of inquiry-oriented teaching, promoted by the NEI, with teaching for content-driven 'matura' exam that required teacher control and content coverage, created tensions in teachers, which they could not resolve in existing culture that did not support open dialogue and collaboration. To keep the results high, they did not change the way they teach. Because of that, they perceived the work on the reform as an addition to the existing practice, instead of as a means to change it.

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Summary

The existing tight hierarchical structure that remained unchanged throughout the school's collaboration in the NEI's project, and a very authoritative principal perpetuated the culture of isolation at Little Creek that discouraged collective sense making of the reform initiative. Although the climate of high performance expectations did not support inquiry-based change promoted by the NEI, teachers were initially excited about the new opportunities to achieve their personal visions of higher quality teaching for better engagement of students. But because their work was driven by the imperatives of 'matura' exam, teachers were hesitant to commit to the student-oriented, cross-disciplinary teaching, promoted by the NEI's reform initiative, which required risk-taking and abundance of their traditional, one-subject, one-teacher, and one-class routine.

Instead of providing the catalyst for change, Frank constrained expansion and sharing of leadership by maintaining his position of power, thus preventing the newly established school development team to construct their leadership identity and assume leadership roles. Frustrated by the existing cultural norms and the entrenched structure, the team was unable to initiate the processes to enable the faculty to make meaning of the proposed change, and provide a space and support for their inquiry.

Organizational Structures and Implementation of Redesigned Work

In addressing my fifth research question: *How have the existing and new organizational structures moderated the ways principals and teachers undertook redesigned work*, I considered the impact of the existing and also of the new organizational structures, reinforced through the NEI's initiative, such as the school development team and action research teams, on how the reform work was implemented in each school, how the issue of time was resolved for teachers to be

able to integrate change into their existing practice, and how the existing and new structures were linked with developing school culture.

Linden Tree High School

Hierarchy

Leadership succession at Linden High, which was connected with an especially intense emotional episode, provoked a dramatic change in school culture mainly because Lydia and the school development team were well prepared to manage the process, and were able to channel teachers' emotional output toward building their engagement in common purpose. While initially Lydia felt mistrusted by some of the faculty, which probably caused her to carry on the same hierarchical structure as her predecessor when she became principal, she soon turned back to her more collaborative leadership style, seeking the input from the school development team members especially on the micropolitical dynamics in the staff room, and their help in preparing a strategy for bringing about organizational change.

By relinquishing her control, and setting up a norm whereby teachers were expected to be leaders, she eventually empowered her team members to move beyond advisory roles into leadership roles in which they were expected to contribute equally to the decision making about the school. Before dialoguing with the faculty, the team regularly engaged in a process of inquiry within their group to articulate their goals and clarify and coordinate their expectations, which enabled them to function as a coherent leadership body in front of the faculty.

After creating the opportunities for teachers for collaborative inquiry into the existing beliefs and values, and following up by crafting a common vision and developing a common understanding about the school's future, the school

development team broadened the shared decision-making strategy that they applied in their own team to include the faculty in the school-level decision making.

Departmental Structure

The school did not dismantle the structure of subject departments when they established new groupings – not only because of its long tradition but also because the academic disciplines remained core organizing contexts for policy systems and professional development institutes that still communicated mainly through subject channels. Nevertheless, the co-existence of the new leadership positions and new groupings, which spanned over the individual subject area, gradually diminished the primacy that the subject-departmental organizational model previously held within the school. With the department chairs working together in the new leadership team, the need to guard their individual subject territory was disappearing, which produced – and was enhanced by – the growing openness of the school culture. Due to the teams' internal cohesion, the members actively maintained open department boundaries. The restructuring and re-culturing processes thus developed simultaneously, reinforcing one another.

School Development Team

The new structure of school development team provided the context through which new cultural attributes were initiated and nurtured. While initially Larry's position of power constrained the flow of communication between the team and the faculty, thus reducing their influence on the teachers, they were able to communicate more effectively once the team members became accepted as competent leaders of action research teams through their exhibition of expertise. The structure of action research allowed the team members multiple opportunities for communicating with the teachers on their team, making it possible for them to develop a deeper insight into

their different viewpoints and dilemmas, which they then brought back to their leadership team for discussion and preparation of strategies for addressing them in productive ways.

The findings thus suggest that Linden High school development team, supported by the NEI's training, eventually utilized their expert power to influence the decisions at their school. Because Lydia perceived herself as part of the team also after she became principal, the team reported that they did not experience any problems negotiating the decisions with her, on the contrary, they indicated that she continuously invited and encouraged their participation in decision making about the issues pertaining to the school goals. The team assumed a central leadership role, which was exhibited in their leading the vision building and action research processes and annual planning, oversaw collecting and sharing evidence of school's improvement with the staff, adapting the NEI's workshops for the staff, and clarifying the guiding direction for the school's development.

Action Research Teams

Action research teams that were created based on the individual and team identification of common instructional problems, provided the structure for the implementation of the whole-school process of inquiry. Instructional change implementation that occurred through the process of inquiry thus involved most of the faculty, not just exceptional, self-motivated individuals. Because the teams consisted of teachers across subjects and grades who were involved in researching instructional issues that were their common concern, new relationships were established, which fostered both the school's change capacity and re-culturing.

While the process of inquiry in action research teams provided teachers with voice, it also required from each individual to accept the responsibility of involvement

in instructional reform. Collaboration in small teams eased teachers' discomfort with change and increased their capacity to adjust to the change over time. Developing the skill of dialoging in small teams as a means of constructively addressing differences and valuing divergent perspectives prepared teachers for the professional dialogue at faculty meetings, which evolved to a higher level of quality with the faculty's growing perception of collective learning as an important organizational value.

Creating the opportunities for the teams to share their experience at the faculty meetings was crucial for linking their individual and team goals to overall school goals, and for making the knowledge about the desired instructional change overt. The process of sharing their experience, and holding teachers accountable to demonstrate their instructional improvement efforts in front of others required organizational re-culturing and purposeful creation of the climate of openness and communication.

Schedules, Routines, and External Requirements

Once she became principal, Lydia successfully avoided a trap of embracing quick fixes for the sake of creating a good impression about their development at the monthly meetings with the leadership teams from other cohorts at the NEI's main office. Based on her firm belief that instructional change was necessary, Lydia and her team used a number of strategies to break the habit of isolation of teachers' work, and surface teachers' assumptions and values in relation to learning. By investing a sustained effort in the development of clearly understood and commonly shared goals and values, and at the same time rearranging the school schedule to permit enough time for sustained communication, Lydia and her team created the conditions for building community and trust, necessary for real cultural change.

The structure of action research team work that facilitated teachers' engagement in sustained learning that challenged their assumptions, paired with a

growing culture of openness and mutual trust, encouraged teachers' consideration of new practices, and created their inner drive for deepening their knowledge and skills to experiment with instructional change in an informed way.

Curriculum

Initially, the overcrowded subject syllabi, and teachers' concern for pacing content coverage in individual subjects to prepare students for the 'matura' presented a barrier to broader involvement in the reform. Taking into account the pressure of the state-prescribed high-stakes exam that retained its content orientation, Lydia and her team reported changing their attitude toward the reform from their initial insistence that every teacher should embrace instructional change to deliberately forging a middle path between a conventional and radical approach to instruction, thus exhibiting certain maturity that increased the faculty's trust in their leadership.

With the development of collaborative school culture, the faculty ultimately embraced the idea of integrated curriculum, based on their realization that it would provide them with more time necessary for the implementation of problem-based learning. They reported establishing a cross-disciplinary planning team of teachers two years after the completion of the NEI's project who engaged in intensive, externally- provided training, with the intention of leading their colleagues through the process of cross-disciplinary planning in the coming school year. The teachers thus exhibited their readiness to disseminate their growing knowledge and expertise within their school, and broaden the faculty's capacity for the implementation of their own reform agenda.

Summary

The findings from this case suggest that Lydia and the school development team recognized the influence that the existing structures had on the faculty, and used

their knowledge as leverage for constructing their new leadership roles. After establishing their credibility as leaders through action research work, they were able to provide guidance and support to the faculty for building their capacity for instructional change school-wide, and work strategically on improving the school's reputation in the community.

Although the new structures and processes, such as for instance action research and peer coaching, were initiated from the outside (by the NEI), the data shows that they were implemented meaningfully, as a means of solving instructional problems that were of real concern for the teachers, and as opportunities for mutual support and organizational learning. The new structures also created the opportunities for questioning the beliefs and values that were at the heart of existing structures. By embedding the new processes into the school schedule, and reserving time during faculty meetings for teachers to share their progress, the new structures became legitimate, and could serve their purpose of leveraging school-wide interaction and feedback.

While the training was essential for Lydia and the school development team members to build their leadership capacity for launching the school's restructuring initiative, it was equally important that they worked simultaneously on reculturing the faculty with the aim of instituting changes in relations and behavior patterns. They did not only exhibit growing expertise over the years but also increased personal and professional maturity, which gave them credibility as capable leaders, able to institute changes in organizational structures – embedding changed or adapted existing structures and newly established structures into the culture of inquiry, based on professional trust, active commitment to shared work, openness, and reciprocal learning.

Little Creek High School

Although Frank allowed the new structures to be put in place in the school, he maintained the existing hierarchical structure throughout his principalship, which constrained the development of broader leadership. While he, for instance, held the school development team members responsible for coordinating the reform to make sure that the NEI's requirements were met, he limited their ability to function as leaders and decision-makers by continuing to exert his role-based authority. Because Frank's control function took precedence over collaborative and shared decision-making approach, the team's leadership potential was undermined.

When Boris became principal, he maintained the same hierarchical structure – although less coercive – as that of his predecessor. In spite of that, teachers considered him to be a democratic leader compared to Frank because he tolerated discussion and information sharing. His decision to delegate instructional matters to Tatiana (the team members reported that they could act only through Tatiana) could be interpreted as his readiness to share leadership, although it became clear from what he reported in the interview that he made it because of his sense of instructional inferiority. But although the data indicate that Boris shared the instructional aspect of leadership, the work could not be redesigned in a way supportive to distributed leadership development because of other limitations, such as the persistence of hierarchical structure in decision making, teachers' perceptions of authority as a one-person role, and the culture that did not support broad-based leadership structures.

Department Structure

The subject-departmental organizational structure was particularly strong at Little Creek, and remained unchanged throughout the school's collaboration in the

NEI's project. The new groupings of teachers that were implemented in compliance with the NEI's requirement were added to the existing department structure, rather than adapting the existing structure to accommodate them – the department chairs, for instance, who assumed the new roles of school development team members and action research team leaders in addition to keeping their department chair duties and their full teaching load, reported being under continuous time pressure. In spite of their work overload and shortage of time, they indicated being eager to keep their department chair positions because the new structures were not perceived as significant for the school. New groupings and processes were implemented for the sake of compliance rather than commitment since the school did not have collectively defined goals about the implementation of the reform that could guide their work. Teachers' superficial and often short participation in the new teams prevented the development of internal cohesion, thus making the new structures too weak to make the department boundaries more permeable.

School Development Team

In spite of receiving substantial support from the NEI over time to build their leadership capacity, the school development team failed to mobilize and use their new knowledge and skills and become influential leaders of the reform for a number of reasons. The existing hierarchical structure and lack of support from the formal leaders, for instance, constrained the team's opportunities to enact their leadership, which in turn lowered their motivation to fully engage in the training to build their leadership capacity.

Due to frequent changes in their membership, and their unchanged perception of leadership revealed in the interviews, which they continued to identify with formal leadership roles, they were unable to establish equitable relationships within their

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team – rather than distributing leadership among the team members, they perpetuated the same hierarchical structure within their team as within the school. They were thus unable to hold collegial discussions within their team about the reform to resolve their different beliefs and reach a consensus about the meaning of change, which was probably why they reported lacking power and influence to resolve the conflicts among teachers, and facilitate a collective understanding of change.

By requiring from teachers to implement external requirements for the sake of appearance, they exhibited a lack of respect for their own value as leaders, and for their teachers' professional judgment. The data thus suggest that the school development team failed to assume a central leadership role at the school due to the constraints under which they operated and also because of their inability to distribute leadership in their team and make meaning of the reform through collective engagement.

Action Research Teams

While the NEI instructed the school development team to create action research teams based on the individual and team identification of common instructional problems with the purpose of encouraging teacher teams to engage in systematic processes of inquiry into the instructional concerns common to the group, most action research teams were reportedly formed based on friendship rather than common interest. Such superficial implementation of action research strategy of work constrained the development of new relationships across subjects and grades, thus preventing collective capacity building. Instead of utilizing the process of inquiry to discover what was right for their school, they implemented action research out of compliance, to do things right, which produced small results while taking a huge amount of energy and time from the teachers.

Although Tatiana attempted to encourage community building by inviting teachers to share their experience at the faculty meetings, uneven success of individual action research teams and increasingly negative climate that did not encourage open communication provoked negative criticism from teachers, who revealed perceiving their colleagues' presentations as their showing off. Because individual and team experience were not linked to overall school goals, sharing knowledge was not perceived as something everybody could benefit from and be proud of.

Since the team failed to hold every teacher accountable for the implementation of what they were learning, those who invested themselves in action research and were then willing to expose their work in front of others, reported feeling angry at their colleagues' negative attitude and criticism, and losing their motivation to continue.

Schedules, Routines, and External Requirements

Neither Little Creek principal conveyed a firm belief in the necessity of instructional change, and revealed understanding of what school capacity building, promoted by the NEI's initiative, entailed. Lacking certainty about the purpose of the reform, their comments revealed that they felt the need to address issues of technique but neglected to address those of context and values. While changing the school schedule and routine way of functioning to create regular time and space for faculty and team meetings, they failed to address increasingly negative relationships among teachers, caused by lack of clarity regarding the work of reform, and expectations about teachers' engagement in it. By continuing to exert their role-based authority and by finding certainty in relying on the NEI for the direction of the reform –because that way they could be sure that teachers would observe the necessary policies and

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regulations in their work – rather than involving the faculty in vision building and defining their own direction of reform, the formal leaders failed to build faculty's commitment to shared leadership structures, and inquiry based approach to their work.

Because their leaders were unable to create a culture of trust in which the faculty could openly and honestly discus important issues, teachers were reluctant to attend faculty and team meetings, although time was set aside for them. Revealing that they disliked most conflicts with their colleagues, and expressing concern that the meetings might expose differences or provoke disagreement among them, teachers preferred to avoid the meetings. New leadership structures that were reinforced through the NEI's reform initiative to promote broader involvement in the work of reform thus pushed teachers further apart instead of bringing them closer together.

Curriculum

Although the school development team invited teachers who exhibited appropriate expertise to assume leadership of new teams, like for instance of the committee for cross-disciplinary planning – which was the curriculum change required by the Ministry – teachers were reluctant to take on new leadership roles. Instead of reflecting on the reasons, the school development team reported having no other choice but add this new leadership responsibility to their already full workload to ensure the implementation of the required change. By deciding to assume another leadership obligation so as to enforce another external requirement, they failed to encourage expanding of teachers' roles outside of the classroom, which would require building shared mental models and collaborative culture, and thus perpetuated the existing hierarchical structure.

While teachers revealed that they considered curriculum integration positive since it could have gained them more time for teaching for understanding, they also reported losing their motivation to assume responsibility for its implementation due to great difficulties in getting their colleagues to collaborate with them. Particularly the teachers of the main academic subjects reported having to refuse requests for collaboration because they had so many collaborative roles that they had no time left for regular instruction. The directive to pace and align instruction with the 'matura' requirements – thus stressing the importance of individual subject coverage – and the simultaneous directive to integrate curriculum – which required across subject collaboration – contradicted each other in teachers' opinion, which is why they reported being reluctant to assume leadership of the change they considered impossible under the existing conditions.

Summary

Although Little Creek dutifully structured work processes according to the NEI's advice, such as arranging time to allow for various team meetings and collaborative planning, the formal leaders failed to create a collegial culture and cultivate norms to enable teachers to engage in collective inquiry to make sense of the reform initiative, which is why the new structures could not become meaningful processes for leveraging distributed responsibility for instructional change implementation. Instead of transforming their work and adapting the existing structures so as to enable the establishment of norms and structures that would allow for productive engagement in collective inquiry, the school added the new structures on top of the existing ones, thus making the reform work run parallel to the existing practice.

Because the reform work was perceived as less important than the existing work, geared toward high achievement results on the 'matura', new ways of working and thinking were not possible. The existing hierarchical school structure constrained the school development team's leadership potential – feeling more like coordinators than leaders of the reform, the team members practiced compliance rather than creativity in bringing the reform to the school, which is why they became bogged down in procedural issues and external requirements, and completely lost the focus on student learning in the process, which the teachers stressed again and again in the interviews as the main reason why they were turning away from the reform.

Although the new processes became embedded in the school schedule, teachers reported being unable to develop commitment to redesigned work because their leaders dismissed it as impossible in their situation in which high results on 'matura' were the main measure of success. Having experienced the reform initiative as additional work that drained their energy and took their time away from caring for their students properly, some teachers reported turning their backs to any change, others, who were able to get beyond their anger, reveled using the time assigned for collaborative work for private projects with their friendly colleagues, which sustained the norms of isolation rather than contributed to building a professional community.

CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

The previous section of this chapter presented the analyses of the implementation and development of distributed leadership in two schools in relation to their key learning from the NEI's professional development intervention. This section identifies the common and divergent points across the two schools in their performance of leadership functions for leadership distribution under the influence of

the NEI's PDP, the relationship between redesigned work and transition mechanisms, and the antecedent and moderating effect of organizational structures.

In this horizontal, cross-case analysis, I reduced the within-case analysis data (Miles & Huberman, 1994) to focus on the information pertaining directly to the research questions that guided this study. I organized the pertinent data from each case analysis in tables with condensed descriptive information in the cells, went down each column to note patterns and sub-themes, and then compared and contrasted them to infer relational patterns. Defining the common set of sub-categories (sub-themes) across the two cases helped me organize the cross-case analytic reports, and draw conclusions in a form of narrative synthesis (1994) to answer my research questions.

Performance of Leadership Functions

To answer my second research question: *How did the performance of leadership functions evolve in the schools over their engagement in work redesign*, I analyzed the manner in which leadership functions – defined as the outcomes of distributed leadership reform in Mayrowetz et al.'s model (2007) – evolved across the two schools, taking into consideration the NEI's investment in building collective leadership capacity for instructional change. I analyzed the evolvement of the following leadership functions: providing and selling a vision, implementing redesigned work, adapting standard operating procedures, working with resistance, monitoring improvement efforts, providing encouragement and recognition, and buffering the faculty from outside interference. In the cross-case analysis I considered whether the performance of leadership functions was the result of individual and/or collective leadership efficacy, and drew conclusions about what contributed to or impeded the successful performance of leadership functions.

Providing and Selling a Vision

Table 11. Providing and Selling a Vision

	Linden Tree High School	**Little Creek High School**
Role of Principal in Building Teacher Ownership of Reform	**Larry** got majority agreement for change proposed by NEI but did not get teachers' commitment – was unable to create conditions for collective vision building for the outcome of reform; *Relied on his individual leadership*, carried responsibility for teachers' job security and success of reform on his own; By taking all responsibility for outcomes of reform and its influence on the school's future, Larry exhibited lack of recognition of the potential of collective leadership efficacy;	**Frank** got majority agreement for change proposed by NEI. Teachers followed his direction based on their acceptance of his autocratic leadership style, without being able to see the big picture; felt separated from goals of reform. *Relied on the NEI for directio*n and shifted the responsibility for outcome of reform to them; By keeping position of power and authority, Frank exhibited lack of understanding of/ unwillingness to understand the potential of broader leadership capacity for the enactment of this and other leadership functions;
	As Larry's successor, **Lydia** demonstrated awareness of importance of *collective leadership capacity* building for facilitating direction setting for the faculty, and her major role in the process. Lydia acknowledged difficult context in which she was working, encouraged building broader leadership capacity for transforming the culture. Included teachers in vision building, enabled discussions about concerns, seeking solutions together, collective setting of goals and linking those goals to expected reform outcomes.	As Frank's successor, **Boris** made an assumption teachers shared his vision thus exhibiting lack of awareness of the necessity of collaborative vision building expected faculty's commitment to reform without collaborative setting of direction for the school and linking that direction to reform goals. Teacher interviews proved his assumption faulty. Boris ignored increasingly negative culture, seemingly unaware of his role in it.
Building Readiness for Vision Building	As principal and school development team (SDT) leader, **Lydia** built her own and SDT's capacity for engaging the faculty in a vision building process, which clarified common direction; Lydia fully engaged SDT	As assistant principal and SDT leader, **Tatiana** exhibited surface understanding of the purpose of vision building process by failing to take into consideration the school's context and the necessity to build the faculty's readiness; Tatiana did not engage SDT members in the process of building faculty's

	members in the process of building faculty's readiness for vision building by giving them concrete responsibility and acted on their suggestions. Shared the responsibility for vision building process enactment with her team – broadened boundaries of leadership;	readiness for vision building.
Enactment of Vision Building Process	Lydia acted as catalyst in the performance of this and other leadership functions. Used knowledge gained in the NEI's workshop on vision building, and included the team members in leading of the process. Seized the moment after internal tragedy. Shared her deep concern about the school's future with the faculty and was direct and concrete about her expectations. Had complete support of her team; Lydia exhibited technical skill, genuine concern for the school's future, and awareness that the school's unique context had to be taken into consideration. The faculty reacted with honesty, openness, shared commitment to work for school's success.	Tatiana attempted to use her knowledge gained in NEI's workshops to enact vision building process without consulting SDT members or showing inclination to use their potential capacity to support her. Team members did not perceive themselves as leaders, no inclination to participate in leading vision building; None of the formal leaders supported Tatiana's attempts at leading vision building process but detached themselves and took the observer stance. Tatiana did not express being concerned about the school's future, relied on secure funding due to school's status, regardless of enrolment. Counted on high achievement results; After two failed attempts at leading vision building, detached herself from further attempts, and exhibited putting her hurt emotions over the possible benefit for the school; Since both her solo attempts were unsuccessful –remains unclear if Tatiana and SDT members mastered the technical aspect of vision building process.
Developing Commitment to Common Vision	Lydia invited teachers to share their emotions and concerns. Surfacing problems enabled confrontation and collaborative goal setting. Redesigning their work became a collective goal for meaningful transformation of operation for the good of students, teachers, and school reputation.	The teachers reported having no common vision, no common goals, expressed a desire to have a clear sense of direction.

	The teachers confirmed sharing common vision and commitment to it.	
Sustaining Common Vision	Lydia and the team created opportunities for engaging teachers in annual re-visiting of school vision – demonstrated awareness of the importance of sustaining common purpose.	No indication that the school had a common vision, no efforts to sustain it.

As Table 11 summarizes, both schools reported having no common vision when they entered the NEI's project to pilot the reform, and no opportunity under their formal leaders to participate in collective vision building to help their understanding of and commitment to the work of reform. The school development teams from both schools went through the same training and capacity building for the enactment of this and other leadership functions, however, vision building process was later successfully performed at Linden Tree but not at Little Creek. At Linden Tree, Lydia and the team members seized the moment after an internal tragedy to start building the community, and transforming negative culture, possessing the necessary skills and strong determination to move the faculty forward. While Lydia acted as a catalyst for direction setting and collective sensemaking of the reform, exhibiting the necessary personal attributes and strategic leadership behavior, she and the team members openly acknowledged that the task of transforming the negative culture required their collective effort, and that Lydia's solo leadership capacity would not suffice. Of particular importance was Lydia's mindset – she demonstrated her belief in the superiority of collaborative over individual leadership efficacy by engaging the school development team members in decision-making, and by relying on their skills to complement her own. Being aware of the difficult context in which she was working, she invested time and effort in collective leadership capacity building, which she believed was necessary for performing this and other leadership functions.

Unlike Linden Tree, Little Creek that also experienced a change in leadership later on did not use the momentum as an opportunity for community building. Tatiana acted as a solo leader in her forceful attempts to enact vision building, thus exhibiting lack of belief in collaborative leadership efficacy. Boris as the new principal demonstrated a traditional view of leadership that did not match the NEI's professional development model, and reinforced the school's entrenchment in a hierarchical structure by enforcing his own vision while failing to realize that teachers did not share it. The teachers' comments in the interview confirmed that they lacked a common sense of purpose. Vision building was thus not performed at Little Creek due to lack of leadership action – individually or collectively performed. While Boris lacked leadership skills and exhibited a traditional mindset that did not allow boundary crossing between teacher work and administrator work, Tatiana demonstrated overreliance on her own leadership capacity, which had a disabling effect on the school development team members and their leadership capacity building.

Implementing Redesigned Work

Table 12. Implementing Redesigned Work

	Linden Tree High School	**Little Creek High School**
Manner of Planning Redesigned Work	Collaborative planning of redesigned work, following NEI's instructions and requirements but also accommodating their own needs, with clear purpose – achieving systemic change defined consensually; A culture of inquiry – supported redesigned work over two years; new structures and processes – embedded into the school's schedule, matching the changing	Redesigned work assimilated into existing structures and culture – purpose: to fulfill the NEI's requirements, report at meetings with other pilot schools, but neglecting their own needs. Growing negative culture and negative relationships made collaborative planning impossible. Reform work imposed on teachers. Action plan preparation – Tatiana's

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	functioning of the school toward desired improvement. Action plan for redesigned work – evolved in collaboration with faculty – tasks distributed, teachers volunteered for out of classroom work or were assigned such work consensually – allowing them to demonstrate their areas of strength.	solo responsibility, involved some team members to contribute but not conceptually; asked the faculty's opinion *after* the plan was finished (circulating finished plan to be able to claim that faculty was included). Teachers demonstrated being aware of manipulation.
Manner of Redesigned Work Implementation	Following the vision building process, the team led the process of school action plan evolvement in interaction with faculty, connecting it to common goals. Every teacher got out-of-classroom task either by own choice or assigned if undecided to fulfill agreed upon school goals. SDT followed up - wrote detailed action plan (review showed it was complete with names, tasks, and dates), and displayed it in the staff room to keep everybody accountable. They linked new structures and processes that characterized redesigned work and were required by the NEI with developing school culture that supported inquiry-based reform work – redesigned work gained meaning. Teachers reported collective ownership of reform and individual and collective responsibility.	Having no common vision and common purpose, Tatiana and some team members wrote the school action plan because the NEI required it but without connecting it to internal need for change, which remained undefined. The teachers remembered seeing the action plan after it was written but not participating in its preparation, just being asked for opinion, which they did not provide. Review of action plan revealed its general nature and surface character – no specification of who would perform what and with what purpose. The plan did not serve its purpose. Teachers reported not feeling ownership of change, expressed disappointment over lack of shared accountability for reform work, avoidance of reform work possible without consequence. In their opinion the administration lost sight of students while trying to 'please' external institute.
Sustaining Redesigned Work	After the project ended, they kept the practice of annual planning, requiring from teachers to write down their individual plans, describe areas in which they wanted to collaborate, their strengths and where they wanted to assume leadership, based on evidence of	The school did not demonstrate adopting annual planning strategy to involve teachers in planning their work and for holding them accountable. Redesigned work was not practiced after NEI's project ended.

	their expertise. The plan then evolved based on negotiation and consensus. Was not a formality but meaningful practice. Kept practicing action research, institutionalized peer coaching.	The structure of SDT remained after project ended, but remained disconnected from new principal and faculty. The team functioned as coordinators, not a leadership body.

As Table 12 reports, both schools followed the NEI's guidance and direction in their initial planning of redesigned work with an important difference: while Linden High planned their new work collaboratively, linking new structures and processes, such as the new team meetings, teacher action research, school development team work, and peer coaching, to the developing culture of inquiry with the purpose of fulfilling their own commonly agreed goals, Little Creek planned their work in a manner that resembled more a compliance exercise than planning for real change. Unable to address increasingly negative culture, and lacking firm principal's support, Little Creek school development team failed to build collaborative processes throughout the organization to develop shared norms and common goals. While Linden High principal and school development team involved teachers in action plan preparation as a follow up to their collaborative vision building and goal setting, holding them accountable for the performance of reform work, Little Creek resorted to assigning work to teachers when the reform requirements built up, often without their consent. Interview and documentation data confirmed that while Linden High teachers found the new work meaningful– every teacher volunteered or agreed to perform out-of-classroom tasks – Little Creek teachers expressed their frustration because the reform extended their work without giving them a reason for fundamentally changing it.

Adapting Standard Operating Procedures

Table 13. Adapting Standard Operating Procedures

	Linden Tree High School	**Little Creek High School**
Reasons for Adapting Standard Operating Procedures	SDT reported making adapting standard operating procedures one of their priorities in the first years of their collaboration in the NEI's project out of concern that increased workload due to reform could have de-motivating effect on teachers.	Tatiana, whom the principal entrusted with the NEI's project implementation, reported following the NEI's instructions when asked about the reason for modifications (additions to regular teaching hours) to enable the implementation of the reform work. Not expressing concern over increased workload, claiming teachers would have to accept it.
The Manner in Which Standard Operating Procedures Were Adapted	SDT came up with original idea to shorten the instruction time by two hours on one day in the week, and do reform work during those two hours, thus demonstrating respect for predominantly commuting faculty – they expected that every teacher would consider their participation obligatory. In other adaptations they introduced (adding another long break, using longer interdisciplinary blocks) they followed NEI's instructions but also revealed making those adaptations meaningful by embedding them in the culture of inquiry and collegiality that they had built over time. The school transformed their usual way of operation rather than adding the reform work to their existing work schedule.	Tatiana and the team members did not report making an effort to consider teachers' needs when planning reform work. They partly embedded the time for meetings and teamwork in the existing time schedule and partly added to it, thus extending teachers' workday. Despite frequent opportunities for interaction, professional culture deteriorated due to incompetent leadership that did not support joint work for meaningful reform. While part of the faculty that refused to take additional work could get away with no responsibility for work of reform, more and more work was dumped on the teachers who volunteered. Because the purpose of the new work was fulfilling the external requirements rather than consensually defined school purpose, there was no general commitment to it, hard to engage all the teachers in out-of-classroom work.
Meaningfulness of Adaptations	Interview data revealed that adapting standard operating procedures would not have been sufficient for the performance of redesigned work if the faculty had not shared a clear organizational purpose that focused their collaborative redesigned work.	By adding the reform work to the existing practice without engaging the faculty in collective sense making of the reform, and without believing in the necessity of change, formal leaders reinforced divisions among teachers and contributed to corroding culture that impeded effective change.

As Table 13 indicates, the two schools differed in the manner in which they adapted their standard operating procedures. While Linden Tree school development team prioritized this leadership function out of their concern for preventing their teachers' and their own work overload, Little Creek implemented external requirements without having such concern, expecting from teachers to follow their example and carry enormous workload out of compliance. While at Linden Tree, the performance of this function was a collaborative effort in which the team took the NEI's ideas, and combined them with their own to make the adaptations suitable for their particular situation, at Little Creek the team added the reform work to their existing schedule, letting teachers know that it was just something they had to do even though it may not make sense to them, and without providing opportunities for collaborative sense making.

The situation was different at Linden Tree – because the team previously enabled collaborative sensemaking in vision building process, the teachers expressed finding the adaptations to standard operating procedures that made their frequent interactions possible meaningful, addressing their genuine need to discuss their changed practice.

Working with Resistance

Table 14.   Working with Resistance

	Linden Tree High School	**Little Creek High School**
Reactions to Reform Initiative	Strong initial resistance from part of the faculty caused general doubts about the NEI's reform initiative. Lydia and SDT initially had conflicting views on the reform initiative but discussed it, clarified their understanding, and reached	Hidden resistance under Frank's leadership caused by his preference of some teachers over the others became overt when Boris became principal. No indication that Tatiana and SDT discussed the reform initiative and came to agreement in the team – the interview revealed they shared

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	agreement that it was necessary and feasible. SDT recognized that the causes for teachers' doubts were their concerns over lack of knowledge and their limited understanding of change. Decided to use planned strategies to address teachers' needs (professional support, empowerment, opportunities for practice in safe environment, getting meaningful peer feedback – increased teachers' sense of self-efficacy, raised professional standards).	feelings of uncertainty about it, feared that it may threaten the 'matura' results. Claimed maybe some day knowledge gained in the NEI's training would become useful but not under present circumstances. Teachers did not express having clear understanding of reform initiative. No opportunity for open discussion about the meaning of change. No attempt to clarify causes for teachers' possible doubts and concerns.
The Role of Culture	The team put sustained effort into building a culture of trust that enabled honest conversation about the required change. Transformed the culture by changing teachers' mental models –stopped the trend of blaming forces beyond their control – students a priori lazy and de-motivated, and families unable to discipline them – for their average achievement results, and encouraged changing teachers' practice. They sought teachers' engagement in decisions about the school's future rather than blind acceptance. Everybody expected to use their voice.	Tatiana's solitary attempts to improve climate made it worse (she revealed making her attempts under pressure to comply with the NEI's requirement.) She demonstrated inability to overcome her hurt feelings over teachers' resistance to her attempted vision building process by refusing to talk about the experience. Boris revealed his expectation that resistance will gradually disappear by itself. He ignored problematic relationships, and avoided confrontation with resistors. Reasons for deeper relational and communication issues remained hidden because un-discussed, which caused built-up of negative climate.
Working With/Against Resistance	After clarifying their own understanding of reform, Lydia and teacher leaders involved the faculty in decisions about school's future, which then led to a consensus to make the NEI's change initiative part of their common purpose. The team worked with resistance rather than against it by strategically including teachers in decisions concerning the school's future. Leveraged the development of teachers' sense of ownership	Formal leaders' reluctance to face resistance made honest conversations about teachers' concerns regarding the required change impossible. Those teachers that were willing to work felt betrayed because they had to deal with communication and relational issues on their own. Those teachers that did not want to participate in redesigned work got away with it without consequences. Tatiana revealed working against resistance when explaining that she

	and empowerment. While disturbances kept erupting, the team resolved them before they could escalate by connecting external requirements to their own need, and buffering the faculty from outside pressure.	assigned reform work to teachers when under pressure to show results, putting teachers in groups despite aversion to one another without their consent. This then led to a surface implementation of new structures and processes for the sake of satisfying external requirements, without the intent to change anything. Teachers often ignored Tatiana and did not appear for teamwork, leaving the burden to those who showed up. Even the teachers that originally showed commitment to change demonstrated resistant behavior after the project ended by either returning to the isolation of their classrooms or starting their own private projects.

Table 14 indicates important difference between the two schools in how they dealt with resistance. After facing strong initial resistance from a small group of male teachers that caused general negativity toward the reform, Lydia encouraged resolving the conflicting views on the reform within the school development team first, which then enabled the team to act harmoniously, following a strategic plan that they prepared collaboratively: They started by transforming the negative culture and building a trusting environment for honest conversations about change among teachers, and then led the faculty to a consensual decision to make the reform work an organizational effort so as to achieve the agreed upon systemic change. Next they connected external requirements to their own need by supporting teachers to identify areas of instruction in need of improvement, followed by organizing appropriate learning opportunities for them, and buffering them from outside pressure, which eliminated causes for resistance.

At Little Creek, deeper relational and communication issues developed from initial hidden resistance, caused by the former principal's leadership style, and was thus not geared toward the reform initiative but rather against each other. Instead of encouraging a dialogue among the faculty to reveal potential areas of discord, the formal leaders either pretended the relational issues did not exist, or made them worse by assigning common work to the teachers who disliked each other, without attending to climate change. The interviewed teachers conveyed a sense of uncertainty about whether the reform work was desirable or not, which was due to the inability of the formal leaders to clarify their expectations from the reform. In the absence of a clear purpose and collaboratively defined vision, some teachers avoided redesigned work without consequences at the expense of the motivated teachers, whose workload increased as the result, which further eroded professional culture.

Monitoring Improvement Efforts

Table 15. Monitoring Improvement Efforts

	Linden Tree High School	**Little Creek High School**
Monitoring as Support vs. Control	SDT checked in frequently but refrained from exerting control over teachers and their work. SDT and teachers reported performing reform work out of accountability to internally prepared action plan, and evaluating it using internal evaluation, which eased their obligation to write the reports for the NEI as part of their project obligation – nobody had to be forced to evaluate their work and write reports when they were due for NEI's review. Teachers reported collecting internal evaluation data for feedback, and for further planning	Predominantly Tatiana monitored the innovation (or delegated monitoring to some SDT members) sporadically and under external pressure, when reports for the NEI were due. The teachers reported being under constant pressure to produce reports of their work while feeling that the change was not supported by the administrators, who were not interested in evaluation results. Because the reports did not serve any internal purpose, teachers did not perceive them as meaningful, and did not feel accountable. Interview data and review of documentation revealed that internal evaluation plan did not exist. Since they

	(what did not seem to work was abandoned, and what worked was kept and improved if necessary).	did not define their common school goals, and linked them to reform outcomes but pursued the NEI's project goals directly, each according to their individual understanding, they also used the NEI's evaluation forms.
Strategies Used for Monitoring	School development team's guidance and support rather than control; teachers' self-monitoring: peer coaching that became institutionalized, school 'exhibition days', individual written reports for end-of-year faculty 'working' meetings that served for revisiting school vision and goals, and for following year annual planning.	Peer coaching used for the sake of complying with the NEI's requirements, abandoned when project ended. No strategies to support teacher self-monitoring. No internally agreed measures to hold teachers accountable for change implementation, only external NEI requirements. New principal exerted top-down control to ensure fiscal feasibility of reform work, and for the prevention of the 'extremes', which the teachers perceived as professionally demeaning.

As Table 15 summarizes, Linden High school development team avoided imposing control over teachers' work, but used a number of strategies to enable their self-monitoring of innovation. Their approach demonstrated their sensitivity to the fragility of the culture of trust and collegiality, and their respect for teachers' professionalism. Little Creek school development team, on the other hand, reported monitoring the execution of the reform work top-down by exerting constant pressure on teachers to write reports about what they were doing, without following up on their reports, which made teachers feel that the work of reform was an excuse for the team's exertion of control, revealing their lack of respect for their professionalism.

While Linden High created a balanced bottom-up and top-down pressure to monitor the direction of their reform work as part of their organizational improvement efforts, which contributed to the increased accountability climate, and enhanced the faculty's sense of community, Little Creek exerted top-down pressure out of compliance with external requirements, and to showcase their power. Without a sense

that the reform work was serving a valued common purpose, Little Creek teachers
indicated perceiving the school development team's and principal's monitoring of
reform work as a surveillance that distracted them from their work with students
rather than a support to their professional growth.

Providing Encouragement and Recognition

Table 16. Providing Encouragement and Recognition

	Linden Tree High School	**Little Creek High School**
Awareness of Importance of Providing Encouragement and Recognition	Lydia and the school development team members expressed awareness of the importance of providing encouragement and recognition to teachers to sustain the extra effort they were putting in improvement of their practice and the work for the school success. Teacher interviews revealed that Lydia's encouragement was limited to the cadre of teachers who were involved in leadership work. Lydia acknowledged that this function was her area of growth.	Neither the principal nor Tatiana and the school development team demonstrated awareness that providing encouragement and recognition was important or that it was their responsibility.
Strategies Used for Providing Encouragement and Recognition	Lydia provided occasional praise – oral or emailed – predominantly to the cadre of teachers that performed leadership work. By institutionalizing the system of peer coaching, Lydia enabled teachers to provide encouragement and recognition to each other, thus distributing the performance of this leadership function across the faculty, which was possible because of the culture of collegiality and trust. While the team expressed	The team members cited payment for 'extra hours' as recognition of their work on the team, and teachers saw the reward for their effort in their students' success on the 'matura'. Peer coaching as a means of mutual encouragement did not take hold because of absence of culture of collegiality and trust, and lack of shared vision and common goals. While the team got energized from externally organized annual celebration that showcased best practices, they tried to evoke the same feelings in the faculty by bringing the presenters from other

	appreciating externally organized celebration in the form of annual Festival of Best Practices, which filled them with new energy, their comments did not reveal their awareness that internal celebrations were equally important. Teachers recalled some occasions of internal celebrations, which they understood more in terms of socializing than reinforcing the importance of vision and common values, and sustaining their improvement efforts.	schools into their school. Due to their unresolved internal issues, those external interventions had the opposite effect, making the faculty even more acutely aware of internal barriers that prevented them to move forward. No-one could recall internally organized celebrations in the interviews.

As illustrated in Table 16, both schools experienced problems with the performance of this leadership function but at different stages of development. At Linden High, the principal showed awareness that her performance of this leadership function was limited to the cadre of teacher leaders, and that she needed to broaden the range to include others. What she did not seem to realize or take credit for was that by institutionalizing peer coaching she distributed the performance of this leadership function broadly among the faculty, enabling teachers to provide encouragement for instructional innovation to each other. This was possible because of clear common goals, which served as guiding principles for the school's development, and were used as the criteria against which teachers could peer- and self-assess their performance. Interestingly, the teachers also reported that the performance of this function was among their weakest. While their reports probably referred to a lack of internally organized celebrations, their perceptions may also indicate that they considered providing encouragement and recognition the formal leader's responsibility, thus failing to realize that this function was performed successfully although not directly by the principal.

At Little Creek, both principals and teachers revealed that they thought about this function mostly in terms of providing a financial reward. Frank, for instance, mentioned that he paid teacher leaders for their extra hours; the teachers, when asked if their extra work was recognized in any way, claimed that they did not expect getting extra financial reward for investing themselves in instructional improvement, which may mean that they considered financial reward professionally demeaning or that they disliked the fact that the teachers serving on the school development team got paid extra for their work, while the teachers who did not serve on the team were expected to work extra hours without any reward. The school development team's efforts to stimulate teachers by bringing the ideas and practices of other pilot schools into their school caused bad mood and annoyance among the faculty. The interviews suggested that the negative feelings may have been caused by teachers' frustration with their leaders' inability to resolve internal relationship issues and unleash their internal potential, which would have given them reason to celebrate their own successes instead of applauding the successes of other pilot schools.

Buffering the Faculty from Outside Interference

Table 17. Buffering the Faculty from Outside Interference

	Linden Tree High School	**Little Creek High School**
Perception of External Initiatives	Lydia exhibited a critical stance toward external initiatives, did not accept them without questioning their value for the school. Was aware that they needed to be adapted to fit the level at which the school was, and the needs that the teachers identified in their action research groups. Was also aware that newly developed school culture was fragile and had to be protected. Lydia and the SDT members took every initiative under consideration,	Neither Frank nor Boris demonstrated that they possessed a critical stance toward external initiatives. Both modeled total conformity, stating openly their belief that the NEI knew best what was good for the school. Without clear vision and common goals, the SDT was unable to distinguish between what was important for the school and what was not. They obeyed the principal in trying to implement the change that the NEI required while at the same time

	making sure that each of them was in tune with the needs of the teachers; Put the goals of the school before external requirements (it was essential that they previously clarified vision and identified common goals).	keeping the old practice intact. As the result, both the team members and the teachers who were willing to experiment with change suffered from huge work overload. By expecting from teachers to implement external requirements for the sake of keeping face, without really believing in the proposed change, the formal leaders offended teachers' sense of professional value, and caused them to lose respect for their leadership integrity.
Use of Buffering Strategies	Lydia and her team exhibited a vigilant stance to protect the culture they created by carefully screening available professional development offerings to make sure they addressed the faculty's needs (they included the faculty in decision-making), and that it was implemented in teacher-friendly ways. Sometimes they repeated the NEI's workshops – adapted them to fit the level of difficulty for faculty. They scanned for opportunities and brought resources from the business world and from other pilot schools to raise teachers' awareness, and to energize them, which was successful because of a possibility of open discussion. They protected vocational teachers from external top-down vocational reform initiative by preparing their own internal professional development program for them. Instructional change as collective good and collegiality allowed for collegial criticism in a non-threatening environment, support, and feedback.	No buffering strategies used at Little Creek – the teachers willing to work were exposed directly to external demands that were accepted without screening for their appropriateness for the school. On the other hand, no internal system of collegial support, criticism, and judgment to overcome the privacy of individual teacher's practice.

As Table 17 summarizes, Linden High principal was a catalyst in building confidence and autonomy in the team that enabled them to direct their school improvement efforts from within, and adapt the external initiatives to their own development needs. Based on their awareness of how fragile the culture of trust they were building was, they buffered the faculty from external pressure that they believed could destabilize their development by raising their awareness about the bigger picture of change, building their capacity by bringing carefully screened professional development opportunities into the school that fit their teachers' needs, openly discussing problems, and following their own action plan for success. Little Creek leaders lacked such autonomy – they followed the NEI's project goals instead of their own, and implemented all the requirements without consideration of their own needs, which led to reform implementation that was added to the existing practice. As a consequence, the faculty was exposed to enormous outside pressure that made even the most dedicated teachers feel demoralized and burned out.

Conclusions

The cross-case analysis shows that while the external institute had an important role in building teachers' capacity for the performance of leadership functions, and for changing their perception of their role and responsibility, their on-going support was not a guarantee for a thoughtful, distributed performance of leadership functions, supportive of school capacity building for change. The two cases of schools show that although the development teams from both schools received the same on-going training and support for distributed performance of leadership functions, they differed in their implementation of those functions, which in turn produced a different response from their respective faculties, visible in their

engagement, relationships, and responsibility for the work of reform that emerged over time.

The case of Linden Tree demonstrates successful performance of leadership functions in terms of their impact on the faculty, and their capacity building for instructional change. The following internal processes that developed at Linden Tree served as a leverage for the implementation of change in the desired direction: (1) the school development team's construction of their identity and the way they assumed leadership: after building strong internal coherence in their team, and acquiring power through expert knowledge, Linden Tree school development team used their skill of coalition building rather than position in their approach to execute leadership functions; (2) the relationships within the school development team: they developed a reciprocal relationship, based on trust, and utilized different capacities of team members in a productive way so that they complemented each other, and ultimately produced collective capacity that became more than the sum of individual contributions; (3) the manner in which the team worked with the faculty: after building their internal capacity and demonstrating their expert instructional ability, the team involved the faculty in vision planning by creating a dissonance with their current beliefs and attitudes, which had originally constrained people in their interactions, and acted as a barrier to their sensemaking of the reform. They then followed up by reconstructing teachers' current values, beliefs, and norms in ways consistent with the reform goals, which they then linked with their own shared goals. Making teachers an integral part of vision building and goal setting laid the foundation for their collective responsibility and ownership of the reform work, which was perceived as an on-going and fundamental change in the way the school functioned, and not as a short-term change, ordered from the outside. The team

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enacted all leadership functions by giving teachers voice in decisions related to instructional change. They took time to build a culture of inquiry and collegial exchange, supported teachers' capacity building through collaborative classroom-based inquiry, and buffered the faculty from external pressures based on their awareness that outside interference could destabilize their internal development process; (4) the principal's attributes, capacity, and understanding of her role: Lydia acted as the catalyst, who possessed the necessary personal attributes, reflective capacity, strong instructional experience, openness to continuous learning, awareness of difficult context in which the team was working, respect for teacher professionalism, and strong belief in the importance of collective effort, which helped her get the faculty's engagement for the work of reform. Because the former principal did not provide the catalyst for change during the first two years in the reform, the reform efforts and the associated instructional changes did not materialize.

Little Creek team failed to build their internal cohesiveness, which disabled them to situate themselves as a leadership body in the school. Lacking power, they experienced difficulties in the performance of leadership functions. The internal processes that acted as a barrier to their implementation of change as planned by the reform were: (1) carrying the hierarchical order into their team, the school development team members relied on their leader to use her positional power to enact vision building – not because they aspired to develop their faculty's commitment to the work of reform, but rather to be able to check it off as one more task, performed as required by the NEI; (2) being detached from the old and the new principal – neither acted as a catalyst early in the reform – the team was unable to articulate the school goals and connect them with the reform goals. They adopted the NEI's project goals as their school goals, without adapting them to the needs of the teachers, students, and

the school, and without inviting the teachers into a dialogue about the direction of the school's development. As a consequence, teachers did not feel committed to the project goals, and expressed uncertainty about the direction of the reform; (3) relying on teachers' self-motivation and internal commitment to any change, they left it up to the NEI to build their faculty's capacity for instructional change, while expecting from teachers to hold their new knowledge on reserve, openly expressing their doubt that it can be put into practice under the existing conditions; (4) the administration viewed the proposed change as a possibility rather than a desired practice, which discouraged teachers from serious change efforts; (5) the team leader's attempts at performing leadership functions were enacted for the sake of satisfying external requirements rather than changing the way that the school was functioning; (6) lack of strong support from their formal leaders and lack of focused effort based on mutual agreement about a common direction of change that may benefit the school divided the faculty and dissipated the energy of those teachers that volunteered for reform work, leading to their burnout; (7) neither principal provided a space and climate for collegiality and trusting relationships. The former and present formal leaders exerted role-based authority, and the teachers kept their traditional mindset expressing their belief that crafting vision and working on the climate was not their responsibility; (8) instead of buffering teachers from external stresses, the principal and the team directly exposed them to external pressure, requiring from them to produce evidence of their reform work for external review, thus shifting all the responsibility for work of reform on the teachers; (9) Frank did not allow resistance, Boris pretended not to see the growing negativity, and Tatiana was too weak, failing to invest in broader leadership capacity building of the team, to tackle unresolved tensions among the teachers, which grew out of the old grudges and new resentments due to uneven distribution of

additional workload. Overall negative culture increased, reinforcing divisions among teachers about fundamental issues, which impeded collective capacity building for change.

<div align="center">Transition Mechanisms</div>

To answer my third research question: *How has the redesigned work influenced the transition mechanisms for the development of distributed leadership: the meaning that the principal and teachers make of their work, their motivation for work, and their use of learning opportunities to improve their knowledge and skills*, I compared the implementation of the changes in the design characteristics of the work and in the practice of leadership in the two schools under study, and then cross-analyzed how those changes translated into transition mechanisms – whether they stimulated collective sense making of the reform, increased teachers' motivation for new work, and improved their capacity for its performance. Finally, I drew analytic conclusions about the factors that either positively or negatively affected the transition mechanisms, and thus either fostered or impeded the development of broader capacity for change.

<div align="center">*Making Sense of Reform Work*</div>

Table 18. Sensemaking

	Linden Tree High School	**Little Creek High School**
Collective Understanding of Reform	The first two years in the reform – teachers lacked system view of change; felt disengaged from the reform but remained willing to learn – they built new skills and acquired new knowledge by taking part in the NEI's PDP, however, they did not put those skills and knowledge into practice due to incoherent mental models – not all of them believed	Throughout the school's participation in the NEI's reform piloting, hierarchical demand for urgency and compliance with externally inserted initiative caused superficial understanding of purpose of reform. The former principal's autocratic leadership style protected teachers from out-of-classroom problems but disabled them to develop the need for change. While the learning seemed to

	change was possible and necessary. At the end of second year – internal tragedy – a lever for building faculty's commitment – Lydia and team used the momentum and applied their new leadership capacity (acquired in the NEI's PDP) for: - posing questions about teachers' beliefs and values, - facilitating collective identification of need for change, and - reaching consensus about particular areas in need of change. Making teachers realize that each of them could contribute to the improvement they agreed on was necessary for breaking their habit of blaming others for their problems. *Collective sensemaking helped create teachers' emotional engagement with the learning process.* Setting common goals and priorities, and a vision of what they wanted to achieve helped build a community spirit, and develop shared feelings of commitment to change – *teachers volunteered for out-of-classroom work, which they started to perceive as having the same or even higher significance for their school's future than their work in the classroom.* Meaningful implementation of the inquiry process in action research teams – helped develop common language, and connect it to teachers' immediate problems of practice.	make sense for the individuals, they were unable to make collective sense of the reform due to lack of context that would foster dialogue about the learning experience and the learning of others. The work of reform kept being added to existent practice. School development team leader's solo attempts to use her theoretical knowledge for involvement of teachers in vision building process and discussion of the meaning of reform failed because no prior work on school climate. She herself revealed lack of understanding of the purpose of reform for school. In spite of everything – some teachers kept volunteering for out-of-classroom work (strong inner motivation for excellence). The new principal promoted a tunnel vision of school success measured by high achievement ('matura') results, which the school already had before reform. The only common goal implicitly present in everybody was high 'matura' results – which locked teachers within their subjects, and behind the façade of their perfect individual practice, which remained immune for collective scrutiny. Implementation of action research – superficial, did not serve any purpose since they already had high achievement results.
Organizational Culture	Collegial culture and feelings of safety in taking risks (teachers were not pushed into change but encouraged, supported, and invited to share when ready)	Lack of internal consensus and certainty about the reform exposed the faculty to external pressures, felt rushed. Teachers torn between conflicting demands for high 'matura'

	contributed to development of trusting relationships and positive climate.	results and for production of evidence of their redesigned work, unable to discuss their dilemma openly. Remained caught in unresolved internal tensions and personality issues. Relationships worsened because of uneven distribution of reform work; toxic culture, lack of collegiality – refusal of working with certain people.
Collective Empowerment	By twisting and channeling the reform to advance the school's own purpose, the team supported teachers in developing a sense of ownership of change, and increased their motivation to develop their knowledge so as to be able to rely on their own internal capacity for instructional improvement. Teachers' voices heard; expectation that they'll contribute their ideas, opinion, be involved in work for success of reform. Teachers expressed feeling respected and included.	Excluded from decision making teachers unsure about the purpose of their work for reform. Added it to their existent work instead of transforming their practice because the principal made it clear that they had to keep high achievement results on 'matura', which the proposed instructional change did not guarantee. Teachers expressed feeling exposed and deserted, claiming administrators did not trust their professional ability and judgment. They felt disempowered; felt betrayed because they invested themselves – volunteered for reform work – which, as it turned out, the administration did not perceive as desirable for the school.

As Table 18 summarizes, while Linden High experienced a rocky start of the reform implementation, with negativity prevailing in the staff room that initially prevented collective sense making of the reform, Little Creek started the reform implementation with general enthusiasm and initial perceptions of the reform as meaningful for individual growth. In both schools teachers accumulated a lot of theoretical knowledge and skills for the performance of leadership tasks and instructional change over the years but did not put that knowledge into practice due to unchanged mental models, and a culture that did not support change. This situation changed for Linden High when Lydia became principal. Her support to the leadership team over the years in their capacity building paid off –the team helped her seize the

right moment to put the strategies they learned in the PDP in practice for turning the negativity around. As a team, they felt empowered enough to give voice to teachers, and help surface their concerns, values and beliefs. By including teachers in setting school goals and developing school vision they helped widen their focus from the immediate outcomes in their classroom to the school as a whole, which had a strong motivational impact and led to their commitment to develop new skills and expand their work for the sake of school-level improvement. Aligning commonly identified school goals with the reform goals led to the collective responsibility for the success of the reform work. Envisioning a better future together supported teachers' sense making of the reform work, and eased the transfer of their theoretical knowledge into practice in spite of the stress, caused by the dissonance between the result-oriented 'matura' exam, and the process oriented instructional change, promoted by the reform.

Little Creek, on the other hand, went from initial enthusiasm to loss of meaning. Since the former and the current principal both prioritized high achievement results, which the school already had, the reform work became an addition to teachers' existing work, which they did not dare to change for fear of spoiling the achievement results. While the reform seemed to make sense for some individuals, they were unable to test their individual understanding in a dialogue with others due to increasingly negative climate, which increased the stress caused by the administration's prioritizing of high achievement results. The interviews revealed that some teachers, including those that performed leadership work, persisted in spite of perceiving the work of reform as a burden because they had made a commitment to the reform when they joined the NEI's project. Nevertheless, the fact that they carried a heavier workload than the rest of the faculty, who excluded themselves from reform

endeavors, turned people against each other, and created a toxic culture in which collective sense making of the reform became impossible.

Motivation for Reform Work

Table 19.   *Motivation*

	Linden Tree High School	**Little Creek High School**
Perceptions of Reform	With Larry as principal, teachers sensed the need for change but more as enrichment than transformation of existent practice; Once they joined the project, general negativity toward reform spread by small group of resisters, although majority agreement to join the project. Lydia – catalyst for change: after collective sense making and setting their own goals – to improve the school's image in community and raise enrolment numbers, consensus about improvement of instructional quality. Bringing school and reform goals in sync, reformed work became the new way of functioning.	Initially positive perceptions because of general concern over their restricted access to professional information and training (school's remote location), inner desire for learning – reform perceived as opportunity for learning and gaining recognition, although reform work understood as enrichment (added) not transformation of existent practice; Majority agreement to join but very vague notions about expected change – what it entailed, what was its purpose; While initially ready to participate in out-of-classroom activities, teachers did not connect those activities with their regular work – the reform remained separated from regular work, perceived as a burden.
Professional Commitment	The team worked in a synergy exceeding the sum of individual contribution for the good of the school (sincerely committed to school improvement). When teachers realized their colleagues on the team were not working for own promotion but for promoting the school, reacted with sincerity and commitment. Exchange of experience at faculty meetings became common practice – linking individual inquiry to overall school goals.	The team kept changing its members, no time to build commitment, and create synergy within team. Team members worked on team because of opportunity to be the first to learn and get information (shared desire for individual excellence). Formal leaders made their lack of commitment to the proposed change explicit but nevertheless required from teachers to perform new tasks for the sake of compliance with the NEI's

	Practicing their skills within a small circle of peers in action research teams promoted critical yet supportive and non-judgmental attitude toward each other's practice and efforts to change it; Time available for building individual capacity in a non-threatening environment before exhibiting changed practice to community – balanced support and pressure. Positive community feedback strengthened trust in individual and collective ability and professional judgment, and increased motivation. Principal and teacher leaders exhibited trust in teachers' judgment by letting them decide what was best for students, and supporting their decisions all the way, thus raising their commitment to develop professional excellence.	requirements – diminished teachers' trust in their leaders' professional judgment to benefit school, and in the process of change that they encouraged yet failed to support. Lack of personal support from their leaders, no positive feedback from colleagues and no recognition for their work on various committees and teams outside of their classroom lowered teachers' professional commitment. Exchange of experience at faculty meetings perceived as show-off because of problematic relationships and general negative climate.
Satisfaction with Work	Leadership team members initially dissatisfied in new role, accused of 'crunching for promotion', blamed for any problems in connection with reform. Frustrated because taken for scapegoats while unable to put their leadership capacity in practice. After establishing themselves as action research leaders thus being able to use their new knowledge and skills, they used their collective capacity to mobilize the faculty when the right moment presented itself, and became extremely motivated by positive results; Realized their contribution to school's success much broader than in the past when their power limited to their classroom work. Reported they had the opportunity to "co-create the school's future" – perceived their new role as very significant. Teachers satisfied with reform work because recognized by community when showcased, plus enrolment	Leadership team members lacked motivation to work on the team because they could not use the knowledge they were acquiring through NEI's training –work on the team not meaningful, members kept dropping out – which worked against building trust and internal coherence. Expressed being overworked (teachers increasingly refused to write reports and comply with other NEI requirements – so the team had to do all the work themselves), and increasingly unhappy in their role. Teachers unhappy with reform work – had to perform it while expected not to threaten the existing high school achievement. Perceived it as additional burden. Lost their drive when realized that their ideas not appreciated, just the results for formal reports counted.

	numbers went up. Never felt rushed, their ideas respected and welcomed.	Detested their formal leaders' servant attitude toward external institutes, and their lack of feeling for the needs of teachers and students. Because teachers were sometimes forced into collaboration with their hostile colleagues that refused to communicate with them, the faculty felt increasingly reluctant to perform the work of reform.

As Table 19 indicates, general low motivation for change was characteristic of Linden High faculty in the first two years of their collaboration in the NEI's project. The faculty shared a mental model of blaming others for their low enrolment numbers, but broke the pattern and moved out of their comfort zone in the process of creating their common purpose in which they revealed their vulnerabilities. Action research helped strengthen their relational trust, and empowered teachers by giving them the opportunity to have more input into decisions about instructional change. Balanced internal and external support and pressure created by collective expectation for instructional capacity growth, enhanced teachers' self- determination. Positive feedback from the community when they showcased their new instructional practices increased their sense of self-efficacy and validated their professionalism. By satisfying teachers' needs for finding meaning and self-actualization in their work, the above internal processes enhanced teachers' motivation for reform work.

Unlike Linden High faculty that ultimately embarked on the process of change collectively by supporting and challenging each other through regular dialogic encounter, Little Creek teachers had to rely on their individual inner motivation to sustain their self-determination to persist in the reform for a while. While entering the reform with readiness to embrace work redesign, their reform work remained separate

from their regular practice because the school's internal priorities remained focused on high achievement results. By shifting all the responsibility for the results of the reform work on the teachers while also expecting from them to keep high achievement results (which the innovation did not guarantee), the administration created pressure but no support, thus encouraging the cycle of the reproduction of the status quo. While the teachers kept seeking individual benefit from the NEI's professional development program, most of them avoided risk taking, and applied their new knowledge and skills only as occasional enrichment of their existent practice. Unable to translate redesigned work into meaningful changes in their work place, teachers were unable to experience pride and satisfaction, and felt increasingly burnt out instead. Because their attempts to implement reform work were presented as evidence to the NEI while internally they did not count, teachers expressed feeling disappointed and losing motivation for work of the reform.

Learning How to Perform Reform Work

Table 20. *Learning*

	Linden Tree High School	**Little Creek High School**
Making the Learning Useful	Lydia and team – used the support of the NEI's PDP and the coach's on-going support and encouragement to *create learning relationships* among faculty by: – engaging teachers in action research to identify and work on problems of their practice; – scaffolding candid conversations about meaning of change that reform promoted (principal and the team stood behind change, believed in its necessity); – principal's and team's firm belief in the necessity and feasibility of reform; – providing suitable training	Regular attendance of NEI's professional development (shared inner drive for excellence) but no change of practice because: – no opportunity at school to clarify meaning and overcome uncertainty about whether the reform would produce a positive outcome on the 'matura' or other worthwhile outcomes; – no firm belief in change on the part of principals and leadership team – action research and peer coaching practiced to satisfy the NEI's requirements, did not become embedded in the way of functioning (disappeared even before the NEI's project ended);

	targeted at identified need; even adapting and repeating NEI's workshops (the team acted as professional developers) – tailoring them to levels of understanding of individual teachers and groups.	– disconnect between their own goals (maintain high achievement results) and goals of reform; – leaving it up to teachers to decide if they wanted to change their practice, set teachers against each other because some teachers were carrying a heavier workload than others.
Spreading New Knowledge	Providing opportunities to put their knowledge into practice by creating a safe space for discourse around innovation in which providing and receiving constructive collegial feedback was possible. Through organizational learning and mutual support – individual self-reliance enabled their showcasing of their best practice – got community recognition, which further enthused them; Creating a culture of inquiry – even those teachers that took part in subject-specific training, developed the habit of sharing what they learned with faculty – *individual knowledge became collective resource*; Creating a collegial culture (institutionalizing peer coaching; exposing problems to problem solve together, trusting relationships, mutual support – a norm); Making teachers aware of expectations, holding them accountable, but also giving them as much time and support as they needed to learn and try change when ready (encouragement in a non-threatening way). General awareness that for their complex problems solutions were not readily available – that they had to work on own solutions – readiness to persist, not requiring immediate results.	Ignoring increasingly dysfunctional relationships instead of putting a deliberate effort into their improvement, the principal and the school development team deprived teachers of a trusting environment that could potentially provide sources of collegial feedback; Exerting pressure on teachers to produce results of reform work (i.e., requiring immediate results), time pressure, inability to go through the inquiry process reflectively, led teachers to *add* changed practice to their existent practice instead of transforming it from fear of lowering results on 'matura'; Dysfunctional relationships – barrier to open sharing of knowledge and collegial problem solving – those who ready to share were accused of showing off, competitiveness instead of collegiality (criticism without good intention).

Table 20 indicates that while the NEI attended to the development of knowledge and skills that the school development team and the teachers needed to carry out the work of reform by providing ongoing, on-site professional development and support, it was then up to the individual school to build internal readiness and make the learning meaningful. While at Linden High there was evidence of strong reciprocal learning relationships, and teachers' collective use of inquiry for improvement of practice, Little Creek teachers had to rely on their inner drive for learning since meaningful application of their newly acquired knowledge and skills was discouraged from fear of jeopardizing the school's high achievement results. While at Linden High, teachers experienced learning as a mutual influence process that empowered and enthused them, Little Creek teachers – caught in the environment that encouraged status quo – remained torn between their inner desire to achieve excellence through continuous learning, and their fear of changing their existent practice, which the principal considered successful since it produced high achievement results. While Linden Tree developed into a learning organization in which the processes that encouraged collaborative inquiry, collegial feedback and sharing of knowledge became institutionalized, based on their growing awareness that they could generate better solutions as a community, at Little Creek, the knowledge was not shared, and the efforts of individual teachers to put their new leadership skills into practice and become change agents failed because the conditions, such as the appropriate climate and relationships, were not there.

Conclusions

The cross-analysis shows that the changes in work (or new job characteristics according to Mayrowetz et al, 2007) that the NEI encouraged in the pilot schools translated into transition mechanisms at Linden Tree, but not at Little Creek. The

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processes that most likely contributed to the translation of the changed job characteristics into educators' sense making, engagement, and learning at Linden Tree were the following: (1) after developing into a cohesive leadership body, the school development team was able to encourage a shift in teachers' mental models that had originally turned people against reform ideas. They achieved such a shift by facilitating teachers' collective sense making in which individuals could test their understanding of the reform, and connect the reform goals with the goals they envisioned for their school; (2) the collaborative sense-making process framed the faculty's understanding of work redesign as having high significance for their school's future, which motivated teachers for developing new skills, acquiring new knowledge, and assuming new responsibilities; (3) by building their faculty's awareness that the new processes that the NEI trained them for, such as action research, peer coaching, and critical friendship, were fundamental for determining how to change instruction to better support their students, the team could then encouraged teachers to implement them as long-term, systemic changes in the way the school functioned; (4) collaborative engagement in the process of inquiry strengthened relational trust and helped build collegiality; (5) balanced internal and external support and pressure, high internal expectations for every teacher's contribution to instructional improvement, and mutual encouragement through collegial feedback helped build professional community in which sharing of problems, collaborative problem-solving, and sharing of knowledge and resources became the norms; (6) positive feedback from the community when teachers showcased their new approaches to teaching led to more teacher satisfaction, and increased their responsibility for continuous learning. With improved performance, teachers became more critical consumers of external professional support.

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While redesigned work at Linden Tree spurred increased teachers' motivation for change and capacity building, based on their collective understanding of the new job characteristics as a means of taking their future into their own hands, which in turn improved satisfaction with their work, at Little Creek, work redesign led to a collective loss of meaning. The factors that negatively affected the transition mechanisms, and thus impeded the development of broader capacity building for change were: (1) the inability of Little Creek school development team to develop firm belief in the necessity and feasibility of change, demanded by the reform, which was due to a lack of cohesiveness and stability within their team, and lack of empowerment of the team members to act as the new leadership body. Consequently, they were not able to support collective sensemaking of the reform in their teachers; (2) formal leaders presented work redesign as a short-term utilization of the NEI's strategy, and did not connect it to their internal school purpose; (3) lacking support from the principal, and remaining torn between their inner desire for change and their leaders' focus on achievement results, the teachers that were motivated for change added reform work to their existent practice instead of using their new knowledge and skills for transforming their existent practice, which led to their work overload; (4) the administrators created pressure for change without demonstrating a firm purpose and appreciation for real change, which they did not really support; (5) teachers had to carry all the responsibility for the success of the reform, which was understood in terms of fulfilling the external requirements, while being under constant pressure to sustain high achievement results. Facing external pressure to change their performance, and internal pressure not to change anything led the teachers that were motivated for change toward extending their workload instead of changing instruction; (5) increasingly negative climate and lack of support prevented a

transition from individual toward organizational learning and system change, which presented a barrier to the improvement of organizational performance.

Antecedents

Organizational Structures and Formulation of Redesigned Work

To answer my fourth research question: *How have the existing organizational structures shaped how the school leadership teams in conjunction with the NEI formulated the redesigned work in their school*, I analyzed the impact of the existing structures, such as the hierarchical division of labor, departmental structure based on discipline specialization, schedules, routines, and external requirements, and prescribed national curriculum, on the formulation of redesigned work across the two schools. I then made conclusions about how the practice and understanding of existing organizational structures either contributed to or worked against the formulation of the new job characteristics, and the capacity building for their performance, as significant for the school.

Hierarchical Division of Labor

Table 21. Hierarchy

	Linden Tree High School	**Little Creek High School**
Understanding Leadership	As a formal leader, Larry considered the school's success his full responsibility – shielded teachers from external pressures – making them unaware of consequences of dropping student enrolment. Discussing these problems with teachers would mean (for him) he was not capable of solving them. Because of lack of information and awareness, the faculty easily fell under the influence of the small group of resisters – formulated redesigned work as an addition to	Frank's authoritative leadership style did not allow power sharing. Considered decision making his right yet shifted responsibility for reform to the NEI. Held teachers responsible for high achievement results measured by 'matura' exam at the end of secondary school. The faculty accepted his decisions without discussion. Did not see relevance of reform work since they already had high achievement results. Teachers cautious not to change their existent practice– redesigned work perceived as addition to existing

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	their already full workload, bearing little relevance to their immediate practice. Although supporting the school development team's capacity building and nominating Lydia for team leader, Larry unable to clarify the team's role (did not demonstrate perceiving their work as leadership – continued to make decisions on his own), and his expectations from them – probably the reason why the faculty initially perceived them as a new addition to existing hierarchical structure without real purpose in the school. The team needed to build their capacity and prove their ability over two years before the faculty accepted their leadership, and before they could formulate redesigned work as important.	practice. Frank's holding on to his positional power disempowered the school development team, and disabled them to define and negotiate their leadership role. They did not perceive their work on the team as leadership work, and could not formulate it as such. Frank competed with the team members from fear of being less informed, and losing his power. Pronounced himself team leader. Demonstrated inability to grasp the concept of leadership distribution.
Understanding Decision Making	Larry considered his duty to make decisions. He consulted Lydia, his assistant principal, but then made final decisions on his own.	Frank considered his right to make decisions, and expected teachers to follow them without questions or comments. He did not consult or involve anybody.
Including Teachers' Voice	Teachers were invited to provide suggestions and comments but due to negative culture and their lack of insight and exclusion from decision making, they tend to complain and blame the principal for every problem. Lydia and the team gave teachers voice while also expressing their authentic concern about the school's future; teachers felt they were sincere, the moment was right – they were willing to reveal their vulnerability (stop pretending everything was great, admitting they had problems) – led to development of relational trust and faculty's engagement with learning process.	Teachers were not used to having voice. Expected to be told what they should do. Because Tatiana failed to take into consideration the strong effect of existing hierarchical structure on the climate and relationships, her attempts to engage teachers in an open conversation about the school's future failed.

As Table 21 summarizes, the former principals at both schools did not seem to be prepared to let go of their positional power – although from different reasons – and thus prevented the school development teams to define and negotiate their roles and responsibilities as leadership, and frame redesigned work as important for teachers. Operating through different mental models, the former principals of Linden High and Little Creek, however, differed in how they impacted the shaping of redesigned work at their schools. While Frank created a culture of dependency through preserving the hierarchical, one-way power relationships, which prevented the school development team to define their work as leadership or to envision putting their leadership knowledge and skills they were acquiring in the NEI's PDP into practice, Larry supported leadership capacity building in the school development team members, and empowered Lydia to become the team leader. While he was not able to share his leadership responsibilities with the team, his positive and supportive attitude paved the way for later formulation of leadership as a collectively performed decision-making process, and for defining new job characteristics as important for better school's future.

Departmental Structure Based on Discipline Specialization

Table 22. Departmental Structure

	Linden Tree High School	**Little Creek High School**
Formal Leaders' Role in Weakening Departmental Structure	While inviting department chairs of key subjects to volunteer for leadership team membership, Larry then did not seem to understand and use leadership potential of the team yet allowed members to take actions by not positioning himself above them as their leader. Lydia used her formal power to support the team members'	Frank assigned department chairs on the school development team but kept his decision making power. Did not frame the role of new team as important – according to him, they were coordinators of reform, following NEI's instructions. Lack of stability in team membership prevented development of new collegial relations inside the team (outside of department boundaries).

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	leadership capacity building, and by consulting them in her plans about the school's future. When she became principal, she continued to rely on their input and support. Team members identified with their new leadership role, felt empowered, their decision-making power had a wider range than before, put their new role over their department loyalty. Satisfaction in new role also came from development of collegial relations in the team, meaningful discourse, mutual learning, trust, and their shared desire and determination to improve the school.	
Role of New Groupings in Weakening Departmental Structure	While teachers still demonstrated strong departmental loyalty, their new cross-departmental identity that they were developing in action research groups, and in the school development team, were also growing, making their departmental identities weaker.	Because action research groups were formed as a formality, teachers did not find them meaningful, could not identify with the new groups, felt safer in their departments where they had long-standing relationships, and in which they felt autonomous. Teachers kept their department identities because they could not form their new identities in cross-departmental teams. The nature of work they had to perform in school development team – write reports and nag people to produce evidence of reform work – devalued their new role on the team, could not define it as leadership.

Table 22 indicates that both schools created new teams – first the school

development team, followed by action research teams, and interdisciplinary groupings

of teachers – that connected teachers across disciplines. The NEI required such cross-

disciplinary groupings to potentially weaken the isolated, impermeable social and

professional networks based on subject specialization that were strongly present in

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both schools. By encouraging teachers' interaction across discipline and grade-level boundaries in the new teams, they expected that collective sense making of the reform would be easier.

Although both schools followed the same recommendations and training that the NEI provided, they differed in how they formed the new groupings, and in how those new groupings built their new identities. While Larry applied a democratic procedure for the selection of the school team members, Frank used favoritism, which planted the seeds for later problematic relationships among Little Creek faculty. Larry positioned himself as a member in the school development team, rather than using his formal positional power to assume leadership of the team, thus allowing Lydia and the team members to view themselves as potential leaders of change in the school, which in turn increased their engagement in the learning process, and contributed to their building of collegial relations. The team members that built a strong leadership identity over time confirmed in the interview that they perceived their new roles as superior to their previous department chair positions.

By contrast, Frank seemed to abuse his formal power by proclaiming himself the leader of the team, thus extending hierarchical relations into the team, which seemed to discourage the development of trusting and collegial relationships in the team. Since they had to perform bureaucratic work for the NEI, which the resistant faculty refused to engage in, the new team members attributed less value to their work in the team than to their previous chairing of departments. They did not express feeling advantaged in their new positions, which was probably the reason why most of the original team members stepped down and re-assumed their previous department chair roles. Lack of stability in team membership and lack of value attributed to the

new job characteristics, were among the main reasons why departmental structure

based on discipline specialization remained strong at Little Creek.

Schedules, Routines, and External Requirements

Table 23.   Schedules, Routines, and External Requirements

	Linden Tree High School	**Little Creek High School**
Discord Between Existing School Structures and Redesigned Work	Existing school structures: separate schedules, teacher isolation in classrooms, private nature of their work, 45-minute class periods, and short breaks between them worked against teacher collaboration and interdisciplinary planned units – the reform did not fit existing schedules and routines so teachers initially rejected it. External requirement for 'matura' exam reinforced the existent subject oriented practice behind closed door, and thus worked against cross-disciplinary collaboration as a form of work redesign.	The same.
Overcoming the Discord	Extensive external support combined with internal assurance (from Lydia and the team) that redesigned work was valuable for students, and mutual encouragement in newly formed professional relationships with colleagues – teachers able to break with existing routines, and put student benefit above their concern for high achievement results. Reform work formulated as transformation of existent practice of teaching and working with each other.	Private character of work – did not change. Climate did not allow articulating concerns regarding discord between external requirements ('matura'), combined with internal insistence on maintaining high achievement results, and reform initiative, which made teachers cautious in their approach to reform work. In spite of extensive external support, lacking internal value, reform work formulated as addition to the existent work and as such perceived as a burden.

As Table 23 indicates, the existent well-established schedules and routines,

and the external final exam ('matura') that had a powerful influence on students'

academic trajectories, initially presented barriers to the perception of reform work as meaningful in both schools. But while Linden High's school development team managed to break their teachers' deep- seated habits of assigning blame for mediocre results to others or to the system by using assertiveness that derived from their deep understanding of the purpose and benefit of the reform for the school, Little Creek remained entrenched in their old ways of functioning. By reinforcing the importance of the 'matura' results, the former and the current principal at Little Creek stressed the values that were not in tune with the reform spirit, and thus perpetuated the use of routine way of work. By failing to define the new job characteristics as feasible in the given situation or in any way important for the school's future, they directed teachers into performing redesigned work as an addition to their existent practice, which ultimately dampened their initial enthusiasm for change.

National Curriculum

Table 24. Curriculum

	Linden Tree High School	**Little Creek High School**
Understanding Curriculum	Upon entering the NEI's project – teachers perceived national subject-based curriculum as prescriptive and aligned with content-driven 'matura' exam. Feeling limited in their professional autonomy, they shifted the blame for low-achievement to students' lack of ability and learning habits, thus maintain the status quo in their work. Redesigned work that encouraged collaborative inquiry with colleagues across disciplines– felt as irrelevant.	Little Creek shared understanding of curriculum in a prescriptive way with Linden Tree but unlike Linden Tree, Little Creek belonged to the highest performing schools in the country according to their achievement results on the 'matura', which gave recognition to this rural high school. Principal presented curriculum as a 'straitjacket' but since in tune with 'matura', he required strict compliance to curriculum requirements (content coverage) from teachers. For him student benefit and success on 'matura' were one and the same. Required cross-disciplinary collaborative inquiry for the sake of

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		complying with the NEI's requirements while not perceiving it as important for the school's future.
Internal Processes En/dis/abling Defining Curriculum as a Barrier to Work Redesign	Lydia and team – saw beyond compliance with tradition for the benefit of students – after creating culture of open dialogue, collaboration, and trust – challenged current teachers' perceptions, cognitive conflict led to change in mental models, teachers felt safe to share experience about redesigned work, started to rely on their own professional judgment. Giving teachers more professional confidence and autonomy allowed them to perceive curriculum as less prescriptive, came to a conclusion it could be better covered by applying cross-curricular connections, which made redesigned work – more collaboration across subjects – meaningful for faculty.	Tensions between teachers' shared inner desire to teach better vs. coaching for 'matura' could not be resolved –conflict remained unresolved because the culture did not support dialogue and collaboration. Teachers appeared to feel they did not have power to shape instruction beyond prescriptive curriculum. The climate did not provide safety for teachers to be vulnerable to try new instructional approaches. Principal and team – did not challenge the faculty, rather held them back by constant awareness raising that 'matura' was number one priority. Teachers felt administration did not trust their professional judgment. They also did not trust administrators to support their putting reform work into practice. Concerned that if achievement results dropped, parents would blame them (no buffer between teachers and parents). Prescriptiveness prevailed, making redesigned work an addition to existing practice, which was expected to remain unchanged – leading to work overload.

As indicated by Table 24, both faculties initially perceived the national

curriculum as prescriptive, and as limiting their ability to change instruction and their

old way of functioning. Because the curriculum and 'matura' were both subject-

based, teachers at both schools initially perceived collaborative, cross-departmental

inquiry, promoted by the reform, as irrelevant under current conditions, although they

mostly agreed that cross-curricular connections could serve their students' needs

better. By perceiving the reform work as out of tune with their given situation, teachers at both schools initially made it difficult for the school development team members to frame their new role as change agents. While sharing the same initial mistrust toward redesigned work, Little Creek teachers nevertheless demonstrated a stronger internal desire for change than Linden Tree teachers, although they already had high achievement results. But because administrative support to any kind of change was lacking at Little Creek, teachers were cautious about putting their newly acquired knowledge into practice, and used it only as an occasional enrichment. Linden Tree school development team, on the other hand, managed to instill deep desire for serving their students' needs better in previously resistant faculty by assertively spreading trust in the reform ideas, which helped shift teachers' blaming attitude toward deeper awareness of moral purpose of education. By supporting personal and interpersonal capacity development in original ways, Linden Tree school development team empowered teachers and their sense of professional competence, which had previously been undermined because of dropping achievement results. With gradual development of trust in their professional judgment, and with shifting their thinking toward putting their students' needs first, teachers started to perceive the curriculum as less prescriptive, which enabled them to rely on their professional judgment when planning instructional change. After visualizing their school's future and reaching a consensus about the direction of change, they realized that the reform can help them reach their goals to improve instruction and in turn establish their school's reputation in the community, which helped them see its relevance for their own purpose.

Conclusions

When the NEI initiated the reform processes, the existing organizational structures at both schools initially presented a barrier to the formulation of redesigned work as significant for the school. In the process of each school's engagement in the NEI's reform initiative, some important internal processes and attitudes surfaced that likely eased the formulation of the new job characteristics as important at Linden Tree, and worked against general perception of reform work as significant at Little Creek. (1) While the hierarchical division of labor initially remained unchanged at both schools, it soon became clear that the former principals operated from different mental models, which had consequences for how their respective faculties perceived work redesign. Although Larry of Linden Tree did not share his leadership responsibility with teachers, he supported their leadership capacity building and buffered them from outside pressures, thus providing opportunities for gradual positional and work redesign. By contrast, Frank of Little Creek perceived leadership capacity building in the school development team as a threat to his formal role, and used his positional power to keep rigid hierarchical system and centralized decision making in the school and within the team, thus disabling the formulation of leadership as a shared decision-making process. (2) Similarly, while Larry set the stage for weakening the departmental structure by communicating his expectation that the teachers would work together in new, cross-discipline groupings that the NEI encouraged, with a clear purpose of improving instruction school-wide, Frank failed to do so because his expectation was that the teachers would work together to implement the NEI's requirements while keeping their practice unchanged. Consequently, Little Creek teachers did not perceive new groupings as meaningful. (3) As Larry's successor, Lydia modeled participatory leadership, thus indicating to the faculty its significance. She played a key role in creating more flexible

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organizational structures that supported teachers' voice, and increased their willingness to identify problematic teaching practice, and then come up with alternatives. By contrast, the formal leaders at Little Creek attributed value to centralized authority by stressing the importance of following externally prescribed rules and regulations, and demonstrated a tendency to create certainty through maintaining the status quo. (4) Having no doubts about the benefits of the reform work for the students, Lydia and her team could offer psychological safety to the teachers, enabling them to face the uncertainty of change by instilling a common belief in them that without changing instruction, teachers could not fulfill the moral purpose of their work. The formal leaders at Little Creek constrained teachers' collective formulation of work redesign as important for the school by maintaining a cultural context that discouraged educative exchanges among them, which increased their anxiety over a mismatch between external requirements and the reform initiative, and decreased their trust in their own professional judgment.

Moderators

Organizational Structures and Implementation of Redesigned Work

To answer my fifth and last research question: *How have the existing and new organizational structures moderated the ways principals and teachers undertook redesigned work,* I analyzed the same existing structures as in the antecedent section, i.e., the hierarchical division of labor, departmental structure based on discipline specialization, schedules, routines, and external requirements, and the national curriculum, and the new structures, such as the school development team and action research teams, across the two schools to draw conclusions about their moderating effect on the implementation and development of work redesign. I based my conclusions on the analysis of the moderating effect of the existing and new structures

across the two schools on the direction and strength of the reform implementation and its development, visible in characteristics of work redesign.

Hierarchical Division of Labor

Table 25. Hierarchy

	Linden Tree High School	**Little Creek High School**
Understanding Decision Making	Before taking over the principal position, Lydia practiced decentralized decision making in the team, made possible due to culture of collaboration and trust they developed within the team. As the new principal, she initially carried on the same hierarchical model as her predecessor seemingly because of her initial insecurity and fear about faculty's reactions (felt they were judging her every action, so she wanted to create impression of being secure in decision making). But her changed mental model of leadership – superiority of distributed over solo – she developed over two years soon took over –continued to seek input from team members in decisions that were previously reserved for principal alone. Established and promoted team as leadership body in front of faculty, reacted on their proposals, entrusted them with leadership tasks – one team member whose strong area was accuracy in work with documentation monitored teachers' required documentation keeping, another took on internal professional development. Lydia also viually demonstrated flattening of hierarchy by setting up a round table in her office for team meetings – planned or ad hoc – that took place before decisions related	While the new structure of school development team was intended for flattening the hierarchy, Frank carried hierarchical division into the team (nominated himself leader of team), disabling team members to put their new leadership knowledge and skills into practice. As Frank's successor, Boris delegated the instructional decisions to Tatiana but not as a distributed leadership strategy, but rather because he considered himself inferior in instructional matters as a previous vocational subject teacher. But expected Tatiana had to report to him before putting decisions in place.

Teachers on the school development team and the rest of the faculty revealed keeping the perception that decision making was a one-person's (formal leaders') and not distributed responsibility. |

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	to the work with faculty in fulfilling the school's vision and goals.	
Alignment of Changed Division of Labor with Beliefs and Norms	Lydia set up expectation for teachers on the team to be leaders by expecting from them to contribute to decision making about the approach to work with faculty, reform implementation, timing, activities, etc. Teachers reported significance of new work – co-creating school's future. Crafting common vision and setting common goals as faculty transformed the norm of one-leader decision making and responsibility in school. Helped focus the faculty's effort. By holding each teacher accountable for contributing to work of reform, which was aligned with newly defined school goals, the team broadened responsibility for change to include each faculty member. Structural change aligned with new norms of collegiality and professionalism –expectation for teachers to be leaders broadened outside of the school development team members. From initial change agents and leaders of reform, school development team members became creators of opportunities for teachers to become leaders of change.	School development team members expected to contribute to administrative work, such as writing and collecting reports but not to make decisions about the direction of school. Teachers on team did not report considering themselves leaders. Tatiana perceived herself as leader of instructional change, she nevertheless considered Boris to be on top of hierarchy – e.g., complained that teachers do not respect him and that they should because of his formal position. She revealed presenting all instructional decisions to him first before implementing them. Her perception of hierarchical division of labor remained unchanged. Unchanged hierarchical structure and a culture that did not encourage participative decision making constrained broader distribution of leadership – structural change proposed by NEI did not seem meaningful since it did not fit people's perceptions, values, belief systems and behavioral patterns. No common vision – no alignment with reform goals - teachers pushed into change process for the sake of producing desired results for the NEI's review while not really expected to change their work (felt as lack of respect for their professionalism).

Table 25 indicates that while the existing hierarchical division of labor framed daily action in each school, its effect on the development of work redesign and its outcomes differed between the two schools. At Linden Tree, the former principal did not enforce hierarchy within the school development team although at the school level

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he retained his full decision-making power, which empowered Lydia to use a shared model of leadership within the team. Although she initially carried on the same hierarchical model of leading school as her predecessor when she became principal, she soon demonstrated her changed mental model toward valuing collaborative over individual decision making, which led her to extend discretion for the performance of leadership tasks also at the school level to the team members. In addition, she started to promote the same multi-directional communication and honest exchange of information as in the team also in the staff room. With the growing culture of collegiality, the faculty started to show increasing readiness to take responsibility and ownership of the reform, which ultimately led to flattening of the hierarchy, and eased the translation of school goals into practice.

Contrary to the attitudes and actions of the formal leaders at Linden Tree with which they weakened the hierarchical organizational structure, and encouraged a focused implementation of redesigned work, the former principal of Little Creek kept hierarchical, one-way power relationships within the school development team and in the school that disempowered teacher leadership and intensified a general culture of dependency. By enforcing direct implementation of the reform requirements without connecting them to the school's own vision of progress, they failed to build the faculty's commitment to change, and encouraged their perception of work redesign as a huge extra teaching load that did not produce any short-term benefits. The formal leaders put teachers under constant time pressure to produce results for the NEI's review because of their competitive mindset, and rather enforced their own decisions than trying to involve the faculty in decision making about their work to save time, with which they reinforced teachers' alienation from reform. Not only the hierarchy but also the culture and the norms of school that did not support teachers'

participation in decision making, were probably the reason why work redesign was

implemented for the sake of the form, and as such could not weaken the existing

hierarchy.

Departmental Structure Based on Discipline Specialization

Table 26. Departmental Structure

	Linden Tree High School	Little Creek High School
(Im)Permeability of Department Boundaries	Departmental identity did not disappear but teachers also formed new identities in cross-departmental groupings that they perceived as meaningful, which increased department permeability. School leadership team brought together department chairs of different subjects – increased permeability of department boundaries due to inner coherence – mutual commitment to school improvement goals, and trusting relationships in the team. Coherent cultural orientation. Vision building process in which the faculty aligned school goals with reform goals raised general awareness of work redesign as necessary for ensuring better school future. Lydia acted as a catalyst, raised teachers' awareness of significance of collaborative effort– private nature of teachers' work not valued. Allocated time for cross-disciplinary team meetings during workday. Teachers demonstrated understanding of work redesign as new way of	Because teachers did not perceive the work in new cross-departmental groupings as meaningful –new groupings implemented without change in culture, which constrained their interactions, the department boundaries remained impermeable. School leadership team consisted of different subject department chairs yet could not weaken department boundaries because the members were not empowered as leaders, and because they could not develop their team identity due to lack of coherence and stability in membership. Those teachers that believed in change, and volunteered to work in cross-disciplinary projects, were disabled in their efforts because norms of collegiality were not in place. Although administrators communicated necessity of school's focused reform effort, teachers' work in new groupings supported only in theory – both principals made it clear to teachers that their primary responsibility was carrying on high achievement results, and implied that in changing instruction they had to play safe.

operation, and not as a short-term change. The culture of collegiality that supported inquiry based change made collaboration in cross-departmental groupings meaningful. The school goals regarding instructional improvement took precedence over external requirements, cross-disciplinary teacher collaboration perceived as benefitting students. New structures increased the permeability of departmental boundaries because they were linked with the developing school culture that supported inquiry based change.	Since 'matura' and syllabi were subject oriented – administration implied that in given situation, cross-disciplinary teaching was not practical. Teachers' personal goals not aligned with school goals, and school goals (never explicated) not aligned with reform goals. Subject departments remained the primary unit. Increasingly more interest for in-class issues than for the areas related to school because school issues perceived as being beyond teachers' influence.

As Table 26 summarizes, teachers in both schools had strong subject specific identities when the schools entered the NEI's project, which was visible in alienated relations among teachers of different subjects, and in their narrow discipline interest. While at Linden High teachers eventually formed new identities in the newly established cross-departmental groupings that weakened department separation, and in turn eased the creation of a shared vision, at Little Creek, department boundaries remained impermeable. Unlike Linden High, where the leadership team formed new groupings as part of their internal plan to collaboratively improve instruction so as to attract higher student enrolment, Little Creek formed new groupings under the pressures of reform without linking them to their own development plan or explicating their real intention to the teachers. Cross-disciplinary groups, for instance, that depend on relationships were imposed without prior resolving of problematic relationships among the faculty, which led to a decreased significance that teachers

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attached to the cross-departmental group work. Since teachers' collective processing of the meaning of the new structures and of the reform as the whole was not supported, teachers' anxiety over their hugely expanded roles increased. Structural change alone that was implemented without a culture that would support joint action, and without a clear sense of purpose, was thus futile, leading to teachers' perception of the time set aside for their cross-departmental collaboration as a waste. While probably possessing the necessary skills for the performance of work redesign,– Little Creek faculty made an impression of being highly conscientious, seeking opportunities for learning how to perform more challenging, meaningful, and responsible work throughout the school's participation in the NEI's project – Little Creek teachers kept their practice unchanged. Adding the reform work to their usual way of work made them so overwhelmed that most of them ultimately refused to collaborate across departments, particularly because such collaboration was often forced from above, thus undermining their desire to initiate their own joint projects. Although cross-departmental collaboration did not spread beyond a few enthusiastic teachers, the administration did not seem to feel the need to promote it more vigorously and to require broader involvement. Even more, by letting the teachers who refused to take part in the reform to get away with no additional work, they allowed uneven distribution of work. As a result, the teachers who were initially ready to take risks lost their motivation and belief that the school-wide change was possible, and re-focused on their subjects. While some individual teachers continued to seek collaboration with their friendly colleagues, those individual efforts seemed to be driven more by resistance to their formal leaders than real desire to change.

School Development Team

Table 27. School Development Team

	Linden Tree High School	**Little Creek High School**
Situating SDT in Existing School System	The school development team members were not able to mobilize and use their new knowledge in the first two years of the school's collaboration in the NEI's project due to constraining effect of existing political and cultural dynamics (hierarchy intertwined with toxic culture). Nevertheless, the team was unwilling to allow negative school culture in which they were situated distract them from their purpose of building their capacity to improve their school. Strong bonding due to stability and common purpose, shared passion to improve school. The opportunity to enact their leadership through their action research projects enabled them to prove their expertise, which represented a source of their power – teachers entrusted them with leadership. Faculty's validation of their leadership and their internal team cohesiveness empowered them to influence instructional change and shape a vision for the school.	Frank's position of power and centrality over all aspects of school functioning throughout the school's participation in the NEI's reform initiative constrained the team's ability to perceive themselves as leaders and exert their leadership for change in the school. Hierarchical relationships carried into the team –equitable relationships inside the team impossible, members not mutually supportive. Due to lack of stability in membership, new members deprived of continuity of on-going NEI's training. Lack of stability disabled internal bonding. Not all team members were able to derive power through expert leading of action research teams. Lack of internal cohesiveness, competitive internal dynamics and no recognition from teachers of their expert power disempowered the team to deal with conflicting situations in the staff room effectively.
Constructing Leadership Identity	Stable membership, compatibility of team members, and on-going training that provided significant opportunities for principal-teacher collaboration and sharing of ideas helped built strong internal cohesion and relational trust. In spite of Larry's gradual alienation (he was a member of the team from the start), the team developed a sense of internal power because of Lydia's strong leadership capacity and encouragement she provided to team members, and because of equitable relationships they developed in the team.	Lack of stability in membership disabled development of trusting relationships within the team. Principal-teacher collaboration impossible due to hierarchical mindset of all involved. While Tatiana soon took over the leadership of the team, she did not take time for building internal coherence, but engaged in competing with other pilot schools. The team lost a sense of purpose and dissipated their energy for procedural issues instead of focusing on their student learning, and improvement of instruction.

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	Once Lydia became principal, the team developed a strong identity in school that **facilitated work redesign with all its benefits: eased cross-departmental communication, based decision-making on teacher expertise** – because team members were closer to the classroom than Lydia, they could provide her with better insight into what was going on, **enabled decision making based on a better pool of information; kept the focus on student learning and improvement of instructional quality**. Over time, they facilitated the same dynamic within school as in their team – by giving teachers voice, facilitating discussions, supporting their professional growth, sharing ideas, clarifying problems and synthesizing viewpoints, they created a trusting environment in which the faculty developed into a closely-knit professional community.	Teachers identified the team as 'those who have to do what we don't want to' – their work was devalued. Team members did not consider themselves leaders. The way the school development team members engaged with each other and their faculty to construct their identity inhibited implementation and development of redesigned work.
Assuming Different Roles	The team kept redefining their role over the period of three years – from project coordinators to staff developers and problem-solvers, they ultimately developed into creators of opportunities for others to lead. Inside the team, their roles were compatible – Lydia's relinquishing of control empowered the team members for different aspects of leadership, producing the whole that was more than individual parts.	The team did not exceed their initial role of project coordinators. While they tried to delegate project leadership to teachers, the faculty refused to take opportunities for leadership because in the mean time, the reform work lost meaning for them, and the professional culture deteriorated to the point that collegial relationships across the school became impossible. Inside the team, Tatiana kept her control and delegated tasks to team members who did not view themselves as leaders but rather as Tatiana's "helpers".

As indicated in Table 27, the school development teams differed in how they situated themselves in the existing organizational structures in their respective schools, built their new identities, and used their newly built leadership capacity to take actions. While the teams at both schools initially experienced the existing hierarchy as having a constraining effect on their leadership role, their team leaders used different strategies that either strengthened work redesign through weakening of the hierarchy, or weakened work redesign by retaining strong hierarchical structure. Although Lydia and her team were unable to practice leadership and exert influence on the faculty while Larry was principal, he nevertheless enabled the team to build their leadership capacity and keep their process orientation by avoiding to exert pressure on them for immediate results. Lydia's process orientation was revealed in her on-going encouragement and support to the team's internal coherence, trust and capacity building over the first two years in the reform, and was the key to the successful implementation of distributed leadership at Linden High later on. Her actions and attitude originated from her firm belief in the superiority of distributed over solo leadership, which she demonstrated by using her formal power to promote the school development team's leadership identity, rather than using it for exerting control over the team members.

By contrast, Tatiana as the team leader at Little Creek revealed to be completely result oriented – rather than supporting the existing team members' capacity building, and develop trusting relationships, she let member after member leave the team, and then sought new team members with the expectation that they would immediately contribute to the team's success. The same result orientation was visible in the former and the new principal. Being under stress of time (and probably not trusting the team members' leadership ability), Tatiana attempted to perform the

leadership actions for which the NEI trained the team on her own, which further

undermined the team's leadership potential. Lack of support and frequent changes in

membership prevented the team members to build their internal coherence and

collective leadership capacity, which is probably why they lacked internal strength

and stamina to weaken the principal's absolute power and control.

Action Research Teams

Table 28. Action Research (AR)Teams

	Linden Tree High School	**Little Creek High School**
AR's Intended vs. Actual Effect	Faithfull application of AR strategy of work established new patterns of interaction in school, and helped build school-wide culture of inquiry, and common language to discuss change. The structure of action research became a dynamic and coherent framework for daily action – changed teachers' attitude from problem fixers to problem solvers (using data from at least three sources to understand problems; discuss solutions with colleagues, consult theory and their coach to make informed decisions). AR enabled relationship building across faculty, and collaborative learning and problem solving as part of the faculty's mutual school improvement efforts. Meetings of school development team members, who acted as leaders of AR teams, served exchange of experience from their respective AR teams and school-level decision making. Sharing AR process and results became also regular part of faculty meetings, thus situating classroom-based research within school-level	Overwhelmed by pressure to accomplish what other pilot schools seemed to be accomplishing through AR, the school development team formed AR groupings, intended for development of cross-departmental collaboration, sporadically or based on friendship, instead of following the AR strategy to put together teachers according to the same identified instructional problem. Used a shortcut because they believed it would save them time – did not realize the cost of surface implementation of AR. Treated AR as a routine activity to satisfy the NEI's requirements. AR groups to which teachers were assigned sporadically stopped meeting soon after they started – although time was assigned to permit the meetings of new action research groups, the increasingly negative culture did not support collaboration. AR did not change teachers' mindset. Did not become a framework for action. Only two AR teams (one led by Tatiana and another by the only other stable team member who was in the team from the start) produced meaningful instructional results. The teams that functioned formed based on friendship – failed to reach

	inquiry. Framed the faculty's attitude toward external initiatives – became more critical consumers (knew exactly what they wanted), refused to accept initiatives and training that were not meaningful for their work.	the overarching aim of AR, which was building relationships across faculty, building climate of collegiality, and broadening responsibility for sharing expertise and problem solve to improve instruction school-wide.
	AR strategy of work used also after the NEI's project ended.	AR structure remained another "*additional work*", did not seem to make profound effect on teachers' work and on their relationships – was dropped before the NEI's project ended.
	Cross departmental collaboration in school development team and action research teams strengthened broader involvement in the reform.	

As Table 28 indicates, Linden Tree put an on-going effort into developing understanding of the purpose of action research, and then into using it as a strategy for a fundamental change in the way the school functioned, based on their collective belief that by engaging in inquiry process collaboratively, they would improve teaching and learning, and thus create a better future for the school. Linden Tree demonstrated their understanding of the purpose of action research team work by forming action research teams as intended – by giving teachers time to identify didactic problems that really concerned them, and then form teams around the problem, common to the group, which made their research work meaningful. By contrast, Little Creek school development team members invited their friends on the action research teams that they led, expecting that this would save them time and ease their production of fast results with which they wanted to impress the NEI.

Prompted by the NEI, Linden High school development team situated classroom-based research within school-level inquiry by establishing a routine to share action research results at their team meetings and then also at the faculty

meetings, which further bonded teachers together. Similar attempts at Little Creek to

share action research practice had a completely different effect due to negative

relationships within the team and negative climate in the staff room – teachers

reported perceiving the colleagues who were willing to share their experience as

show-offs. Ultimately, while Linden High demonstrated internalizing the principles of

action research inquiry, which manifested itself in their transition from blaming others

for their instructional problems and dropping achievement results, to using inquiry as

a stance, Little Creek revealed using action research as a required but temporal routine

by stopping to use it even before the NEI's project ended.

Schedules, Routines, and External Requirements

Table 29. Schedules, Routines and External Requirements

	Linden Tree High School	**Little Creek High School**
Purpose of Changing Extent Schedules and Routines	Extent schedules and routines (short subject slots, teacher isolation, short breaks, no habit of collaborative planning, subject and teacher autonomy) worked against implementation of work redesign. First two years – no changes in spite of changed structures. Yet once *work redesign was perceived as the new way of functioning in the direction that they collaboratively determined,* changing the school schedule and routine way of functioning started serving for embedding the reform work and inquiry process into structure and culture of the school. Adaptations and changes gained meaning because they were used as opportunities for clarification of problems, data sharing, educative exchanges about instructional matters – teachers felt the need to participate,	The same extent schedules and routines as at Linden Tree. The administrators viewed reform as opportunity for on-site learning, perceived as a series of techniques that could be acquired with practice, and put into use when the right time come*s*. Since time was not right (because 'matura' and curriculum remained the same), the work of reform added to the existing practice. *Work redesign was viewed as a compliant exercise that may become handy when the right time presents itself.* In spite of changing extent schedules and routines to accommodate various team meetings – real dialogue not possible, teachers on the receiving end, getting top-down directives about external requirements – made frequent meetings meaningless for them, negative culture drained their energy.

	their voice was heard. Found meetings empowering, increasing their sense of individual and collective efficacy.

Changes to extent schedule followed commonly agreed purpose. For instance, they introduced block scheduling to accommodate interdisciplinary approach to teaching and to activate students. Wanted to create time for both – content coverage for 'matura' and development of higher order skills they agreed students would need for life. | Changes to extent schedule – e.g. block scheduling – used as exceptions to their "normal" practice in the form of a project week in which students were more active. They used this week as evidence for the NEI's review. Teachers reported having more work after project weeks ended because they had to cover more content since when students were active – and teachers did not have opportunity to lecture – they were not sure it was covered. |
| *Attitude Toward External Requirements* | Lydia and the team – exhibited *critical attitude toward external requirements* (NEI's reform initiative, 'matura'), following the direction they set for themselves and *subordinating external requirements to their own agenda.*

First they clarified their understanding of external requirements in their team, then engaged the faculty in identifying their own needs, and linked them to goals of reform.

Encouraged teachers' ideas, used them and linking them to the reform, instead of responding to external proposals with direct application – *developed a sense of ownership of reform.* | Both principals and the school development team – exhibited *compliant attitude toward external requirements.* Administrators preoccupied with following external requirements directly, without addressing their teachers and their school's needs – causing teachers' frustration and their feelings the administration 'sold' them. Emphasized documentation and written procedures – devalued the content of reform for teachers, turned it into formality rather than deep instructional change. *The reform was perceived as being done to the teachers, instead of the teachers doing the reform.* Increased strain and burnout since added to the extent workload as practice without collective added value. |

Table 29 indicates that while both schools perceived the existing schedules and routines as structural barriers to task distribution, they differed in their understanding of the changes to the existing schedules and routines that they implemented as prompted by the NEI, which was visible in the meaning they attached

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to the available time, provided by those changes, and in how effectively they used it. Linden High faculty engaged in new tasks and used additional time with the purpose of building their collective ability for instructional improvement. Because they built a positive collaborative culture, and because they were continuously reminded of the big picture of change, they used the time available to fully engage with colleagues, which in turn gave them more energy to persist in spite of hard work. By contrast, the time produced by changed schedules and routines served for meetings with top-down directives from the formal leaders at Little Creek with the explanation that a more democratic approach is ineffective because teachers tend to complain a lot. Teachers, on the other hand, perceived countless meetings that did not serve any concrete purpose as a waste of their time. When they got voice, they blamed the administration for their work overload, which suggests that they considered decision-making as being beyond their reach. While they individually expressed their belief that the instructional change was beneficial for students, they also assumed a passive attitude by stating that they could not implement a cross-disciplinary approach until the administration improved the relationships and changed the toxic culture that prevented a constructive dialogue. In addition, most of them also waited for the external requirements to change, the same as their formal leaders, before they were willing to transform their practice for fear of lowering their 'matura' achievement results that had made their school recognizable.

Unlike Lydia and the school development team, who exhibited a critical stance toward external requirements by considering their school's and teachers' needs first, and implementing work redesign as a collectively agreed upon, intentional strategy for transformation of their work to create a better future for the school, which increased Linden High faculty's commitment to its implementation, the formal

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leaders at Little Creek demonstrated a compliant attitude toward external

requirements, accepting them as a short-term obligation that was not part of their

internal plan, and enforcing them without taking teachers' concerns and needs into

consideration.

National Curriculum

Table 30. Curriculum

	Linden Tree High School	**Little Creek High School**
Curriculum as Prescription vs. Guideline	Initial stress over necessity to cover subject-oriented curricula that required extensive content coverage, initially produced resistance, i.e., teachers complained about lack of time for inquiry based teaching, collaboration with colleagues, student-centered instruction that the reform encouraged. Lack of time cited as main reason for not becoming involved in the reform.

Lydia's and team's encouragement to put students' needs over external requirements, and ample opportunity for revealing their concerns in open dialogue, helped teachers overcome fears, started to perceive curriculum as guidelines and not prescription, which increased school's ability to implement work redesign and put their new knowledge into practice. | Lack of opportunity to discuss their concerns and negative climate that worsened over the years prevented teachers to overcome initial stress caused by their perceived time shortage to cover the curriculum in case they implemented new knowledge gained in NEI's training.

Their administration's directive to pace and align instruction with 'matura' requirements worked against engagement in innovative practices, encouraged by the NEI's reform.

Formal leaders' inconsistency and vague expectations – when they needed evidence of reform for NEI they pushed those teachers that were willing to implement change, but once they were in the process of change, they exerted control so they would not go too far to threaten 'matura' achievement results. Caused internal division of faculty between motivated teachers and those that ignored reform. Administration advocated change not for students' sake but for the sake of complying with external requirements – teachers were aware that was wrong. |
| *Relationship* | Once the faculty defined their | Lack of common vision and common |

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Between Internal Certainty About Direction of School and Teachers' Understanding of Curriculum	vision and identified a purpose of change, based on shared values and beliefs, their trust in their internal professional judgment of what was best for students led them embrace the idea of integrated curriculum and problem-based learning. To translate those ideas into practice, a team of volunteers engaged in intensive externally-provided training, clear purpose – to pilot and then disseminate their knowledge to the faculty, thus continuing to build school capacity on their own after reform project ended. *The principal and team reported finding a middle path between a conventional and radical approach to instruction, letting teachers decide what they wanted to use because they were sure that they had students' best interest in mind.*	purpose made teachers uncertain about the kind of instruction that would be best for students (*unlike their administrators, teachers demonstrated keeping their focus on students*). While individually, teachers considered curriculum integration beneficial for students, they experienced difficulties in getting their colleagues to collaborate with them. Lack of collegiality across school, and lack of support from principal who openly stated that curriculum integration contradicted prescribed 'matura' requirements prevented teachers to sustain extraordinary effort required for change. Lack of a sense of safety and administrators' trust – prevented putting student benefit above external requirements. Curriculum still understood as prescription for 'matura' success. Fear that 'matura' results would drop, they would be in newspapers. Teachers feeling under constant scrutiny to align their work with 'matura' requirements - inhibited work redesign effect.

As Table 30 summarizes, the two schools developed different understanding of curriculum requirements in the face of the reform, which ultimately strengthened work redesign effect at Linden High, and weakened it at Little Creek. During the initial years of the reform, teachers in both schools felt pressured for time in their efforts to cover the prescribed curriculum, which they believed was necessary for preparing students for 'matura'. Although the understanding of those requirements continued to present a challenge in both schools due to a dissonance between the need for content coverage, required by the curriculum, and teaching for understanding, required by the reform, the culture of collaboration allowed Linden Tree faculty to

take the paradox as an incentive to experiment with innovation and determine its possible benefit for the students. Such attitude was possible because Linden Tree principal and her team kept focusing the faculty's attention on the necessity of their instructional capacity building, thus reinforcing the idea of expert rather than hierarchical authority, and revealing their trust in teachers ' professional judgment and responsibility. With continuous external training and internal capacity building, teachers' reliance on their own professional judgment in how they approached instruction increased, which in turn changed their understanding of the curriculum from a prescription to a guideline. While Lydia and her team were initially ambitious in the scope of change, expecting all the teachers to change their instruction, they nevertheless remained within the limits of achievable given the realities of resources and external demands.

At Little Creek, the principal's and school development team's focus on 'matura' results implied to the teachers the necessity of content delivery, which is why teachers added lessons that involved student inquiry on top of their regular lecture-style teaching, which the faculty considered necessary to cover the prescribed curriculum and prepare students for 'matura'. On the other hand, building the capacity and seeking collaboration with their colleagues for such added work was perceived as something optional by most of the teachers. Those teachers that felt morally obliged to redesign their work for student benefit faced such a huge work overload that they ran out of the mental and temporal space necessary for understanding the curriculum as a guideline and not as a prescription. Because sharing of their convictions was not encouraged, teachers did not feel safe to implement unfamiliar practice beyond occasional experiments, fearing that it may affect the results on the high-stakes 'matura' exam.

Conclusions

The cross-case analysis shows that while both schools had similar existing structures that initially presented a barrier to the development of distributed leadership, they differed in how they understood and with what purpose they adapted the existing structures in the process of implementing changed job characteristics, and how they framed the new structures required by the NEI, which produced a differing effect on the reform implementation in respective schools. Among the reasons why work redesign was successful in one school context (Linden Tree High School) but not in the other (Little Creek High School) were: (1) while Lydia as the new principal at Linden High demonstrated her understanding that changing the context (the structure and culture in which they worked) was necessary for the successful implementation of work redesign, and that it would take time and cumulative effort, none of the formal leaders at Little Creek showed such understanding. Because they did not plan to change anything, they rushed teachers through the reform for the sake of fulfilling the external requirements, expecting that increasingly negative climate would resolve by itself without their intervention; (2) while process orientation at Linden High eased the school development team's capacity building and comfort in initiating new ideas, result orientation and competitive attitude at Little Creek caused the school development team members to feel continuously pressured for time, which led to their more directive and less collegial attitude toward the faculty; (3) at Linden High, the school development team supported teachers in getting new experiences, building new capacities, and getting new insights into the proposed change after getting their commitment to changing context. While not expecting immediate success from them, they enabled them to taste the satisfaction with their short-term accomplishments, thus lowering their stress, building their trust in their abilities, and

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getting them energized for a longer-term implementation of reform. At Little Creek, teachers felt under pressure to produce immediate results, while also feeling preoccupied with coaching students for 'matura', which left them little time for meaningful learning and experimenting with change, and turned reform work into a draining process that increased their stress and lowered their motivation for redesigned work implementation; (4) while at Linden High, the school development team created a sense of security among teachers by enabling them to look for solutions to the instructional problems of their interest in small cross-departmental, action research groupings without requiring immediate success but holding them accountable for their work, at Little Creek, the new groupings were implemented under time pressure, without understanding the purpose of action research but with the expectation that they will produce immediate results for the NEI's review. Consequently, teachers lacked time for developing trusting relationships and a sense of security for risk taking; (6) successful cross-departmental groupings at Linden High that led to improved communication with colleagues across departments, and increased collegiality among teachers, weakened previous department isolation, and thus eased the implementation of work redesign. By contrast, leaving it up to the teachers to decide if they wanted to participate, the reform work was unevenly distributed among Little Creek faculty, which pushed teachers further apart, making the faculty even more balkanized by department than before the reform; (7) while at Linden High, changes to the school schedule and routine way of functioning were introduced with the purpose of embedding the reform work and inquiry process into the structure and culture of the school to realize the school's common vision and goals, which gave teachers a sense of purpose and built their commitment to change, at Little Creek, similar changes were introduced without connecting them to the

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school's purpose, which caused teachers to perceive the reform as being done to them instead of feeling that they were in charge of the reform; (8) while Linden High principal and her team members exhibited a critical attitude toward the external requirements, and a vigilant stance to protect the culture they had created, which strengthened a sense of internal security and eased the implementation of work redesign, Little Creek formal leaders demonstrated a compliant attitude. They verbally required the change that was proposed from the outside while implying that they did not really believe in it, and completely losing their focus on what was best for the students, which caused doubts in the faculty about their integrity and discouraged their risk-taking; (9) while in both schools teachers initially perceived the curriculum as prescriptive and in dissonance with the reform initiative, the value that they ascribed to expert rather than to hierarchical authority, and the administration's trust in teachers ' professional judgment and responsibility allowed Linden High faculty to take the paradox as an incentive to experiment with innovation and determine its possible benefit for the students. The principal's support to teacher's capacity building as a means of continuous school progress, and her trust in their professional judgment, empowered them to view the curriculum as a guideline rather than prescription. By contrast, lack of administrative support to teacher inquiry and collaboration at Little Creek, and their lack of trust in teachers' professional judgment fostered a dependent attitude in the faculty, causing them to ultimately resort to their routine way of teaching to cover the content, although they had doubts that such practice was in the best interest of their students.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

    This study was designed to examine the development and implementation of distributed leadership in high schools in Slovenia using Mayrowetz et al.'s *Distributed Leadership as Work Redesign Model* (2007) as the framework. The purpose was to contribute to the knowledge of how leadership can be deliberately distributed through job redesign, determine what facilitates (or constrains) the translation of redesigned work into learning opportunities, identify how individuals and groups make sense of work, and gain an understanding of how these transition mechanisms can shape leadership practice and performance. The main variable examined was organizational structures and their antecedent and moderating role in the formulation and implementation of distributed leadership practice.

    The research questions that guided this study were:

1. What are the characteristics of the national initiative design, and to what extent do they reflect Mayrowetz et al's conceptualization of redesigned work under distributed leadership reform?

2. How did the performance of leadership functions evolve in the schools over the course of their engagement in work redesign?

3. How has the redesigned work influenced the transition mechanisms for the development of distributed leadership: the meaning that the principal and teachers make of their work, their motivation for work, and their use of learning opportunities to improve their knowledge and skills?

4. How have the existing organizational structures shaped how the school leadership teams in conjunction with the National Education Institute formulated the redesigned work in their schools?

5. How have the existing and new organizational structures moderated the ways principals and teachers undertook redesigned work?

This study's findings support the limited prior research that examined the development of distributed leadership practice in schools, notably, the importance of substantial preparation experience, embedded in the fabric and culture of school, and on-going support of an external coach or expert (Copland, 2003), the principal's successful performance of his/her new role to ensure internal coherence and stability while promoting change (Murphy, et al., 2009), and the challenges of broadening leadership responsibility and enlarging jobs and roles for carrying out different (and not just the existing) leadership functions in a meaningful way (Copland; Smylie, et al., 2007). Employing the analytical model (Mayrowetz, et al., 2007) to frame the exploration of distributed leadership development and implementation in high schools, this study goes further, however, in revealing that the complexity of distributed leadership practice requires peeling back numerous layers in the effort to understand and explain forces at work that shape its development and implementation. While parts of Mayrowetz et al.'s model have been applied once before to frame the study of distributed leadership development (Smylie, et al.), this study attempted to apply the model in its entirety while focusing on one organizational variable, aiming among others at strengthening the validation of the usefulness of the model for understanding what eases or constrains distributed leadership development and implementation in schools.

This chapter will provide a summary of key findings, discussion of the summary findings, implications and recommendations for practice and policy, and suggestions for further research.

Summary of Key Findings

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In response to the research questions, I made several conclusions that can be summarized into the following five key findings: (1) although high-quality professional development program is essential for building capacity for effective distributed leadership, how this capacity is then carried into practice depends on the individual school's contextual variables, and on whether the leadership team is entrusted by the teachers with leadership; (2) organizational characteristics are not prohibitive of leadership distribution provided that the principal understands his/her new role, and performs it successfully. While previous research has confirmed the principal's key role in providing the catalyst for leadership-dense organizations, this study identified a number of personal attributes as well as ability and attitude that are conducive to the principal's successful performance of the new role; (3) some internal processes are more likely than others to support effective transition of work redesign into teachers' sensemaking, motivation, and learning, such as creating a sense of urgency, turning some internal distrupton, such as for instance the change in principal, into an opportunity for aligning teachers' mental models and engaging their commitment for common good, creating a clear focus and empowering teachers through action research for actual performance of change, providing balanced support and pressure, and transforming the culture of blaming the forces beyond teachers' control into a habit of critical self- and peer-review; (4) while organizational structures, such as departmental isolation, time constraints, lack of coordination and interdependence that impede distributed leadership development have to be transformed, meaningful as opposed to surface implementation of work redesign seems to depend on internal processes, such as attributing value to internally distributed leadership based on expertise, rather than exhibiting blind compliance with external authorities, rules, and requirements, matching structural transformation with

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consensually defined school improvement agenda, embedding the structural redesign and process of inquiry into the culture that supports reform, and presenting work redesign as a non-negotiable means of school improvement for mutual benefit, rather than a matter of teacher voluntarism; (5) the school leadership team's successful construction of their leadership identity in school seems to depend on whether the principal becomes an active partner in the team who does not feel threatened by the team's growing leadership potential, whether the team aligns their mental models regarding the change, negotiates common focus, develops common values and trusting relationships, whether the membership is stable and the members are compatible, which contributes to the development of synergy rather than competitiveness, and whether the team recognizes the influence of existing structures on their ability to lead, and is able to build coalitions in the staff room, practice servant attitude toward the faculty rather than top-down control, and exhibit trust in teachers' professionalism; (6) without the established climate of sharing and valuing teachers' expertise in pursuit of a clear collective purpose, decentralization and structural redesign can weaken school leaders' credibility in the eyes of the teachers, and discourage collective sensemaking of redesigned work as significant for teachers.

Discussion of Summary Findings

The Characteristics of NEI's Professional Development Program

Drawing on the NEI's professional development program design and implementation characteristics, project documentation analysis, and the interview data, collected in the pilot phase of this study from the NEI's administrators, this study first sought to determine the degree to which the NEI's professional development program as it evolved over three years promoted the characteristics of redesigned work, and built leadership capacity for the performance of leadership

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functions as defined in Mayrowetz et al.'s theory (2007). While the program analysis considered the leadership skills and competencies that principals and their leadership teams acquired from the program as well as the manner in which the NEI's training was implemented, the within and across case analyses also revealed the ways and the extent to which the participants carried what they learned into their leadership practice to engage the school community in taking up and implementing the reform.

The program analysis led to a conclusion that the program's coursework addressed most of the elements of work redesign and outcomes as defined by Mayrowetz et al. (2007). However, the data also revealed that while the NEI granted school leadership teams the autonomy in what and how they carried from their preparation into their practice, not all of the teams demonstrated their skills and capacity in practice. The school development team that did transfer their skill to practice identified a number of factors that were critical to their success including: a) the continuous and individualized support from the NEI's experts and from the coach; b) their growing capacity acquired from their participation in the program for building trusting relationships and internal coherence within their leadership team; c) their use of in school opportunities to construct meaning and knowledge collectively and collaboratively; d) their knowledge and experience in how to engage the faculty in collaborative inquiry; and e) a balance between pressure and support constructed in such a manner to implement what they were learning in a safe, trusting, and encouraging coaching environment.

These findings are consistent with the research on central features of high-quality professional development programs for school improvement, notably, the importance of providing on-going, on-site, sustainable professional support, situating professional development in a collegial learning environment, with respect and trust

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as essential features of productive learning community (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1996; Lambert, 2003; Whitcomb, Borko, & Liston, 2009), and involving teachers in on-going, meaningful cycle of inquiry to investigate the problems of practice they themselves identify (Copland, 2003; Newmann, et al., 2000). This study's findings also support the limited research base on professional development specifically for school leaders that has emphasized the importance of providing opportunities for authentic leadership work supported by a strong mentor or coach (Daresh, 1995), and time to reflect the integration and application of what they are learning while having regular opportunities for collegial consultations (Kochan, Bredeson, & Riehl, 2002).

While two prior studies have linked the success of redesigned work implementation to organizational variables, namely to school culture (Copland, 2003) and trust (Smylie, et al., 2007), this study adds to the understanding of variations among the schools in their application of their newly acquired knowledge, skills and competence, by linking meaningful (as opposed to surface) implementation of work redesign to various individual and organizational variables. Most prominent among these variables are the principal's reflective capacity and critical attitude toward external initiatives, strong instructional expertise, the interconnectedness between the school culture and structures, trust within the leadership team, and the principals' perception of their new role in relation to the required distribution of leadership responsibility.

While the NEI could have monitored more closely whether and how individual school teams carried their skills and capacity into their subsequent leadership practice, this would oppose their main purpose of developing school capacity rather than prescribing the outcomes. In addition, a body of research that identified successful

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strategies for whole school improvement and capacity building (Hargreaves, 2003; Hopkins, 2001; King & Newmann, 2001) suggests that closer monitoring does not necessarily ensure better transfer of theory into practice, whereas paying greater attention to developmental differences among schools by tailoring the scope and pace of professional development program to individual school needs may produce better results.

Next, this study drew on the analysis of interviews, observations, documentation and research notes across the two cases of schools to deepen the understanding of distributed leadership implementation and development by considering: (1) the performance of leadership functions, particularly in terms of whether increased and more broadly distributed school leadership capacity provided effective assistance to teachers in their provision of better instruction to their students; (2) how redesigned work enabled (or not) teachers' sense making, learning and motivation (transition mechanisms); (3) how the existing structures (functioning as antecedents), shaped the formulation of redesigned work; and (4) how the existing and new structures (functioning as moderators) moderated the manner in which redesigned work was performed.

Performance of Leadership Functions

Since the actual performance of leadership functions differed across the schools although the third cohort schools and their development teams received the same training and support, this study concluded that also various internal processes (e.g., shared goals and commitment, cross-grade inquiry and collaboration, strong norms of collegiality, trust, and openness, peer feedback, strong norms of teacher influence and decision making, a consistent focus on school-wide instructional improvement, rather than leaving the choices about professional development and

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change implementation up to individual teachers), and personal attributes, skills, ability, mindset, and attitude of principals determined how successful the schools were in carrying their learning experience into practice.

Linden Tree's school development team that successfully carried their capacity for distributed performance of leadership functions into practice in terms of supporting teachers' work redesign and engagement for instructional improvement, started by strategically building their individual and team leadership capacity through collaborative learning. Next, they developed trusting and democratic relationships within the team based on shared commitment to school improvement. They used individual team member's capacities in a complementary way to build increased collective team capacity. By opening their classrooms to collegial criticism, leading action research teams, screening the external intervention and tailoring workshops to suit teachers' needs, approaching individual teachers to listen to their concerns and discuss their vision of the school future, the team members negotiated their new leadership role as important among the faculty. By building coalitions and modelling collegiality, they demonstrated their servant attitude as opposed to exerting top-down control.

The Linden Tree school development team exhibited the exemplary leadership practices when executing leadership functions emphasized during their preparation experience, such as making teachers aware of the urgency of change, involving them in vision building process, inviting them to voice their concerns and taking time to face and resolve resistance. After explicating a connection between school goals and the reform goals, and making their high expectations for improved instructional performance clear to teachers, they buffered the faculty from external pressure so as to prevent distractions from instructional improvement focus. Throughout the process,

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they gave teachers time to learn, provided them with encouragement and support, and introduced strategies for self- and peer-monitoring and for external recognition of changed instructional practice. That way, they supported the development of a culture of inquiry and collegial exchange. While these leadership practices have been recommended in the literature on organizational learning and school improvement, they were mainly attributed to the principal and his role until recently when the shift from solo to intensified or distributed performance of leadership functions occurred (Chrispeels, Burke, Johnson, & Daly, 2008; Kruse & Seashore Louis, 2009).

At Little Creek, which serves as an example of a failure to perform leadership functions in distributed way, the school development team rushed from one activity to another without building the team's internal coherence or at least clarifying individual team member's competencies, roles and responsibilities, let alone setting clear school goals and connecting them with the reform, or including the faculty in decisions about the future. In pursuing quick fixes they got stuck in growing negativity and bitterness that accumulated in the staff room, and suffered from credibility deficit regarding their own leadership capacity.

Another theme that emerged from the analysis of the performance of leadership functions was the principal's role. Lydia's personal attributes, abilities, and her attitude, such as her ability to listen, see the big picture, solicit teachers' opinion and use it, as well as develop their engagement, reflect and use critical attitude toward external initiative, prioritize the school's and students' benefit over external requirements, exhibit great sense of timing and sensitivity to the needs of teachers, and posses technical skill and knowledge that she carried into her practice, as well as her firm belief that the reform was non-negotiable, were probably essential for successful distributed performance of leadership functions that assisted broad

instructional improvement. At Little Creek where these functions were not performed, the two principals that led the school in succession, and the school development team leader, all lacked Lydia's qualities, attributes, ability, and attitude.

This study's findings concerning the distributed performance of leadership functions support the limited research base that has identified possible characteristics that can prevent school leadership teams from situating themselves in the school and establishing their authority and power to enact their leadership, such as poorly clarified roles within the team, the manner in which team members relate to each other, to the principal, and other staff (Mawhinney, 1999), lack of internal coherence, unity, and clear focus on high standards (Bush & Glover, 2012), state and district context that is not supportive of change, negative school culture in which they are embedded (Chrispeels & Martin, 2002), and preoccupation with procedural issues that blur the team's focus on student learning (Smylie & Hart, 1999). This study adds to this body of research by exploring factors contributing to or preventing the teams to construct their leadership identity, taking into consideration the team's internal dynamics, relationships among team members, with the principal, and with the faculty, and how this in turn affected their ability to perform leadership functions.

With regard to the principal's role, this study confirms previous findings about the key role of principal in providing a catalyst for leadership-dense organizations (Copland, 2003; Harris, 2012; Murphy, et al., 2009; Smylie & Hart, 1999), and also adds to this limited research base by identifying the principal's personal attributes, ability and attitude that seem to be conducive to the performance of the new role that requires a shift from leadership as a position to leadership as interaction. While Lydia faced the school conditions that were more challenging with regard to climate, resources, and academic performance history than the principals in the other school,

she was successful in sharing leadership, improving practice, and changing the school's climate while Frank and Boris were not. This suggests that organizational characteristics are not prohibitive of leadership distribution provided that the principal understands her new role and acts as a catalyst for lasting dispersal of power among the capable members of the school community.

Transition Mechanisms

To date, there is no research on how work redesign implementation translates into educators' sensemaking, motivation for work under distributed leadership reform, and their learning to be able to perform new tasks. This study fills this gap in research by identifying the processes that seem to affect the transition mechanisms either in a positive or in a negative way. Some of the findings presented here support the research on school reform, particularly on leadership roles and functions that leverage large-scale instructional improvement (Elmore, 2000, 2004), leadership support to teachers' sense of efficacy and its translation into their greater readiness to adopt reform strategies (Raudenbush, Rowan, & Cheong, 1992; Wahlstrom & Seashore Louis, 2008), and the necessity to address individual and collective mental models to achieve coherent commitment to reform (Chrispeels, et al., 2008; Reynolds, Murrill, & Whitt, 2006; Senge, 1990).

In both schools that were the focus of research in this study, the NEI encouraged the implementation of the same changes in the design characteristics of teachers' work and leadership practice, however, this study found that each school's unique environment, structures, and other individual and organizational variables determined how the changes were implemented, and how they then affected teachers' sensemaking of the reform, their motivation for change, and their readiness for learning. While Little Creek serves as an example of the school in which surface

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implementation of work redesign led to a collective loss of meaning, decreased motivation for change, and loss of purposeful learning in initially highly motivated faculty, at Linden High redesigned work was implemented in a way that had positive effects on the transition mechanisms. Lydia and the teachers on the school development team encouraged the following processes that seemed to contribute to transition mechanisms in a positive way: creating a sense of urgency and including teachers in the process of collective identification of the need for change, promoting collective envisioning of a better future that widened the focus from individual outcomes to school-wide change and produced a new collective set of beliefs, and transforming teachers' mental models from blaming the students and society for their average results to developing a habit of critical self- and peer-review of their work. Aligning the goals of the reform with the commonly agreed school goals motivated all the teachers for learning, and eased the transfer of the theoretical knowledge that they accumulated into practice in spite of stress, caused by the dissonance between the result-oriented external 'matura', and the process oriented change, promoted by the reform. The findings suggest that Lydia's and the team's firm belief in the change promoted by the NEI, which they perceived and implemented as a long-term, systemic change that could save the school from dropping student enrolment numbers, was critically important for making the reform work significant for the teachers. The fact that Little Creek teachers attributed their loss of meaning mainly to their administrators' mixed messages about the reform that implied their lack of belief in the proposed change, and to their prioritizing of the existing high achievement results over instructional change, presented as a short term compliance exercise that extended rather than transformed teachers' work, adds weight to this finding. This finding is also consistent with the earlier research cited in Elmore (2000), which examined

factors contributing to high-performing school districts, notably, the crucial role of principal's certainty in galvanizing teachers for specific, goal-oriented endeavours, which increased their clarity about what they pursued as a community.

Other important factors that contributed to teachers' sensemaking, which in turn increased their motivation for new work and for learning how to perform it, were using the distrupton of the change in principal that created deep emotional turmoil to bring people together, align their mental models, and engage their commitment for common good, create the opportunity and need for the faculty's regular dialogic encounters (which took place at Linden High) that helped teachers clarify common understanding about the necessity of each individual's improvement of their practice to secure everyone's job safety, and a clear focus on one instructional problem, common to a group of teachers, who were empowered to actually do something about it through their engagement in action research. The finding about the importance of a meaningful dialogue as a means of revealing individual assumptions and bringing teachers' understanding to the same page, supports earlier research, notably, that coherence as the key component of school effectiveness can be undermined by differing mental models (Senge, et al., 2000). At Little Creek, where a meaningful dialogue was impossible due to negative relationships, the reform work divided the faculty, and changed their initially strong inner motivation for excellence shared by all to general disappointment over their administrators' vague guidance and lack of will and ability to deal with negative climate. On the other hand, Linden Tree faculty developed a shared motivation for excellence through their exposure to a balanced internal support and pressure, and high expectations from their leaders for each individual's improved performance, and their complete trust in teachers' ability (they consciously reverted from control and rather made themselves available for on-going

support, plus engaged teachers in peer coaching). Positive feedback from their stakeholders increased teachers' satisfaction with their achievement, and further stimulated their collaborative learning and capacity building.

Organizational Structures as Antecedent

The findings of this study concerning the effect of the existing organizational structures on the formulation of redesigned work confirm a limited body of research on instructionally effective schools. In particular, they support the identification of this research of common strategic elements that these schools share, such as relying more on a common culture of values to shape collective action than on bureaucratic rules and controls, a clear focus on student learning as the central goal, a positive approach to problem solving, and a shared view of structures, processes, and data as instruments for improvement rather than as ends in themselves (Elmore, 2000). The comparison of the two schools under study reveals that in both schools the existing structures initially constrained the formulation of redesigned work as significant for the teachers, but that Linden Tree eventually created a favourable setting for distributed leadership development, and Little Creek did not. At Linden Tree, the norms and values that shaped school work and how people related to each other fundamentally changed over time. Lydia's firm belief in the superiority of shared over solo decision making, which she demonstrated first in her work with the team and then also at the school level, loosened the hierarchy and departmental isolation, and connected teachers across departments and grades around specific problems of practice, holding individual teachers accountable for their contributions to the collective result, and trusting their professional capacity and judgment, with a clear purpose of improving the quality of instructional practice school-wide. The redesigned work gained significance as non-negotiable means to improve the school's

reputation through improving instruction, and also offered opportunity for collaborative problem solving and inquiry. While Linden Tree leadership team never lost the sight of students and their benefit, Little Creek administration lost their credibility with teachers because they neglected student benefit and pushed the reform for the sake of appearances. At Little Creek, both principals and the assistant principal, who was also the school development team leader, attempted to assimilate bits of the reform into the existing structure and culture. The inconsistency between their words and actions, which was visible in their keeping tight control over instructional change, and expressing doubts in "too much" innovation that could threaten high achievement results, while expecting the evidence of change from teachers, caused teachers to feel unsafe and not prepared to risk implementing new instructional approaches. Exhibiting complacency with their existent high achievement results, they did not present redesigned work promoted by the reform as a matter of urgency, thus allowing teachers to choose whether they wanted to participate or not, which led to the general perception of work redesign as additional work.

This study adds to the existent body of research by suggesting that the principals' understanding of their new role in distributed leadership reform, and firmness of their belief in the necessity and feasibility of change can determine the degree to which the existing hierarchy, departmental structure, schedules, routines, and external requirements as well as the requirements of the national curriculum interfere (or not) with the formulation of redesigned work as significant for the school. If the principal perceived the school development team's capacity building as a threat to his positional power, which was the case at Little Creek, his effort to keep the hierarchical system unchanged disabled broader distribution of leadership

responsibility and work redesign. Strong guidance toward collective capacity building for school-wide implementation of change, which was visible at Linden High and was presented as a matter of urgency for everybody's job security but also as individual and collective moral purpose, contributed to the significance of collective responsibility for work redesign, and provided a sense of security that helped teachers deal with uncertainty regarding the outcomes of the reform initiative. Attributing value to internally distributed authority, based on expertise, visible in Lydia's leadership approach, as opposed to blind compliance with external authority and rules, which Little Creek leaders practiced, encouraged openness among the faculty in talking about their practice, and allowed for non-threatening collegial support, criticism and professional judgment. Changed norms of collaboration within the school culture that supported reform work necessitated adjustments and adaptations of the existing structures, and made work redesign meaningful.

Organizational Structures as Moderator

This study's findings concerning the moderating effect of the existing and new organizational structures on the implementation of redesigned work are consistent with previous research on change implementation, notably, on the necessity to transform organizational structures that have been recognized as impediments to change and collaborative learning especially in high schools, such as isolation and balkanization of staff, time constraints, lack of coordination and interdependence, and non-participatory decision making (Leithwood, Leonard, & Sharratt, 1998b; Silins & Mulford, 2001), and the importance of matching the malleability of structures to the school's improvement agenda (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004). This study also supports the earlier supposition that if structural redesign is to facilitate the reform work of organizational members, it has to be embedded in the

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culture that supports the reform (Copland, 2003). This study's findings are also consistent with limited research on the use of meaningful inquiry as a key vehicle for building distributed leadership (Copland), and on the factors that determine whether the new structures, such as the school leadership team, can assume their intended role in the school (Chrispeels & Martin, 2002). At Linden Tree, the principal's and school development team's recognition of the influence of the existing structures on their ability to initiate change, and their readiness to invest time and energy into building their capacity for changing the school culture was essential for their ability to construct their leadership roles and initiating change. At Little Creek, the administrators continued to rely on their formal positional power, thus maintaining the existing structures while expecting from teachers to produce evidence of change for the NEI's review. Their eventual adaptations of the routines of the workplace and additions of new structures, such as the school leadership team and action research teams, served no purpose (for instance, Frank had a leadership team but he made all the decisions. Tatiana delegated work to team members while not expecting from them to be leaders). The processes that they undertook at Linden Tree with the purpose of realizing their collaboratively prepared action plan, such as inquiry based approach to instructional improvement through action research, multi-directional communication, cross-departmental collaboration, and peer coaching required a modification of organizational structures. At Little Tree, these processes were treated as a compliance exercise and a matter of volunteerism, thus failing to break teacher isolation and promote system-wide improvement. Structural redesign was thus perceived as another meaningless change that added to teachers' stress.

This study adds to this body of research by illustrating on the example of two schools what makes shifts in structures and processes meaningful, notably, the

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alignment of adjustments, adaptations and new structures with beliefs, expectations, and norms regarding decentralized decision making, capacity building, instructional improvement as common good, collaborative inquiry and collegiality, the importance of individual contribution and responsibility, trust, and a strong sense of internal security for risk taking.

<div align="center">Implications and Recommendations for Practice</div>

This study has found that while the characteristics of the professional development program and the manner in which it is implemented provide a scaffold for building a school's distributed leadership capacity for sustainable, school-wide instructional improvement, there are also other factors that need to be considered in order to activate a wider potential for leadership in schools. While the establishment of a leadership team is the first priority for the principals, it is important that when selecting members for the team the principal recognizes teacher expertise and the status that members have with the faculty, and considers compatibility of members' areas of strength. The principal needs to be part of the team, participating in the discussions of the team's purpose and in the formal training that supports their leadership capacity building. It is essential that principals support and appreciate broader leadership capacity building, based on their firm belief in its benefit for the school and the students, and sincerely promote enactment of leadership tasks by the team, taking into account team members' expertise and their areas of strength, rather than feeling threatened by the team's leadership potential. The team needs time and opportunities to build internal coherence and trust based on alignment of their mental models regarding the reform, and the professional programs need to plan a provision of a moderator or coach for that purpose. Without internal coherence and mutual trust, shared decision making will be time consuming if not impossible, and without aligned

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mental models, the team will not be able to demonstrate persuasively their firm belief in the change they intend to implement, which is essential for providing a sense of security to the faculty. If the team models serving the faculty in their collective aim of instructional improvement, and demonstrates their trust in teachers' professional judgment, rather than exerting top-down control, the study shows that they are more readily accepted by their colleagues as emergent leaders. While the professional development program can train the team to work with resistance and lead a vision-building process, the team has to be entrusted by their colleagues with leadership and authority in order to be able to enact these leadership tasks.

The findings of this study also suggest that selecting team members who have proved their leadership capacity, for instance in leading the subject departments, facilitates their selection by teachers as leaders of action research. Making school development team members (including the principal) leaders of action research teams seems to be a good strategy for the promotion of the team as capable leaders of reform since it provides opportunities for them to demonstrate their instructional expertise, and to establish an organized and direct relationship between the team and the faculty by opening up multi-directional communication. Nevertheless, this study alerts to the difference between superficial and meaningful implementation of the process of inquiry through action research and peer coaching, which depends on the cultural change – whether the faculty shares values, a sense of urgency for change, collective responsibility for teaching practice and student learning, and masters a dialogue about practice that allows for non-threatening criticism and support. The professional support should therefore focus on enabling cultural change within schools, presenting it to the leadership team as non-negotiable, and giving the team enough time to enact the process.

While the refinement and alignment of organizational structures, and the establishment of new structures seem imperative for the accommodation of the above processes, this study reveals the intertwined nature of the structures and the culture in which they are embedded. Without previously articulated vision, crafted collaboratively, that builds ownership of the reform and clarifies its alignment with the school goals, and without the established climate of sharing and valuing teachers' expertise in pursuit of a clear collective purpose, decentralization and structural redesign can weaken school leaders' credibility in the eyes of the teachers, and cause doubts in whether change implementation really makes sense. While this study points to the importance of organizational characteristics that determine teachers' motivation for taking on more responsibility for change, and their openness to learning, collaboration and sharing of practice with colleagues, it also suggests that the principal has the key role in providing a catalyst for loosening the existing hierarchy and departmental isolation, and enabling the expansion and distribution of leadership responsibility.

While there can be no set formula for successful distributed performance of leadership functions in the school because each school's social environment, organizational structure, and micropolitics are unique, this study deepens our understanding of the complex dynamic and mechanisms at work that shape purposeful distribution of leadership, and determine its successful development in a complex system of schools that requires changes in relations, behavioural patterns, structures, and tasks.

Implications and Recommendations for Research

The contribution of this study extends beyond the immediate practice of schools in that it validates the model of Distributed Leadership as Work Redesign

(2007), developed for studying distributed leadership implementation in schools and predicting the success or failure of such reforms. While using the model to frame the data gathering instruments produced extensive and rich data set, it was then possible to account for the differences between the two schools under study in how they carried their knowledge and skills about work redesign implementation into their respective schools, whether they enabled transition mechanisms (teacher sensemaking, motivation, and learning), and enacted leadership functions for the benefit of their respective faculties. Without applying the model in its entirety to frame the exploration of the implementation and development of distributed leadership in high schools, it would be impossible to identify the conditions and processes that can either ensure or prevent successful enactment of leadership functions. Considering only job characteristics without exploring their effect on transition mechanisms, for instance, would mean neglecting the opportunity to open the "black box" of teacher motivation, sensemaking and learning how to perform redesigned work. Furthermore, leaving out individual components of the model could present a danger to oversimplify the implementation of a complex process such as distributed leadership, like for instance providing the training to school leadership teams and then expecting that they will be able to carry their knowledge directly into practice, without preparing the teams to take into consideration the interactional relationships in the school between new job characteristics and the existing school structures, social environment, and other antecedents and moderators that determine how work redesign actually develops, how it is perceived, and what outcomes it produces. The only part of the model that this study did not apply in its fullest were the individual and organizational variables – for the sake of manageability, I chose to focus on one organizational variable, yet even here it was difficult not to consider the

other variables, which suggests that they are all interrelated (the interrelatedness of organizational variables was not made clear in the original model).

Implications and Recommendations for Policy

While the widening of the target of leadership capacity development from school principals to leadership teams, and eventually to whole schools is necessary for a successful transition in principals' and teachers' perspectives from centralized to distributed leadership, it is nevertheless unlikely that this would be sufficient for replacing the view of leadership work as synonymous to administration. As long as the principals remain solely responsible for the school's success to the external stakeholders, it remains unlikely that they would readily share their decision-making power with others. Principals' responsibility for high-stakes test performance results in particular seems to have a demotivating effect on their readiness for leadership distribution and reliance on teacher expertise when making decisions. This study implies that while shared responsibility for the school's performance needs to go hand in hand with decentralized authority, the policymakers should start thinking about using the new formulation of leadership with all its consequences for shared responsibility also in legal documents, thus legitemazing the participative rhetoric and the practice of redistribution of power in schools through collective and deliberate activity. In addition, this study alerts the policymakers in Slovenia and in other countries with the national curriculum and associated assessment system to the misalignment of the requirement for greater autonomy of schools that is conducive to leadership distribution, and the restricting power of the assessment system, particularly if it is narrowly prescribed and as such reduces principal and teacher autonomy.

Suggestions for Further Research

While this study applied the analytical model to frame the exploration of distributed leadership implementation and development so as to refine the understanding of the relationships between changes in the design characteristics of teachers' work and leadership practice, for which the schools received extensive training and support, and actual implementation of such work in relation to the specific school context, and its further effect on teacher sensemaking, motivation, and learning, which in turn determined the performance of the outcomes (leadership functions), further application of the model is necessary to validate its usefulness for the study of distributed leadership reforms in schools. Such research would be of great benefit in deepening our understanding of the complexity of the phenomenon under study, particularly since distributed leadership has been promoted extensively as a strategy for successful instructional improvement.

Because this study had access to snapshots of distributed leadership development and had to rely on the respondents' recollections of the development process, future research would benefit from longitudinal studies that could explore the nature of the above relationships further and more thoroughly based on cumulative data gathered in the process.

While I recommend using the model in its entirety, it would be nevertheless beneficial if future research focuses on the exploration of the relationship between work redesign implementation and transition mechanisms while not excluding other elements of the model, because there has been hardly any research done in this very important area that can actually determine whether the reform fails or succeeds. Also, in order to understand how and why the impact of distributed leadership varies in different contexts, future research should replicate the study of the antecedent and

moderating effect of school structure and trust on the development of distributed leadership, as well as extend the inquiry to other organizational variables.

In view of the fact that Mayrowetz et al.'s model (2007) was prepared for the study of distributed leadership reforms in the United States, it would be illuminating if future studies explored the contextual factors, specific to other geo-political regions, to determine whether the model is applicable for the study of distributed leadership development in the countries with different historical and cultural development, and if certain other variables that would need to be identified play the role in determining the success or failure of work redesign implementation. The present study would benefit if the existing data were analyzed through the specific geo-political lens, taking into consideration the Slovene socialist past, which may help determine the specific contextual variables and their role in how broader leadership practice was defined and implemented in the cases that were the focus of this study.

Finally, research focused at different levels of schooling, including the primary, middle, and high level would be of interest to identify the processes that develop at each level and either support or constrain work redesign. In addition, such research could potentially identify the similarities and differences among the school levels.

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APPENDIX A

Informed Consent Form to Conduct Research

I, _____ hereby agree to participate as a subject in the doctoral dissertation study of distributed leadership as work redesign conducted by Sonja Sentočnik. It has been explained to me that the purpose of the study is to understand the development and implementation of distributed leadership practice in schools. I understand and agree that the results of this study will be presented at a conference and published in an educational journal.

Procedures Used in the Study: The researcher will gather information in this study by interviewing you, reviewing the documentation related to your work in the National Education Institute's Didactic Reform Project, and conducting a brief, informal observation of your school.

Confidentiality: The researcher will undertake to protect your confidentiality to the extent permissible by law. This project is designed to protect the anonymity of participants in all published reports or papers resulting from this study. To help protect your confidentiality, you will be assigned a pseudonym, which will be used in all data collection, analysis, and published reports. The key to code names will be kept separate from the data and stored in a locked cabinet.

People in a few roles may be identifiable (e.g., government official). If you are in such a role, we request your explicit permission to identify you by role or name.

Interviews will be recorded and the digital files will be transcribed by trained professionals. Any information that might identify your school district, school or participants will be removed during the transcription process.

Risks and Benefits: I see no risks associated with your participation in this study. I see no direct benefits to you for participation in this study. Indirect benefits include reflection on your practice, and contributions to my understanding of the nature of distributed leadership.

Time Involvement: By agreeing to this study, you are agreeing to be interviewed. You may also agree to be observed. Interviews will require approximately 60 - 90 minutes during a single meeting scheduled by you. All observations that you agree to will be as unobtrusive as possible.

Costs: There should not be any cost to you for participation in this research study.

Compensation: You will be compensated for participating in this study with a professional development workshop of your choice provided by Sonja Sentočnik.

Subject's Rights: If you have read this form and have decided to participate in this

project, please understand that your participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue your participation at any time without penalty. You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions. You elect to maintain your individual privacy in all published and written data resulting from this study.

Given these understandings:

I have reviewed and understand the terms set forth. I elect to participate in this study, including the following aspects:

Interview: __Yes __No   PLEASE INITIAL _____

Observations: __Yes __No   PLEASE INITIAL _____

I GIVE CONSENT TO BE AUDIOTAPED DURING THIS RESEARCH STUDY:
__Yes __No   PLEASE INITIAL _____

I GIVE CONSENT TO FOR MY NAME TO BE INCLUDED IN PUBLISHED REPORTS:
__Yes __No   PLEASE INITIAL _____

Consent Signature: _____

Print Name of Person Giving Consent:

_____

Date: _____

Questions about the study should be directed to Sonja Sentočnik at sos305@lehigh.edu. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a participant in this study, you can contact Lehigh's Human Protection Administrator at 610-758-3024 or rt01@lehigh.edu.

APPENDIX B

Observation Protocol

The rationale for the use of observations in this study is to look for evidence of distributed leadership practice. The researcher will spend some time observing the school during each visit preferably with another person who will know the school to acquire data about the climate of each school. In addition, observations will be used to explore the nature of relationships among teachers and between formal and informal leaders, especially during the interviews, and to determine how much is what can be observed consistent with what people claim to be true. Observations will be used also to seek evidence of common goals and common vision, as well as the evidence that the school is a place where learning is in the center. The following questions will guide the observation process:

I. School

1. How is the space organized? Is it open and inviting to collaboration (e.g., common areas for teachers and students, open-door classrooms, space for team meetings)?
   How are the common areas, such as the library and cafeteria, equipped?
   Do teachers and students have easy access to data (computers in the library, staff room, and classrooms, library hours of operation, dictionaries, encyclopedias, textbooks)?

2. What does he school culture feel like? Are there signs of what is important for the school visible when you walk into the building (e.g., cleanliness, cheerfulness, student and teacher behavior/interactions in the halls? Are there visible signs of teacher collaboration (e.g., collaborative project postings, teachers talking, working in teams)?

3. What are the school's priorities? Is there a common vision and goals felt when you walk in the school and observe teachers and students at work and during breaks? Are there visible signs of common vision (e.g., the signs posted on the walls in the hallways, in classrooms, in the stuff room and in the principal's office, equipment in common areas: library, computer room)? Are students and their learning in the center (e.g., student work posted on the walls, student-friendly environment, support to their learning)? Are teachers and students recognized for their work (awards, photos of ceremonies)? Has school been recognized for its quality (newspaper articles, photos of visits of important people)?

II. Interactions

1. What are the interactions among the group members like in leadership teams (e.g., what roles do members of the leadership team play? Do they complement each other? What is the role of the principal in the school leadership team (SLT)? Do these interactions reflect the spirit of

distributed leadership, i.e., reciprocal interdependence that may be visible in the ways members of the SLT interact, e.g., do members of the SLT listen to each other? Are they respectful of what each of them has to say? Do they build on what each of them says? Is there a collective sense of pride on what the team/the school has achieved or do people want to stress individual achievement – the use of "we" vs. "I")?

2. What observations can be made of the interactions among teachers? Do these interactions reflect the spirit of distributed leadership, i.e., reciprocal interdependence (e.g., Do teachers listen to each other? Are they respectful of what each of them has to say? Do they build on what each of them says? Is there a collective sense of pride on what the team/the school has achieved or do people want to stress individual achievement – the use of "we" vs. "I")?

Interview Protocols
Principal Interview

I.   Characteristics of Redesigned Work:

   A. Skill Variety

      1. What was your role before your school's participation in the NEI's project/in the initial stages of the NEI's project implementation/during the NEI's project implementation/after the NEI's project finished? How would you describe your role as the principal now?

      2. What changes have you noticed in your workload?

      3. What changes in your skills have been necessary for the performance of your role?

      4. Has the NEI contributed to the development of these skills? If so, in what ways?

   B. Task Identity

      1. Are there leadership tasks that you see as solely the principal's responsibility? Which are these tasks, if any?

      2. What leadership tasks do you perform jointly with the SLT?

      3. What persuaded you to share your leadership responsibilities with the SLT?

   C. Task Meaningfulness

      1. What has been your role in encouraging distribution of leadershipresponsibility?

      2. Do you think that your role as a principal is less important because you have a leadership team?

   D. Balancing of Autonomy and Interdependence

      1. How do you set school priorities? Who makes decisions?

      2. How do you make decisions about instructional change?

      3. How do you decide about the professional development for your teachers?

4. Are there decisions that are still only the principal's responsibility?

5. Who decides about teachers' work outside the classroom?

6. How much autonomy did you have when you collaborated in the NEI's project as to planning your work, professional development, deciding what change to implement, organizing your work?

E. Feedback

1. Who provides feedback to you/SLT/teachers about your/their work? Describe the ways in which feedback is provided.

2. Who provided you with the feedback about your progress in the NEI's project? In what ways?

II. Transition Mechanisms

A. Sense Making

1. What did leadership work mean to you before the project? Has this changed during the project? After the project? How do you see your work as the principal now?

2. What has caused the changes in the sense you make of your work?

B. Motivation

1. Have the changes in your work made you happier and more excited about your work?

C. Learning

1. Have you taken part in the NEI's PDP? Any other training? How helpful has the NEI's PDP /other training been for the performance of your responsibilities as the principal?

III. Organizational Structures

A. School Leadership Teams (SLT)

1. Did you have leadership teamwork in place in your school before your participation in the NEI's project? If so, please describe the purpose, membership and operation.

2. Has the SLT's work been helpful to you / to the teachers? If yes, in what ways? Please provide concrete examples.

B. Action Research Teams (ART

1. Did teachers work in teams before your participation in the NEI's project? If so, please describe the purpose and organization.

2. What was the purpose of AR teams during your participation in the NEI's project? How successful was the AR teams' work in your school? How did AR teamwork affect teachers' motivation for their professional improvement and school-wide instructional improvement?

3. Do teachers still work in AR teams? Do they work in other teams? If so, please elaborate on who initiates teamwork, the purpose of teamwork and the relationships in teacher teams.

4. Has the NEI contributed to the development of teacher teamwork in your school? If so, in what ways?

IV. Interactions

A. Relationships

1. Can you describe your relationships in the SLT? What were they like when
   you started to work together? Have they changed? If so, how?

2. Can you describe your relationship with teachers? Has it changed since the beginning of the project? If so, how?

3. What were the relationships in your stuff room like before you joined the NEI's project? Have they changed since the beginning of the project? If so, how?

4. What caused these changes?

B. Degree of Collaborative Learning

1. Did your participation in the NEI's project contribute to organizational learning? In what ways? Did the structure of SLT and ART help organizational learning?

2. Have you organized similar on-going professional training for your faculty like the one you experienced in the NEI's project? Do you continue to engage teachers in collaborative learning? If yes, how?

C. Collective Meaning Making

1. Do you still work on the SLT? On what occasions?

Does your faculty still pursue common goals?

2. On what occasions do teachers work together? How do you support them?

3. Have you addressed your vision and goals since the end of the NEI? If yes, how?

D.   New Patterns of Control

1. What kind of decisions does the SLT make?

2. Which decisions are the principal's responsibility?

3. How do you communicate the SLT's and the principal's decisions?

4. Do you involve teachers in decision-making? How? For what kind of decisions?

5. Do you involve students and their parents in decision making? How? For what kind of decisions?

V.   Outcomes

A.   Providing and Selling a Vision

1. How did you get the faculty's agreement to take part in the NEI's project?

2. Do you have a school vision? How did you form school vision statement?

3. Do you think that as an organization, you are pursuing collective goals? If yes, what are they? How did you build collective commitment to common goals?

4. What persuaded teachers to step out of their classrooms to work on SLT/ ART/on school-wide goals? How did you continue with that after the NEI's project ended?

B.   Providing Encouragement

1. What kind of support have you provided to the teachers on SLT / ART?

2. How have you supported implementation of instructional change?

3. Do you recognize individual/team achievement? How?

C. Obtaining Resources

1. How did you obtain the means to provide the resources necessary for the changes that you were expected to implement in the NEI's project (work redesign, professional training, equipment, etc.)?

2. How do you further support continuous improvement?

D. Adapting SOPs

1. How did you change standard operating procedures to accommodate the expected change (time for teamwork, team meetings, common planning time, additional workload, ensuring that instruction is not disturbed, meetings with the NEI, professional development activities, etc.)?

E. Monitoring the Improvement Effort

1. How did you monitor the improvement effort during your participation in the NEI's project (e.g., implementation of change in the classroom – individual and school-wide, quality of leadership work/teamwork)?

2. How have you monitored the improvement effort after the project ended?

F. Handling Disturbances

1. Were teachers resistant to change once the project started? If yes, how did you deal with that?

2. Do you still experience teacher resistance? If yes, have you changed the way you address it?

VI. NEI's PDP

1. What in the PDP has been particularly useful to you as the principal/to your teachers (content, approach, methods used)?

2. What did you miss in the program? What would you change in the program?

3. What kind of support do you still receive/need from the NEI?

School Leadership Team Interview

I.   Characteristics of Redesigned Work

    A.   Skill Variety

        1. How do you balance your role on the SLT and your role as the teacher?

        2. How did your colleagues accept your role on the leadership team?

        3. What changes have you noticed in your workload?

        4. What changes in your skills have been necessary for the performance of your work on the leadership team?

        5. Has the NEI contributed to the development of these skills? If so, in what ways? What else was helpful?

    B.   Task Identity

        1. What leadership tasks does the SLT perform? What decisions do you make in the team? How?

        2. What changes have you noticed in the SLT's work (individual member's roles, distribution of responsibility, decision making, frequency of meetings, topics discussed, quality of collaboration, trust)?

    C.   Task Meaningfulness

        1. Why did you decide to join the SLT?

        2. Why do you think that working on the SLT is important?

        3. Does this work take your time away from teaching? Have you kept your full workload in the classroom?

    D.   Balancing of Autonomy and Interdependence

        1. Who gives the initiative to meet? Who plans the meetings? Who leads the SLT meetings?

        2. How do you set your priorities on the team?

        3. How do you set school priorities?

4. How do you prepare your annual plan – especially with regard to teachers' activities outside of the classroom?

5. How do you make decisions about instructional change?

6. How do you decide about the professional development for your teachers?

7. How much autonomy did you have when you collaborated in the NEI's project as to planning your work, professional development, deciding what change to implement, organizing your work?

E.   Feedback

1. Who provides feedback to you about your work? How do you know whether you are successful as a team or not?

2. Who provided you with the feedback about your progress in the NEI's project? In what ways?

3. Who provides feedback to the teachers about their instruction? How?

4. Who provided feedback to them about their work in AR teams? How?

II.   Transition Mechanisms

A.   Sense Making

1. How do you see your work in the school now? Has this changed since the beginning of the NEI's project?

2. What has caused the changes in the sense that you make of your work?

B.   Motivation

1. Have the changes in your work made you happier and more excited about your work?

C.   Learning

1. How helpful has the NEI's PDP /other training been for the performance of your responsibilities as the teacher / member of the SLT?

2. Do you feel that you have had enough/suitable professional support to do your work to the best of your abilities?

III. Organizational Structures

    A. School Leadership Team (SLT)

1. Did you have leadership teamwork in place in your school before your participation in the NEI's project? If so, please describe the purpose, membership and operation.

2. How was the SLT formed initially? Has the membership changed?

3. How did you formulate your work as the team? What has been the responsibility of the SLT (changes)?

4. What has been your role in the SLT?

5. Has the SLT's work been helpful to you / to the teachers/ to the school? If yes, in what ways? Please provide concrete examples.

    B. Action Research Teams (ART)

1. Did teachers work in teams before your participation in the NEI's project? If so, please describe the purpose and organization.

2. What was the purpose of AR teams during your participation in the NEI's project? How successful was the AR teams' work in your school? How did AR teamwork affect teachers' motivation for their professional improvement and school-wide instructional improvement?

3. Do teachers still work in AR teams? Do they work in other teams? If so, please elaborate on who initiates teamwork, the purpose of teamwork and the relationships in teacher teams.

4. Has the NEI contributed to the development of teacher teamwork in your school? If so, in what ways?

IV. Interactions

    A. Relationships

1. Can you describe your relationships in the SLT? What were they like when you started to work together? Have they changed? If so, how?

2. Can you describe your relationship with teachers? Has it changed since the beginning of the project? If so, how?

3. What were the relationships in your stuff room like before you joined the NEI's project? Have they changed since the beginning of the project? If so, how?

4. What caused these changes?

B. Degree of Collaborative Learning

1. Did your participation in the NEI's project contribute to organizational learning? In what ways? Did the structure of SLT and ART help organizational learning?

2. Have you organized similar on-going professional training for your faculty like the one you experienced in the NEI's project? Do you continue to engage teachers in collaborative learning? If yes, how?

C. Collective Meaning Making

1. Do you still work on the SLT? On what occasions?

2. Does your faculty still pursue common goals?

3. On what occasions do teachers work together? How do you support

them?

4. Have you addressed your vision and goals since the end of the

NEI? If yes, how?

D. New Patterns of Control

1. What kind of decisions does the SLT make?

2. Which decisions are the principal's responsibility?

3. How do you communicate the SLT's and the principal's decisions?

4. Do you involve teachers in decision-making? How? For what kind of decisions?

5. Do you involve students and their parents in decision making? How? For what kind of decisions?

V.   Outcomes

    A.   Providing and Selling a Vision

       1.   How did you get the faculty's agreement to take part in the NEI's project?

       2.   Do you have a school vision? What was your role in creating the school vision

       3.   Do you think that as an organization, you are pursuing collective goals? If yes, what are they? How did you build collective commitment to common goals?

       4.   What persuaded teachers to step out of their classrooms to work on ART/on school-wide goals? How did you continue with that after the NEI's project ended?

    B.   Providing Encouragement

       1.   What makes you continue working on the leadership team?

       2.   How do you support teachers' motivation to keep improving their instruction?

       3.   What kind of support did you provide to the teachers on the ART?

       4.   Do you recognize individual/team achievement? How?

    C.   Obtaining Resources

       1.   How did you obtain the means to provide the resources necessary for the changes that you were expected to implement in the NEI's project (work redesign, professional training, equipment, etc.)?

       2.   How do you further support continuous improvement?

    D.   Adapting SOPs

       1.   How did you change standard operating procedures to accommodate the expected change (time for teamwork, team meetings, common planning time, additional workload, ensuring that instruction is not disturbed, meetings with the NEI, professional development activities, etc.)?

    E.   Monitoring the Improvement Effort

1. How did you monitor the improvement effort during your participation in the NEI's project (e.g., implementation of change in the classroom – individual and school-wide, quality of leadership work/teamwork)?

2. How have you monitored the improvement effort after the project ended?

    F.   Handling Disturbances

1. Were teachers resistant to change once the project started? If yes, how did
    you deal with teacher resistance?
2. Do you still experience teacher resistance? If yes, have you changed the
    way you address it?

VI.   NEI's PDP

1. What in the PDP has been particularly useful to you /to your teachers (content, approach, methods used)?

2. What did you miss in the program? What would you change in the program?

3. What kind of support do you still receive/need from the NEI?

Focus Group Interview with Teachers

I. Characteristics of Redesigned Work

    A. Skill Variety

1. How has your work changed since the beginning of the NEI's project?

2. What changes have you noticed in your workload?

3. What changes in your skills have been necessary for the performance of your work?

4. Has the NEI contributed to the development of these skills? If so, in what ways? What else was helpful?

    B.   Task Identity

1. What do you think is your role? What are you responsible for?

2. Did you get new responsibilities since the beginning of the NEI's project?

3. Do you think that it is important to collaborate with your colleagues? If yes, why?

C.   Task Meaningfulness

1. Why did you decide to join the NEI's project?

2. Do you do work outside of the classroom? What do you do? Do you think that this work is important? If yes, why?

D.   Balancing of Autonomy and Interdependence

1. How do you set school priorities?

2. How is school annual plan prepared – who decides about your activities outside of the classroom?
3. Did you make decisions about instructional change in the AR teams? How? How do you make these decisions now?

4. How do you decide about your professional development?

E.   Feedback

1. Who provides feedback to you about your work? How do you know whether you are successful or not?

2. How is feedback given to you?

3. Who provided feedback to you about your work in AR teams? How?

II.   Transition Mechanisms

A.   Sense Making

1. How do you see your work in the school now? Has this changed since the beginning of the NEI's project?

2. What has caused the changes in the sense that you make of your work?

B.   Motivation

1. Have the changes in your work made you happier and more excited about your work?

C. Learning

1. How helpful has the NEI's PDP /other training been for the performance of your work and responsibilities?

2. Do you feel that you have had enough/suitable professional support to do your work to the best of your abilities?

III. Organizational Structures

A. School Leadership Team (SLT)

1. Did you have leadership teamwork in place in your school before your participation in the NEI's project? If so, please describe the purpose, membership and operation.

2. What is the role of the SLT?

3. Has the role of the principal changed since you have the SLT?

4. What is the role of principal?

5. Has the SLT's work been helpful to you / to the school? If yes, in what ways? Please provide concrete examples.

B. Action Research Teams (ART)

1. Did you work in teams before your participation in the NEI's project? If so, please describe the purpose and organization.

2. What was the purpose of AR teams during your participation in the NEI's project? How successful was the AR teams' work in your school? How did AR teamwork affect your motivation for their professional improvement and school-wide instructional improvement?

3. Do you still work in AR teams? Do you work in other teams? If so, please elaborate on who initiates teamwork, the purpose of teamwork, and the relationships in teacher teams.

4. Has the NEI contributed to the development of teacher teamwork in your school? If so, in what ways?

IV. Interactions

A. Relationships

1. Can you describe your relationships in the staff room? What were they like before you joined the NEI's project? Have they changed? If so, how? What caused the changes?

2. Have you noticed changes in your relationships with the principal? If so, what are they?

3. How did you perceive the work that your colleagues did on the SLT? Has that changed your relationship with these colleagues? If yes, how?

4. How did the relationships in the AR team develop? Have you kept them after the NEI project ended?

B. Degree of Collaborative Learning

1. Did your participation in the NEI's project contribute to organizational learning? In what ways? Did the structure of SLT and ART help organizational learning?

2. Have you been engaged in a similar on-going professional training for the whole faculty like the one you experienced in the NEI's project since it ended? Do you continue to engage in collaborative learning? If yes, how?

C. Collective Meaning Making

1. On what occasions do you work together with your colleagues? How is your collaborative work supported?

2. Do you know about your colleague's work in the classroom? Do you feel you are part of a team?

3. Have you addressed school vision and goals since the end of the NEI? If yes, how?

V. New Patterns of Control

1. What kind of decisions does the SLT make?

2. Which decisions are the principal's responsibility?

3. How does the SLT communicate their decisions?

4. How does the principal communicate his /her decisions?

5. Are you involved in decision-making? How? For what kind of decisions?

6. Do you involve students and their parents in decision making? How? For what kind of decisions?

VI.   Outcomes

A.   Providing and Selling a Vision

1. Did you agree to enter the NEI's project? Were you asked?

2. Do you have a school vision? Did you participate in creating the school vision?

3. Do you think that as an organization, you are pursuing collective goals? If yes, what are they? How was collective commitment to common goals built?

4. What persuaded you to step out of your classrooms to work on ART/on school-wide goals? How did you continue with that after the NEI's project ended?

B.   Providing Encouragement

1. Do you still work on improving instruction? What keeps you going?

2. What kind of support did you receive when you worked in AR teams?

3. What kind of support do you receive for working in other teams?

4. Is individual/team achievement recognized? How?

C.   Obtaining Resources

1. Did you have suitable resources necessary for the changes that you were expected to implement in the NEI's project (work redesign, professional training, equipment, etc.)?

2. How is your continuous improvement work further supported?

D.   Adapting SOPs

1. Have standard operating procedures been changed to accommodate the expected change (time for teamwork, team meetings, common planning time, additional workload, ensuring that instruction is not disturbed, meetings with the NEI, professional development activities, etc.)?

E.   Monitoring the Improvement Effort

1. Who has monitored the implementation of change in teaching (during the project, after the project)? How?

F.   Handling Disturbances

1. Have you had resistance to change among teachers? If yes, how did you handle teacher resistance?

2. Do you still experience teacher resistance? If yes, has the way it is addressed changed?

VII.   NEI's PDP

1. What in the PDP has been particularly useful to you (content, approach, methods used)?

2. What did you miss in the program? What would you change in the program?

3. What kind of support do you still receive/need from the NEI?

Title, name Principal   School, Address
Date:

Dear …..title, last name:

My name is Sonja Sentočnik and I am a doctoral student working on my dissertation at Lehigh University in the United States at present. Previously, I worked for the National Education Institute in Slovenia. I am studying the development of distributed leadership in schools, and how the National Education Institute's incentive addressed school-level leadership capacity building. I would like to collect data for my dissertation research in the third cohort of the schools that participated in the National Education Institute's pilot project Didactic Reform. Since your school was one of the third cohort schools, I would like to ask your permission to collect data in your school in the fall 2009. If possible, I would like to come to your school two to three times to observe the site, preferably together with you or with one of your teachers, and to conduct three 60-90 minute interviews. I would like to interview you, your school leadership team, and a group of 6-8 teachers selected by you that will be available during my visit who worked actively in the action research teams during the Didactic Reform project. The interviews can be spread over three days to minimize the intrusion that my visit may cause to the normal operation of your school day. The questions I will ask in the interview will be related to your work in the National Education Institute's pilot project Didactic Reform, especially to the formulation and operation of the school leadership team, action research teams, and other cross-departmental teams, and the nature of support you received from the National Education Institute and their professional development program implemented in your school (please find the three interview protocols attached: the Principal Interview, the School Leadership Team Interview, and the Teacher Interview). In addition, I would like to ask your permission to review the documents related to your implementation of distributed leadership, such as the Didactic Reform school project interim reports and working papers, correspondence between your school leadership team and the staff, and agendas and summaries or minutes of the school leadership and action research team meetings. I would like to assure you that any data gathered in your school, including the answers to questions provided during the interviews or in informal conversations with you and your staff will remain strictly confidential. To help protect your confidentiality, you will be assigned a pseudonym, which will be used in all published and written reports resulting from this study. As compensation for your time dedicated to my study, I would be happy to offer you and your teachers a workshop of your choice in August 2010 when I return to Slovenia after I finish my doctorate. In addition, an indirect benefit to your participation in my study may be an opportunity for you to reflect on your practice and thus develop a better understand of what you have achieved and how you can further improve your school performance. Finally, I will share with you my research findigs.
I look forward to a possibility of our collaboration. I will follow up by phone or email to acertain your willingness to participate in this study and to shedule time for my site visits.
Kind regards, Sonja Sentočnik

RESEARCHER BIOGRAPHY

Sonja Sentočnik

Academic Background

2012   Ed.D. Educational Leadership
                Lehigh University College of Education

1998   M.Ed. Educational Leadership
                Lehigh University College of Education

1986   BA English as a Foreign Language and Comparative Literature
                University of Ljubljana Faculty of Arts

Professional Experience

2010 – present   Independent Researcher and School Consultant

Summer 2010   Adjunct Professor, Lehigh University College of Education
                Comparative Education and International Program

2005 – 2010   Graduate Assistant, Lehigh University College of Education

1994 – 2005   Senior Advisor and Project Leader, National Education Institute,
Slovenia

1989 – 1994   High School Teacher of English and Literature, IIIrd High
School,

                Maribor

1987 – 1989   Interpreter and Translator, Metalna Maribor, Steel Fabricators and
                Constructors

Selected Publications

Sentočnik, S. (2011). Kako izobraževati učitelje v kontekstu nasprotujočih si zahtev,
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