LEADERSHIP PRACTICES THAT SUPPORT DIVERSE LEARNERS FROM EARLY CHILDHOOD THROUGH ADULTHOOD

Harvey A. Rude, Rashida Banerjee
University of Northern Colorado, USA

Abstract

This article addresses the components of leadership and the effective demonstration of leadership behavior that supports strong systems of social welfare from an interdisciplinary perspective. The applications of evidence-based leadership principles are embedded within the context of systems that address the needs of all learners from early childhood through adulthood. Leadership considerations include values-based practice, effective use of data, and team learning for systems improvement.

Key words: *leadership; team learning; adaptive challenges; organizational change; evidence-based leadership; transformational leadership.*

Leadership practices that support diverse learners from early childhood through adulthood

The challenge of providing leadership for the purposes of initiating, developing, and maintaining excellent educational services and supports to diverse learners can be a difficult proposition for professionals in the disciplines of social welfare and education. This ongoing dilemma for human service professionals has been described in a variety of contexts as a call for leadership without easy answers (Heifetz, Grashow, & Linksky, 2009). The difficulty of engaging adults in a collaborative attitude to effect positive changes in the education of diverse learners can seem like herding cats, or in another cultural context, bringing together vast numbers of "free range" camels roaming across the desert landscape into a coherent and focused team that can work together to achieve a common purpose.

The difficult work of building the capacity and independent capabilities of learners begins at an early age, and is compounded by the temptation to provide too much support, which makes it difficult to foster independence, self-regulation, and self-determination for young learners (Milteniene & Venclovaite, 2012). As a single parent of four children, including a nine year-old and four year-old triplets, I frequently felt overwhelmed at the amount of time required to support children in learning independence and self-reliance in everyday tasks. The statement that accompanies this challenge can be synthesized in the following words: "I would have finished this by now, but I had help." This simple statement resonates for any individual within a human service organization who endeavors to provide leadership that builds capacity and self-reliance in pursuit of enhance outcomes, learning, and results for clients. These young people (my children) eventually developed into competent and self-determined human service professionals who are highly effective in their professional roles as teachers and clinical counselors.

Evidence-based leadership practices

Scientific problem: Two questions that have challenged scholars over the course of centuries are the basic concerns for: "What is leadership?" and, "What does it mean to effectively demonstrate leadership?" In the professional literature devoted to the study of leadership, there are more than 100 distinct definitions of leadership (Antonakis, Cianciolo, & Sternberg, 2004; Bass, 1990; Conger & Riggio, 2007; Rost, 1991). Leadership is a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon. The investigation of evidence-based practices that support effective leadership has significant promise for positive changes in human services from a variety of cultural and global perspectives (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004).

Aim of the research: The purpose of this article is to summarize the evidence-based components of leadership and the effective demonstration of leadership behavior. The implications of this line of inquiry have significant implications for the effectiveness of organizations that promote social welfare from an interdisciplinary perspective.

Methodology used: The conceptual foundation for leadership is drawn from the extensive theoretical literature on the topic that has evolved through the study of leadership through different disciplinary perspectives including: "anthropology, business administration, educational administration, history, military science, nursing administration, organizational behavior, philosophy, political science, public administration, psychology, sociology, and theology" (Rost, 1991, p. 45). The conceptual framework that guides the adaptive leadership model is based on earlier conceptions that defined leadership from different perspectives that include: (1) traits or innate qualities of individuals as leaders; (2) behavioral approaches that focus on task and relationship behaviors in the organizational setting; (3) situational approaches that consider the match between the leader's style and specific situational variables; (4) relational approaches that examine the nature of relations between leaders and followers; (5) transformational or "new leadership" approaches that describe a process that changes people and organizations; and (6) emerging leadership approaches that consider dimensions of authenticity, spirituality, servant leadership, and cultural/global perspectives on leadership (Northouse, 2012, p. 2).

The applications of transformational and emerging paradigms of leadership provide a synthesis of how leaders and the demonstration of effective leadership are defined. The collection of evidence-based practices in leadership is summarized through examples of high performance teams, implementation science, and culturally responsive leadership. The definition of successful outcomes from effective leadership is demonstrated through attention to documented results and learning that provide tangible benefits to children and families who are involved in social welfare systems (Anttila & Rude, 2011).

Values in leadership

Leadership in absence of identified values that guide the application of knowledge and skills is untenable for a variety of reasons. The early trait theorists in the era of scientific management posited that some individuals are born to be leaders, while the vast majority would be subscribed to roles as followers in a given organizational context. The great men theories of Thomas Carlyle (1888) run counter to the prevailing approaches that surmised such great men are the products of their societies, and that their actions would be impossible without the social conditions built before their lifetimes (Spencer, 1896). The key issue that emerges from this conversation about whether the person makes the event, or the contextual event makes the person, is the question of whether power and position have intrinsic worth. The challenge of leadership is to demonstrate the necessary courage, commitment, and skill to apply what is needed to effect the necessary changes to move people in new directions. History

is replete with examples of leaders who acted on values and beliefs that did not support the best interests of all people.

The effective exercise of leadership includes a combination of both position power and individual influence. Burns (2003) identified the tenets of transformational leadership that are based on 00shared values for the pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness for all members of a society. The station that is provided to leaders by virtue of title, authority, position power, or other tangible factors that permit individuals to direct the actions of others are complemented by the influence that can be exerted by the accomplishments and expert power that results from demonstrated competence. Within the dynamic of station and influence, there is always a choice regarding whether to lead or mislead, that is to say acting on the values that support children and families through the ability to transform the conditions that can be changed to achieve a more beneficial outcome. A transformational approach to leadership does not rely on the simple transactions that are found in a "quid pro quo" dynamic that expects a mutual exchange of items deemed to have value. The concept of transformational leadership is often based on resolving conflicts through the creative ability to generate alternative perspectives and points of view (Lencioni, 2002). The major responsibility of leaders who ascribe to this paradigm is to mobilize people to tackle tough problems that would otherwise be avoided. The initial focus within such a dynamic is to provide different avenues for engagement in a difficult situation that ultimately leads to a level of empowerment where organizational members can exert their own leadership to achieve new learning and results.

Kukic and Rude (2013) define effective leaders and the exercise of effective leadership in terms of the capacity to demonstrate: (1) integrity; (2) authenticity; (3) a commitment to something larger than oneself; and (4) the ability to become cause in the matter. A brief explanation of these four foundational pillars of effective leadership illustrates the importance of values in leadership.

Conceptual foundations of leadership. A viable conceptual foundation of leadership is based on the contextualized nature of being a leader and exercising leadership in a manner that is effective (Erhard & Jensen, 2012). These contexts include the view of leader and leadership on four major dimensions including linguistic abstractions (i.e., the realm of possibility), phenomena (i.e., what one observes or is impacted by), concepts (i.e., different domains for the demonstration of leadership), and terms (i.e., specific definitions of both leader and leadership). Within these contexts, one of the most important ingredients for effective leadership is integrity, which is simply your word defined. This includes what you said, what you know, and what is expected of you. It would be easy to conclude that integrity in practice is best demonstrated by the golden rule of: "do unto others as you would have them do unto you." A world in which everyone followed the golden rule would be wonderful. However, the dilemma that emerges with this definition of integrity is that this rule of action leaves one with no power. Each individual is left depending on the good will of other to benefit personally.

The meaning of authenticity in leadership is being and acting consistent with who you hold yourself out to be for others, including who you allow others to hold you to be, and who you hold yourself to be for yourself. While this is fairly obvious, what is very much less obvious is the path to authenticity. Lencioni (2012) points out how the path to authenticity is being authentic about those occasions when you are not being authentic. The ability to detect inauthenticity in one's own behaviors is a key to effective leadership.

Being committed to something bigger than oneself is more than altruism. Those who commit to accomplishing something that provides a societal benefit or promotes conditions of well-being for significant groups of citizens derive a source of serene passion required to lead and to develop others as leaders (Hall & Hord, 2006). This becomes a source of persistence that makes it difficult to deviate from commitments when the path to accomplishment gets

tough. A key question that arises in this context is: "Are you committed to being bigger than the way you wound up being?" In other words, what is your purpose in life, and what is the purpose of your career or relationships?

Being cause in the matter means everything in your life as a stand that you take for yourself and life, and acting on the basis of that stance. Effective leaders are accountable, and take full responsibility for their actions and lack of action. In this sense, leaders have significant power that avoids the trap of becoming a victim. Victims have no power, and someone who chooses to be cause in the matter cannot be a victim. Cause in the matter is a context I give to myself to be effective as a leader and the effective exercise of leadership. It is not about the content of a given situation.

Kukic and Rude (2013) determine the ethical application of these four conceptual foundations that result in the ontology of being a successful leader and the phenomenology of doing leadership in an effective approach that produces significant outcomes, learning, and results. The critical consideration to be observed for both dimensions is the identification of the priorities for action that become the basis for ongoing work to achieve better outcomes. The most important priorities are often difficult to define and address through existing approaches, which underscores the importance of leaders in defining the nature of adaptive work in organizations.

Differences between adaptive and technical work

The comparisons between biological evolution and the evolutionary change of successful organizations have common points of reference. A species will change as the genetic program changes to adapt to changing conditions and demands. Heifitz and Linsky (2002) found that an organization is bound by cultural mores and values that seek equilibrium to maintain the sense of security that is bounded by "the way we do things around here". The manner in which cultures change is through new learning, that is frequently expressed by recognition that individuals are not satisfied with the status quo, and are open to the consideration of new learning that leads to personal change and commitment. The key questions to be raised in adaptive work are: "What is it we are adapting to become?" and "For what purpose are we adapting?"

The concept of authority in leadership is distinctly different from influence. The ability to influence the worldview of organizational members is not restricted to those who hold official positions of power and authority. The ability of leaders to exercise influence on the members of an organization are based on the ability to assess current realities and clarify the values that maintain a set of practices, knowledge bases, or attitudes. The task of leadership in addressing adaptive work is to develop a creative tension regarding what currently exists (i.e., the confrontation of brutal facts and realities that define the current conditions and practices) in comparison to the assessment of what could be created to define the ideal future for the organization and the individuals it serves. Thomas Kuhn (1962), in his classic work on the structure of scientific revolutions, espoused the difficulties involved in moving away from established practice, even when the evidence is clear that existing practice is not producing the expected results. There will never be enough data, evidence, research, or proof that will convince others to commit to a created future. The reason for committing to the created future is based on the realization that the default future has failed to make the organization, system, or individual complete.

Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky (2009) have found it helpful to understand the concept of adaptive work in comparison to the more widely understood concept of technical work. Technical work is easy to understand through a set of clearly defined problems, accompanying solutions, and responsibility for implementation typically assigned to a responsible leader with

the appropriate authority to accomplish a resolution to the problem. In contrast, adaptive work typically does not have well defined problems or solutions. The process of defining a problem requires new learning on the part of organizational members, as does the generation of a workable solution to address the identified problem. These problems of practice are commonly referred to as adaptive challenges rather than technical problems. The responsibility for creating the conditions to support new learning to define the adaptive challenge and generate potential solutions expects greater responsibility on the part of all stakeholders who are impacted by the adaptive challenge. In this scenario, the responsibility for resolution is not the purview of the authority figure within an organization, but rather shared in a distributive context with those who have the greatest influence impact others through relationships and creating the conditions for new learning to occur.

Adaptive work requires a significant longer timeframe to identify the nature of the problem, the potential solutions that can address the concern, and the commitment to action in comparison to technical work. Adaptive work is frequently couched in terms of experimental work that requires attention to implementation science (Fixsen, Blase, Duda, Naoom, & Van Dyke, 2011). Adaptive challenges typically generate disequilibrium and avoidance on the part of organizational members. This calls for leaders who are comfortable with the symptoms of conflict that define the dimensions of an adaptive challenge.

Four distinct dimensions that highlight the differences between technical and adaptive work include direction, protection, conflict, and norms. There are situations that require attention to technical work and adaptive work, depending on the role of the leader. When the focus for leadership is concerned with determining the direction to be pursued, technical approaches highlight the need to define the problem and solution, while adaptive approaches are concerned with framing issues and posing key questions. When considering the need for protection, technical problem orientations seek to protect organizational members from external threats, while adaptive challenge focused leadership seeks to disclose the external threat to mobilize action. The inevitable conflicts that arise within organizations are concerned with restoring order in the technical paradigm, while adaptive leadership is concerned with exposing the conflict and allowing it to fully emerge. Table 1 provides a comparison of leadership behaviors from a technical and adaptive leadership approach.

Table 1. Considerations from technical and adaptive leadership

Area of focus	Technical leadership	Adaptive leadership
Direction	Provide both the definition of the problem and the solution to that problem.	Frame the issues for consideration by group members and identify key questions for consideration.
Protection	Protect organizational members from external threats.	Disclose the external threats and inform organizational members about the challenges.
Conflict	Restore order and protect individuals from conflict.	Expose conflicts and encourage individuals to confront the resulting adaptive challenges.
Norms	Maintain commitment to operational norms and agreements.	Allow challenge to norms to occur and support challenge within the organization.

Finally, the operating norms within a technical model focus on maintenance of bureaucracy, while adaptive leadership seeks to challenge existing norms and channel the resulting challenge into a more responsive system. The classic error that is most frequently identified is the tendency to treat adaptive challenges as if they were technical problems. For example, educators who are expected to develop new skills in the role of effective coaches for their colleagues may rely on what is already known about teaching young learners and not consider the benefits of adult education as an essential new learning. To avoid this dilemma, it is critical to consider the purpose of leadership as mobilizing stakeholders to become engaged in adaptive work. Leadership is an activity, with or without authority, not defined by personality traits, power, influence, or position.

High performance teams

The notion of distributive leadership that supports the capacity of professionals concerned with the social welfare of all citizens, including those with the most challenging circumstance or disabilities, has great potential to create and sustain high performance teams. Wheelan (2010) identified the benefits of such efforts. Team norms encourage high performance and quality. The team expects to be successful. The team encourages innovation. The team pays attention to the details of the work. This supports the values-based goals of transformation that departs from more traditional organizational arrangements that tend to fragment individuals into separate goals, perceived roles, and points of view.

The key to transformation of organizational culture takes on the fervent emphasis of an extreme makeover of existing practices. High performing teams move from a culture of separate work to one that is focused on shared work. Communication evolves from a locus of communicating personal interests to communicating how personal interests are an important part of the total pictures. This encourages human service professionals to move beyond a focus of talking and working with others in the same role, to routine interactions with others who do shared work. Nutt (2002) views the ultimate benefit of this transformation as moving from the definition of social welfare organizations and stakeholders as adversaries, to a systemic orientation that supports these organizations and stakeholders as allies. Any organization concerned with advancing the work of social welfare benefits from this broad-based orientation.

Perhaps the most critical skill that high performance team members can develop is the ability to practice dialogue in daily practice, and differentiate this communication skill from the more typical institutional focus on discussion or debate. The concept of dialogue, or shared meaning in conversation, has the potential to raise the collective intelligence of any group. Heisenberg (1971) provided groundbreaking work arguing that all science is rooted in conversations. While debate accepts assumptions as truth and discussion surfaces various assumptions, dialogue examines assumptions so that meaning moves through the group. While debate typically engenders point/counterpoint exchanges and discussion relies on the will of the majority where it is possible to agree to disagree, dialogue seeks common ground and supports consensus. Finally, while debate is concerned with being persuasive and discussion is informative, dialogue has the larger goal of encouraging reflection and the ability to engage in team learning.

Senge (1990) reminds us that team learning does not require individual team members to practice one way of thinking about issues. The ongoing practice of dialogue actually encourages individual communication styles that enhance the overall impact of dialogue in effective teams. Parker (2008) identified four essential team player styles that are complementary to the success of team learning and higher performing teams including the challenger, the contributor, the communicator, and the collaborator. The challenger style is question oriented, asks the tough questions, and pushes teams to take reasonable risks. The contributor is task

oriented, and gets the team to focus on the immediate task. The communicator is more process oriented, and seeks to support interpersonal relationships and group process effectiveness. The collaborator is goal oriented, and emphasizes the overall purpose of the team. These four distinct and complementary approaches to team learning support the impact and effectiveness of high performance teams.

Leadership as moral imperative for effective organizations. Fullan (2011) has studied the critical nature of leadership as a moral imperative that becomes the strategy for improving schools and other human service organizations. To be successful in this arena, effective leaders have six major responsibilities in pursuit of this objective including: (a) make a personal commitment; (b) build relationships; (c) focus on implementation; (d) develop the collaborative; (e) connect to the outside; and (f) be relentless to divert the distractors. A personal commitment is essential to support, activate, extract, and galvanize a moral commitment from teachers and other human service providers. Building relationships requires that leaders lead with respect, even before people have earned it. A focus on implementation assures focus, monitoring in relation to the focus, and displaying a strong sense of efficacy. Developing the collaborative can be accomplished through promotion of learning communities that build the collective capacity of systems, since leaders with moral purpose don't do it alone. Connecting to the outside is essential to have sufficient infrastructure across larger systems and communities. The final ingredient, being relentless to divert distractors, leads to increased focus and coherence of efforts, which leads to more effective outcomes, learning, and results for clients who are the beneficiaries of social welfare systems.

A tangible example of the moral imperative in action is represented through the Diné Education Philosophy that promotes thinking, planning, accomplishing, and reflecting. Begaye (2006) illustrates the importance of maintaining a focus on these aspects of indigenous culture to maintain identity while confronting the inevitable adaptations to social, political, and economic challenges. The key definitions of Diné Education Philosophy are represented in Figure 1 through the corresponding Navajo words of Nitsahakees, Nahat'a, Iina, and Sihasin. The ongoing attention to these learning principles provides a strong foundation for effective leadership in diverse cultural and linguistic contexts. The shrinking of the world through technological advances and the influences of cross-cultural communication provides greater incentives to address the study of global and cultural perspectives on leadership. The Diné Education Philosophy provides a strong sense of purpose and spirituality from a Native American educational point of view, while offering the benefits of a strategic planning process tool from a Western educational application. The ability to acknowledge the strengths and unique perspectives of these two cultural contexts leads to a balanced leadership in support of the moral imperative.
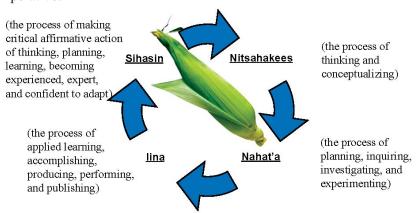

(the process of making critical affirmative action of thinking, planning, learning, becoming experienced, expert, and confident to adapt)

Sihasin

Nitsahakees

(the process of thinking and conceptualizing)

(the process of applied learning, accomplishing, producing, performing, and publishing)

Iina

Nahat'a

(the process of planning, inquiring, investigating, and experimenting)

Figure 1. Dine Education Philosophy

Within the context of leadership as a moral imperative, a guiding set of ideals is offered for consideration. Leaders of systemic improvements adhere to the basic premise that all children can learn, including the most disadvantaged and challenged among us. A small number of key priorities will ensure a clear and concise focus on effectiveness. Resolute leadership is represented by individuals who stay on message, and do not get distracted by the chaos of rough periods found in daily events. The collective capacity refers to the complementary aspects of disciplined collaboration and the intriguing phenomenon of "collaborative competition." The ability to identify strategies with precision enhances the speed of quality change for transformation of human service organizations concerned with human welfare (Fixsen et al., 2005). The failure to develop effective accountability approaches plagues all human service organizations, and is best addressed through intelligent accountability systems that will be described in greater detail. Finally, all does mean all. Gay (2000) documented the impact of ineffective leadership through piecemeal efforts, and how most successful efforts do not exclude, but rather practice and promote inclusivity.

Intelligent accountability is a relatively new phenomenon as advanced by Fullan (2010). The key to success in intelligent accountability is to rely on incentives more than punishment. An organization that invests in capacity building so that people can meet goals is being intelligent with accountability. The focus of these efforts is invested in collective or internal accountability. When interventions are required to maintain focus, these efforts are initially implemented in a nonjudgmental manner. The impact of intelligent accountability embraces transparent data and practices to ensure common understanding of results. Lastly, intelligent accountability advocates intervene more decisively when required.

Leadership applications to organizations concerned with social welfare

The demonstrated impact of leadership relies on a relentless commitment to assessing current realities in organizations that serve the needs of individuals within the variety of human service and social welfare systems. This provides significant support to avoid the unintended outcomes of various human service systems. Some examples of unintended consequences of special education programs and services include the following: increased dropout rates, the differential status of various high school diplomas, limited employment opportunities, the school to prison pipeline, the problem of over-representation of students from different cultural backgrounds in special education, and the lack of attention to the specific needs of college students with disabilities (Valle & Conner, 2011).

The cross-cultural benefits to leadership are represented through the applications of transformational leadership for Native American educators who seek to provide leadership within tribal communities in the United States. Rude and Omdal (2009) describe a model of Native American leadership that embraces the necessary balance between Western and Native traditional practices that are inherently confronted with conflict that requires appropriate attention to adaptations in practices that impact values, beliefs, norms, culture, and language. The continuum of adaptation includes the Native American focus on the duality of Mother Earth and Father Sky (e.g., Mother Earth refers to the "blessing way" nurturing aspects of support, while Father Sky emphasizes the protection way aspects of structure), Hozho which is the Diné (i.e., Navajo Nation tribe) concept of blessing way teachings. The predominate Western values are expressed through negotiation and compromise, while the middle ground in the balanced model of Native American leadership seeks harmony and balance within the system.

Practical considerations of leadership for schools and human service professionals can best be seen through ongoing expectations for positive school climate and a focus on results that includes verifiable data. Positive school climate can be measured through the efforts to engage teachers in collaborative team processes that use data to guide instruction (Kaffemaniene & Jureviciene, 2012). It is imperative to include families in a culturally sensitive, solution focused

approach to support student learning. An essential practice that supports positive school climate is defining and consistently teaching expectations of behavior for students, parents, and educators. The ability to acknowledge and recognize students and adults consistently for appropriate behaviors leads directly to a positive, generative, and powerful school climate. It is essential to monitor, correct, and when necessary re-teach appropriate behaviors when behavioral anomalies are identified.

Deshler and Cornett (2012) conclude that the impact of leadership practices must be documented through reliable and valid systems of data to ensure accountability. The role of leader in facilitating data discussions is the engine that drives the enterprise of professional learning communities. A variety of strategies can be employed to achieve this purpose, including data dialogue meetings, grade or content level meetings within individual schools, and conducting meetings that are efficient, organized, and scheduled on a regular basis. The data discussions can be sustained through considering whole group adjustments in practice, flexible group *changes*, or class changes at the secondary school level. Another target is the identification of curricular gaps based on systematic review of class benchmarks or other data.

Conclusion and future directions

In conclusion, the emphasis on effective and evidence-based leadership practice adds significant value to the complex challenge of interdisciplinary approaches for social welfare systems. The challenge of transformational leadership addresses the complexity of systems change from a variety of perspectives. As you travel this road, perhaps the road less traveled, consider the impact of leadership that is best characterized through the complexity of organizational and systemic change. Leaders can act on behalf of positive or negative outcomes in this enterprise. The challenge for the future is to select the guiding values that will make a positive difference in the lives of children, families, educators, and other human service providers that strive to actively promote the state of human welfare on a global scale.

The ability to apply these key components within social welfare systems hinges to the greatest extent on the ability to demonstrate commitment to change as a person, a human service provider, and a leader of innovation in multiple contexts. Change leaders are models of integrity and authenticity in their daily roles and responsibilities. These critical qualities provide the impetus to ensure that ethical leaders are committed to developing a created future that is clearly about something bigger than position, title, prestige, salary, or other aspects of self-consideration. Successful leaders get to the future first, and find the means to bring their organizational colleagues to new commitments and levels of growth and impact where they would not go on their own. Safe travels to you as you pursue the exciting, unpredictable, and highly rewarding journey of organizational change and growth.

References
1. Anttila, J. L., & Rude, H. A. (2011). Underrepresented groups in gifted education: A logic model program evaluation case study. In J. A. Castellano & A. D. Frazier (Eds.). *Special populations in gifted education: Understanding our most able students from diverse backgrounds* (pp. 417-446). Waco, TX: Prufrock Press.
2. Antonakis, J., Cianciolo, A. T., & Sternberg, R. J. (Eds.). (2004). *The nature of leadership.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
3. Bass, B. M. (1990). *Bass and Stogdill's handbook of leadership A survey of theory and research.* New York: Free Press.
4. Begaye, T. (2006). Defining the context and understanding behind language and culture in native communities. In D. Beaulieu and A. M. Figueira (Eds.), *The power of native teachers.* (pp. 93-111). Phoenix, AZ: The Center for Indian Education.

5.   Burns, J. M. (2003). *Transforming leadership: A new pursuit of happiness.* New York: Grove Press.
6.   Carlyle, T. (1888). *On heroes, hero-worship and the heroic in history*. New York: Fredrick A. Stokes & Brother.
7.   Conger, J. A., & Riggio, R. E. (Eds.). (2007). *The practice of leadership: Developing the next generation of leaders.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
8.   Deshler, D. D. & Cornett, J. (2012). Learding to improve teacher effectiveness: Implications for practice, reform, research, and policy. In J. B. Crockett, B. Billingsley, and M. L. Boscardin (Eds.), *Handbook of leadership and administration for special education* (pp. 239-259). New York: Taylor & Francis.
9.   Erhard, W. & Jensen, M. C. (2012). *Being a leader and the effective exercise of leadership: An ontological phenomenological model*. Boston, MA: Landmark Education.
10. Fixsen, D. L, Blase, K. A., Duda, M. A., Naoom, S. F., & Van Dyke, M. K. (2011). Sustainability of evidence-based programs in education. *Journal of Evidence-Based Practices for Schools*, *11 (1).*
11. Fixsen, D. L., Naoom, S. F., Blase, K. A., Friedman, R. M., & Wallace, F. (2005). *Implementation research: A synthesis of the literature*. Tampa: University of South Florida.
12. Fullan, M. (2011). *The moral imperative realized*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
13. Fullan, M. (2010). *All systems go: The change imperative for whole system reform*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
14. Gay, G. (2000). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, & practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.
15. Hall, G. E. & Hord, S. M. (2006). *Implementing change: Patterns, principles, and potholes (2nd ed.).* Boston: Pearson Education.
16. Heifetz, R., Grashow, A., & Linsky, M. (2009). *The practice of adaptive leadership.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business Press.
17. Heifetz, R., & Linsky, M. (2002). *Leadership on the line: Staying alive through the dangers of leading.* Boston, MA: Harvard Business Press.
18. Heisenberg, W. (1971). *Physics and Beyond: Encounters and Conversations*. New York: Harper and Row.
19. House, R. J., Hanges, P. J., Javidan, M., Dorfman, P. W., & Gupta, V. (2004). *Leadership, culture, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
20. Kaffemaniene, I., & Jureviciene, M. (2012). Opportunities for modeling social skills education based on the individual's strengths. *Baltic Journal of Special Education, 2(27),* 175-186.
21. Kuhn, T. S. (1962). *The structure of scientific revolutions.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
22. Kukic, S. & Rude, H. (2013). *Organizational change: Transformative leadership for special education.* Warner Robins, GA: Council of Administrators of Special Education.
23. Lencioni, P. (2012). *The advantage*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
24. Lencioni, P. (2002). *The five dysfunctions of a team*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
25. Milteniene, L., & Venclovaite, I. (2012). Teacher collaboration in the context of inclusive education. *Baltic Journal of Special Education, 2(27),* 111-123.
26. Northouse, P. G. (2012). *Introduction to leadership* (2nd ed.,). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
27. Nutt, P. C. (2002). *Why decisions fail.* San Francisco, CA: Barrett-Kohler Publishers.
28. Parker, G. M. (2008). Team players and teamwork: New strategies for developing successful collaboration. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.
29. Rost, J. C. (1991). *Leadership for the twenty-first century.* Westport, CT: Praeger.
30. Rude, H. A. & Omdal, S. O. (2009). Native American perspectives on giftedness: Walking in beauty while scaling the heights. In N. L. Hafenstein (Ed.), *Perspectives in gifted education: Diverse gifted learners.* (pp. 83-109). Denver, CO: Ricks Institute for the Development of Gifted Education.
31. Senge, P. (1990). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization.* New York: Random House.
32. Spencer, H. (1896). *The study of sociology.* New York: Appleton Publishers.
33. Valle, J. W. & Conner, D. J. (2011). *Rethinking disability: A disability studies approach to inclusive practices.* New York: McGraw-Hill.
34. Wheelan, S. (2010). *Creating effective teams: A guide for members and leaders.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishers.

LEADERSHIP PRACTICES THAT SUPPORT DIVERSE LEARNERS FROM EARLY CHILDHOOD THROUGH ADULTHOOD

Summary

Harvey A. Rude, Rashida Banerjee
University of Northern Colorado, USA

One of the most important considerations to be addressed in the provision of effective social welfare services to persons from diverse cultural, linguistic, and economic backgrounds is the provision of effective leadership. While researchers have consistently articulated the importance of leadership, the definition of what it means to be a leader and effectively demonstrate leadership has more than 100 different conceptualizations that are documented in the research literature. The determination of what it means to be a leader and to effectively demonstrate leadership is of critical importance to social welfare agencies that seek to make a positive difference in the lives of individuals across the life span. This issue has been investigated by scholars over the course of centuries, and assumes a greater degree of importance in the context of an evolving global and multi-cultural society. The current investigation summarized the evidence-based components of leadership and the effective demonstration of leadership behavior. This supports the success of organizations that promote social welfare from an interdisciplinary perspective.

This article identifies a conceptual framework for leadership that illustrates the importance of being a leader (i.e., an ontological perspective) and effectively demonstrating leadership in multiple contexts (i.e., a phenomenological perspective). These elements include: integrity, authenticity, commitment to something larger than self, and ability to be a cause in the matter or outcome. The evidence of effective leadership is provided through the determination of outcome measures that directly address results and learning, including the following: (1) the determination of adaptive leadership that creates new understanding of adaptive challenges, and builds the capacity of organizational members to pursue new directions and commitments for greater efficacy; (2) team learning strategies that promote and support the individual contributions of team members; (3) organizational outcomes that are measured through implementation science; and, (4) the impact of culturally responsive leadership from a global perspective must be documented through reliable and valid systems of data to ensure accountability.

The ultimate measure of an effective leader is the demonstrated ability to involve other members of an organization to commit to a created future those individuals would not choose to pursue on their own. The alternative to the created future is a default future, one that will be maintained through the bureaucratic influences of governmental and non-governmental agencies alike, that tends to preserve the status quo. The ability to create commitments to change at the personal, team, organizational, and systems levels of impact is critical to the demonstration of effective leadership that results in beneficial outcomes for clients within any human service system. Successful leaders create a vision of improved conditions and outcomes through a relentless commitment to organizational change, and inspire others to join this quest for sustained improvements with a goal of excellence for service providers and individuals who benefit from these services from early childhood through adulthood.