Developing the Leaders We Want to Follow: lessons from an International Leadership Development programme

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This paper focuses on the Conference theme of learning and learning leaders: tracing implications for leaders and leadership in supporting learning

ABSTRACT

Leadership of schools is increasingly seen by both researchers and policy-makers as an essential element for school improvement (Hallinger & Heck (1996, 1998), Creemers & Reezigt (1996), Leithwood & Levin (2005), Marzano, Waters & McNulty (2005)). The quality of teaching is rightly the focus for effective education but without its sound leadership it is unlikely to be effective very long. We are realising the blindingly obvious – good schools have good leadership. Moreover, a transactional (managerial) approach that is rooted in behaviourism is seen by many to be impoverished and unsustainable. Rather, transformational leadership, with its associated beliefs in sharing an involvement in leadership as well as followership that includes all of the school community, is seen as the way in which schools should be led (OECD 2006). Moreover, the further development of this approach into what some call transformative leadership is the way to address issues of social justice in schools and ultimately in society.

It is argued in this paper that such transformational (and transformative) leadership are founded on and develop the important yet slippery principle of inclusion. If inclusive leadership is so important to improving the lives of all the adults and children who work in schools, then we need to discover ways in which potential and actual leaders can learn these approaches. Such transformational learning has underpinned the planning, preparation, facilitation and evaluation of an Erasmus Intensive Programme (IP) “Leading and Managing Inclusive Education in Europe” that has run for three years (from 2008-2010) and has involved some 200 + school leaders and 50 academic and support staff from 5 Universities. These have come from Spain, England, Ireland, Turkey and Norway and all have been practitioners and part-time students on Leadership in Education Masters programmes.

The formative and summative data gathered over 3 years from interviews, questionnaires, presentations by students and surveys both during and after the IP provide convincing evidence of the power of the framework used on the programme both in terms of facilitation of leadership development programmes and impact on the quality of teaching and learning. This framework has also been tested and refined in China, England and Pakistan on other programmes (Precey & Jackson 2009). This Erasmus intensive, focussed, leadership learning experience may be seen as a laboratory for the development of transformational and transformative leaders and a number of important lessons have been learned from it. These lessons are explored in this paper. We contend that this framework is very important to anyone interested in the professional development of school and other leaders if they seek to move the organisations, for which they hold responsibility, forward

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significantly in ways that respect, engage and empower people and which are sustainable.

INTRODUCTION

Leadership matters. Leadership that values people matters. The development of leaders who value people matters. In order to achieve this we need clarity over what type of leadership values people most. This article first offers such clarity and then discusses the significance of criticality and inclusion in leadership. A resultant framework for developing leaders who value people is discussed and an example of its application is presented with lessons learned explained. If developing leaders who value people matters then so do the contents of this article.

1: THE TRANS-LEADERSHIP DEBATE

Two significant points have emerged regarding effective leadership of our schools in the 21st century. First, leaders are essential in making a difference to their schools (Leithwood and Levin et al 2005). International research (Mortimore (1993), Hallinger & Heck (1996, 1998), Creemers & Reezigt (1996), Marzano, Waters & McNulty (2005)) shows that effective school leadership is second only to effective teaching in terms of improving learning and indeed effective leadership does and should impact of this. The behaviour and underpinning attitudes of the person who leads a school are a key element in the quality of that. Behind a good school, there is a good leadership (Murillo, 2006). Leithwood et al (2006) affirm that internationally we are in a “golden age” of school leadership, since there is a confidence in understanding that leadership is one of the keys to school success. The picture across the world in terms of the value and nature of leadership is however varied. In Spain, for example, less attention has been given to school leadership and there are no organisations that focus on preparing school leaders as in some other countries, for example, the United Kingdom with the creation of National College for Leadership of Schools and Children’s Services and in Australia with the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership.

Second the way leaders lead is highly significant. Leadership can no longer be a solitary activity. Marsh (2000) for example, claims that solitary leadership blocks the development of the collaborative working necessary for success in the recent reforms in many countries and it assumes that reforms can be aligned and packaged in outdated and rigid ways. Mulford (2006) clarifies that for leadership to obtain positive results it needs to be distributed. The OECD (2006) has expressed a keenness to address the issue of future challenges for school leaders through collaborative approaches. This type of leadership is based on leaders valuing people, on developing and nurturing talent and sharing leadership throughout schools (Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, Hopkins 2006). Leaders require followers. Thus leaders need to discover, learn and develop the competencies, skills, knowledge and attitudes that encourage others to follow. Followers in such schools sometimes become leaders and leaders on occasions assume the role of followers.
If we know that leaders make a difference and leadership needs to be shared, then a basic truth about effective education is that it is based on relationships between human beings. Fielding (2007) has eloquently analysed the state of education in England based on the influential analysis of the nature of relationships by MacMurray (1961). Fielding argues that leaders (in England) have moved their schools to a resolute focus on performance in line with the Government imposed, target driven accountability system. Publicly visible, measurable test results for each pupil, teacher and school has led, in many cases, to the manipulation of relationships in purely functional ways in order to strain to meet the ever rising, externally-imposed targets. As the targets are raised in the name of continuous improvement, so the strain for all grows and relationships become more and more functional and indeed, transactional. It can be argued that this process distorts and poisons the nature of relationships upon which education rests. Fielding calls for person-centred education, where the nurturing and maintenance of human relationships based on care and concern that includes yet transcends test results, is fundamental to schools. Leadership in this context, with a concern for achievement rather than attainment characterised by inclusion, criticality, high levels of trust and collaboration, is philosophically and practically different from that solely focused of performance which increasingly pervades education in many countries across the world. Such a person-centred approach to leadership may be termed as transformational or transformative as opposed to transactional.

Writers in the field of leadership often use the terms transactional, transformational and transformative. An interpretation of the differences is offered here. Transactional leadership is rooted in rationality and behaviourism and makes use of contingency rewards and punishments. It sees schools from a positivistic perspective with knowable causes and predictable and controllable effects. If transactional leadership is suited to any organisation, it is ones that perform simple unchanging tasks – not an accurate description of unpredictable, complex and dynamic schools today.

Transformational leadership may be viewed as founded on meeting the needs of complex and diverse systems. It sets direction and develops people with the leader looking for motive and developing common purpose. This approach is often related to school effectiveness, reform and improvement and instructional leadership. Transformational leadership operates within the given political, social and economic agenda. Such school leaders follow the government-given script but in ways that value and involve people more than transactional leaders. Murillo (2006) asserts that transformational leadership must contribute to cultural change and the resolution of organisational problems. It is a dynamic process where the role of the leader will be redefined and may oscillate between being a mere bureaucratic manager and to be an agent for the change. When the leadership is distributed or shared, it becomes a more democratic practice.

The difference between transformational and transformative leadership is often confusing and unclear. Transformative leaders question and may change the given the script and seek to change society through education. Shields (2003) has helpfully articulated the difference between these two approaches to leadership. She argues strongly for transformative leadership and asserts that we “live in a world in which the promise of schooling as an agent of change remains unrealised” (p57). Hence she states a case for transformative leadership that is founded on critique and
promise, emphasising deep and equitable change in social conditions. Transformative leadership has also been eloquently described by a number of other writers (Burns 1978, Freire 1998) Foster was one of the first to use the term transformative in relation to leadership development. He asserted that leadership “must be critically educative; it cannot only look at the conditions in which we live, but it must also decide how to change them” (1989; 185). Transformation involves people changing in order to succeed within shifting environments but in the process remaining true to core beliefs and values. Shields (2009) and others (Bourdieu 1977, Said 1994) make the case for moral courage to promote social betterment and equity. The world that children go into is not simple, static, fair and perfect but rather is complex, rapidly changing, unjust and damaged. It is in desperate need of care, nurturing and improvement and this can be done through education. School leaders need to be able to see and evaluate the possibilities as far as they are known today and become equipped to lead through what is coming and, as yet, unknown. In this situation a moral compass becomes absolutely essential; one that a school leader grasps and points in a direction of travel in these difficult times and not just be one that they are trudging unquestioningly. These leaders have to engage their staff and students and do their best, in turn, to equip them if they are to face their future with confidence. Both transformational and transformative leadership are thus about process as well as purpose. “Transformational leadership.....searches for ways to help motivate followers by satisfying high-order needs and more fully engaging them in the process of work” Horner (2003:32). Burns (1978:37) maintains that “transformational leadership is about the ability of the leader to change subordinates by maximising the talents of each individual through a leadership posture sensitive to the needs of others”. There appears some consensus in the literature that both types of leadership involve building a vision of a better future; establishing organisational goals; providing intellectual stimulation; offering individualised support; modelling values; seeking best practice; demonstrating expectations of high performance; creating a productive culture and developing structures to foster participation in decision-making (Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinach (1999)). Karseth (2004) writes, from a Norwegian perspective, about the 4 ”Rs” of leadership that resonate with transformational and transformative leadership. These are:

- Raus: Open and inclusive. Such a leader values diversity and new practical approaches and new ways of thinking. They make room for experimentation and taking risks.
- Robust: They can tackle challenges, uncertainty and critique.
- Redelig: Ethical and democratic rules are followed. People are treated with respect.
- Reflekterende: Such leaders encourage critique and scepticism. They create collective spaces for knowledge building through professional discussions where all parties participate.

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In reality of course the three trans-leadership approaches are inter-related and any individual may employ different strategies from each approach or combinations of them. However, the argument is that, at heart, leaders have a disposition towards one approach. The way they regard and treat people and their behaviours, if they have integrity, flow from this. In this sense the definitions and explanation of differences is useful.

2: THE IMPORTANCE OF CRITICALITY IN TRANSFORMATION

Critical perspectives, although often resisted, are essential for effective transforming leadership and quality education. Dialogue, questioning and critical analysis inevitably raises the issue of power and some (those wedded to transactional approaches) might argue that there is no place for criticality in school leadership. Their view might be that the role of schools in western society has been and is to enculturate and socialise youth. Certainly the notion of leaders critically questioning in some cultures would not be encouraged. In some countries those elected to power in government feel that they know best and school leaders need to do what they are paid to do unquestioningly.

Writer such as Shor and Freire (1987) who advocate more radical leadership with social justice at its core, acknowledge the limits of education on the political transformation of society. They also recognise that in the classroom the transformative focus may be more in relation to developing a critical lens and practicing application to hypothetical situations rather than actual life situations. However, school leaders have opportunities to put ideas into practice albeit with external political, social and economic constraints. Critical thinking is essential to becoming a leader alongside being a reflective practitioner, particularly one with a passion for social justice and equity however unpopular this stance may be with others. It is argued that leaders need to want and be able to question previously uncritically accepted assumptions, beliefs, values and perspectives in order to make them more open, accessible and validated. Freire’s (1998) concept of “conscientization”, Mezirow’s (1978) theory of perspective transformation and Habermas’ (1996) “emancipatory action” domain of learning resonate with Cranton’s (1997) view that “Perspectives transformation is the process of becoming critically aware of how and why our assumptions have come to constrain the way we perceive, understand, and feel about the world; changing these structures of habitual expectation to make possible a more inclusive, discriminating, and integrating perspective; and finally, making choices or otherwise acting upon these new understandings” (1997:22).

3: TRANSFORMATION AND INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

Leadership that fosters inclusion, in terms of the political, ethnic, religious, special needs, socio-economic and cultural dimensions, is essential to the future of all countries in the world. As Europe, for example, grows in terms of member states, population size and diversity, inclusion is an extremely important and difficult issue to lead and manage and schools have an opportunity and responsibility to model inclusive communities. Transformational and transformative leadership are both, we would argue, intrinsically inclusive in the sense that they both encourage and nurture participation.
4: HOW CAN WE PREPARE AND CONTINUE TO DEVELOP LEADERS WHO ARE CAPABLE OF LEADING TRANSFORMATION?

Transforming schools is a key objective of governments across the world and so careful thought needs to be given to the ways in which current and future leaders can be prepared and supported to be successful in a constantly changing, increasingly complex world. Such leaders require learning experiences that prepare them to steer their ships through some choppy waters created by shifting currents and the unpredictable winds of change. This is especially challenging if these leaders have experienced development thus far that has been transactional or managerial in its dominant approach. In this situation, there is a need for a significant mind and behaviour shift.

Learning in relation to transformational and transformative leadership is an elusive concept. All learning requires a change of state but not all change is transformational. Miller and Seller (1990) helpfully point out the differences between transmissional, transactional and transformational education. These may be equated to knowledge transfer, sharing and creation. There is a place for passing on (transmitting) information although it is not a simple process. There is also a place for transactional learning which recognises that the learner is not a “blank canvas” and that experience and interaction with other learners is important. Although the differences between this and transformational learning are often blurred, the latter is more profound and deeper. Precey and Jackson (2010) suggest that “Transformation involves people changing in order to succeed within shifting environments but in the process remaining true to their core beliefs and values.” Precey (2008) would further suggest transformational learning is never ending and describes it as a “deeply challenging, truly educational, intensely liberating process.”

This section briefly explores the different models related to transformational learning experiences. The literature tends to refer to transformational learning and we take this to include learning that is also transformative. At least three critical theories relating to adult learning are important to this argument. First, Boyatzis’ model of self-directed learning (1982, 1995, 2005) emphasises the social aspect and co-construction of knowledge. It is founded on the notion of emotional intelligence that involves self awareness, self management, social awareness and managing relationships within the learning experience. It looks at what one would aspire to be, ‘the ideal self’ and the ‘real self’. From this one’s strengths are identified, where the ideal self and real self overlap, any ‘gaps’ where the real and ideal self differ are also identified. A plan may be subsequently developed to build on the strengths and reduce the gaps. This may in turn be then tested through experimentation which may lead to a confirmation of new behaviour, thoughts and feelings.

Second, Mezirow’s theory of transformative learning, which is based on psychoanalytical theory (Boyd and Myers 1988) is helpful. Mezirow’s approach is one based on a logical, rational, analytical deconstruction of experience. He suggests that this can happen through a series of phases that begin with a disorientating dilemma and include self-examination, critical assessment of assumptions, recognition of shared transformations with others, exploration of new roles and actions, development of a plan of action, acquisition of new skills and knowledge for putting the plan into action, trying it out, developing competencies and self-confidence in new roles of the reintegration into life on the basis of new
perspectives. Mezirow (2000: 8) describes transformative learning as often involving “deep, powerful emotions or beliefs, and is evidences in action.” Critics of Mezirow’s ideas claim that they are too rationally driven (Taylor 1998). Some see transformative learning as an “intuitive, creative and emotional process” (Grabov 1997:90). Others believe that it is a symbiotic process of rationality and emotion. Boyd and Myers (1988), for example, state that this process hinges on the notion of discernment, which is composed of the three activities of receptivity, recognition and grieving. First an individual must be open to receiving “alternate expressions of meaning”, and then recognise the message as authentic. Grieving is the critical phase of discernment and hence transformative learning when an individual realises that the old ways of seeing and dealing with the world are no longer relevant and s/he moves on to adopt new ways and finally integrates the new with the old.

Third, critical social theory (Scott 1997) is important and this has three common themes – the centrality of experience, rational discourse and critical reflection - is also illuminating in relation to understanding the importance of critical theory and adult learning. Scott asserts that critical reflection on experiences is necessary for individuals to change their meaning schemes (specific beliefs, attitudes and emotional reactions) and this can, in turn lead to perspective transformation. The meaning schemes of individuals change routinely through learning as individuals most usually add to or assimilating ideas within existing schemes. Deeper perspective transformation leading to transformative learning occurs much less frequently and is usually the result of a “disorientating dilemma” which is triggered by a major (life) crisis or transition although it may result from the accumulation of transformations in meaning schemes over a period of time (Mezirow 1995). Leaders usually need to step outside the complexities of their situation to understand these concepts.

One of the most ambitious definitions of transformative learning, the precursor to transformative leadership is that of O’Sullivan (2003: 328)

“Transformative learning involves experiencing a deep, structural shift in the basic premises of thought, feelings and actions. It is a shift of consciousness that dramatically and irreversibly alters our way of being in the world. Such a shift involves our understanding of ourselves and our self-locations; our relationships with other humans and with the natural world; our understanding of relations of power in interlocking structures of class, race and gender; our body awareness; our visions of alternative approaches to living; and our sense of possibilities for social justice, peace and personal joy”

Transformative learning is a deeply challenging, truly educational, intensely liberating process. It is a journey with no prospect of reaching a final destination. It is essential that our school leaders do embark upon it to shape their views of the world and of the schools that they run and the adults and children whom they lead if we wish for schools that enable people to develop more fully as human. Transformative Learning Theory is one which describes a process that leads the learner via critical reflection to re-evaluate past beliefs and experience and consciously make and implement plans that redefine their worlds.
How then can transformational leadership be learned? There are proven ways. Burbules and Berk (1999) emphasise practising criticality as essential in educating leaders who might build learning communities and take the risks necessary to foster democracy and social justice rather than “those teachers who play it safe by simply massaging the rhetoric” (Greenan and Dieckmann 2004: 242). They stress four components to such learning; the ability to think outside conventional frameworks and to analyse across disciplines; maintenance of the essential tension of controversy; an interactive collaborative construction of meaning; and fallibilism (as with Ellsworth’s (1989) inability to know fully). Darder supports the idea the transformational development is possible by suggesting that in fostering a cultural critical pedagogy “Students can learn to make problematic views of life; search for different ways to think about themselves; challenge their self-imposed as well as institutionally define limitations; affirm their cultural and individual strengths; and embrace possibilities for a better world” (1997:342).

5: A TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The framework used in this research is that of Precey and Jackson (2008) (see Figure 1) which in turn draws in particular on that of Greenan and Dieckmann (2004). It also builds on the extensive knowledge of learning some of which has been outlined as well as that on leadership. It emphasises the need to live out and model the principles that it professes through its learning processes. Moreover, it provides a framework for the whole process of transformational learning from planning to preparation through facilitation to evaluation and back to planning.
The framework emphasises three core interrelated elements:

- A unique structure – That is a bespoke programme tailored to meet the needs of a particular group of individuals founded on the principles and processes of transformational learning indicated within the framework enabling:
  - Praxis- Involving the interrogation of practice against relevant theory and research and vice versa leading to:
  - Awakenings- (light bulb moments, sense-making) the transformation of learners through the concepts explored, and the personal and institutional knowledge constructed leading to the reconstruction (or even confirmation) of identity (the way the leader sees her/himself in the role).

Trust and criticality are seen as being essential to underpin the learning process. These can be built over a period of time through skilful facilitation enabling the co-construction of knowledge through groups, the development of a community of learners and peer support, and collaboration. Carl Rogers (1983) the humanist psychologist, considered that “facilitation of learning” with a focus on interpersonal relationships between the learner and the facilitator based on trust, “empathic understanding” and genuineness on the part of the facilitator, is the key to effective learning.

6: AN EXAMPLE OF THE APPLICATION OF THIS FRAMEWORK

The OECD (2006) has expressed a keenness to address the issue of future challenges for school leaders in its report on school leadership. These include accountability, sharing leadership, developing collaborative networks, innovative approaches to learning-centre leadership as well as the supply, preparation, professional development and retention of school leaders. This IP has made a contribution to inform and develop these ideas within an European context. The Erasmus Intensive Programme (IP) that is the focus of this article is one of the first attempts to develop a European programme focused on leading and managing inclusive education. It ran for three years (from 2008-2010) with partial funding from Europe via the British Council and it involved some 200 + school leaders and 50 academic and support staff from 5 Universities. These came from Spain, England, Ireland, Turkey and Norway and all were practitioners and part-time students on Leadership in Education Masters’ programmes. The IP involved 10 days of study in July and writing on a university campus (in 2008 it was in Canterbury Christ Church, England, in 2009 in Oslo, Norway and in 2010 in Dublin, Ireland). This IP was an intensive (10 very full days that were residential), focussed (on “Leading and Managing Inclusive Education in Europe”) and selective (participants needed to be on a Masters programme in one of the 5 participating universities and be willing to attend) experience. In that sense it was a learning laboratory but a good deal has been learned from this that has application in less intense situations.

It tried to create a community of reflective practitioners based on sustainable relationships and programmes between the delegates and their schools. A key element is quoted as being the fact that “all participants will learn from and with the others and thus support an on-going reflection on each individual’s learning.”

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In particular the intentions of the staff team were stated as to:

- contextualise the main questions
- connect internationally
- deepen and widen understanding (theoretical and practical)
- use a variety of learning situations (individually, in groups, reflection and independent work)
- scaffold learning by questioning, modelling, contextualizing, clarifying and summarising
- use a variety of groupings including national (for clarification following taught sessions and felt to be particularly important for Spanish and Norwegian participant since the whole IP was in English) and core groups (groups of 7-8 in number with each country represented and within which many of the activities took place)
- invite participants to become involved in optional seminars
- include students in planning for the next day

The stated aims of this IP were:

- To co-create an intensive, enjoyable, challenging programme that increases and deepens participants' knowledge, understanding and skills as critical reflective practitioners and researchers with respect to leading and managing inclusive education in Europe.

Feedback from the student evaluation forms clearly shows that that this was achieved very successfully. The overall evaluation of the programme by students was high. The average score was 4.6 (5 being the maximum on the scale used).

- To enable the students to return to their respective countries with confidence and moral courage to be agents of change to improve the quality of learning, teaching and inclusion within their own settings.

This aim also appears to have been met. Certainly, both an evaluation for the British Council (the sponsor) and a separate Impact Evaluation indicate this is true for both students and staff but the real impact will not be known until some years have gone by. One e-mail from a participant on the first IP (2008) in a follow-up impact evaluation in 2010 and who subsequently became a vice-Principal in a large secondary school is interesting:

*The Erasmus IP has had a significant impact on my thinking about Inclusion, specifically in terms of how I would lead inclusive schools for the future. The programme provided an invaluable opportunity to debate and reflect on what inclusion actually means in practice and while the UK may be more inclusive that some systems in Europe, such as the Turkish model, to move beyond conventional school leadership which may be more “transactional” and achieve “transformational” leadership in the future a more inclusive approach to school leadership is needed in British schools. One significant way to achieve this would be to reconsider the building design of schools, using international models based on small school designs to build greater trust relationships and create space for inclusion.*

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AN EVALUATION OF THE COMPONENTS OF THE FRAMEWORK THROUGH THE IP

The Framework (Figure 1) was used in the planning, preparation and facilitation of the IP and it also provided the structure for the evaluation (both formative and summative) over the 3 years. The research carried out over the 3 years by an international team of academics and research students involved in the IP, used a multi-method approach to the evaluation of the design, facilitation and impact of the framework on the participants. This included:

- Formative individual feedback
- Interviews with samples of participants
- Observation of international small core group learning
- Analysis of data in terms of participants’ access to resources in a virtual learning environment
- A summative impact evaluation structured on the framework
- An limited analysis thus far of the impact of the programme on previous participants and their own students back in their places of work

Some representative feedback from the summative impact evaluation in relation to the Framework components is below.

A: UNIQUE COURSE STRUCTURE

A1. DO YOU FEEL THAT YOU HAVE BEEN A MEMBER OF A COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS WITH PEER SUPPORT AND COLLABORATION?

97% of participants responded “yes” with 43 highlighting the positive contribution ‘core groups’ made in this area.

“Because working in our core groups we learned from each other and formed ideas with the help of others” (Irish Student)

“The core groups made me feel part of a community” (Turkish Student)

A2. DO YOU FEEL THAT THE IP HAS ENABLED YOU TO REFLECT (THINK) MORE DEEPLY ABOUT INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP?

95% relied “yes”. A number of students which included over a quarter of Turkish students made reference to a deeper knowledge of the ‘big picture’.

“I found I have a new found awareness as a result of the course. I am now more aware of the ‘bigger picture’.” (Irish Student)

‘Opportunity’ and ‘Time’ to reflect positively highlighted in particular by the English students:

“An intense programme of study that produced many opportunities for ‘interrupted thinking’” (English Student)

A3. DO YOU THINK THAT YOU HAVE BEEN ABLE TO CLARIFY THE MEANING OF IMPORTANT CONCEPTS IN RELATION TO LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF INCLUSION IN EUROPE?

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97% said “yes”. The Value of ‘Workshops’ highlighted:

“Because I think that the workshops are very interesting and clarify.” (Spanish student)

Language was cited as a barrier to clarification by a small number of students in particular by Spanish students:

“Language difficulties made it difficult to learn fully and critique the Spanish system.” (Irish student)

A4. DO YOU THINK THAT YOU HAVE DEVELOPED YOUR QUESTIONING AND CRITICALITY DURING THE IP?

87% replied in the affirmative with language difficulties being cited as a barrier to this area in particular by some Spanish and Norwegian students.

“No, I’ve had difficulties because of my level of English.” (Spanish student)

“But the language makes it difficult to be critical” (Norwegian student)

“Owing to the language, the persons from Spain and Turkey had difficulties in expressing themselves in the core groups. Maybe too little critical questioning during the IP” (Norwegian student)

A5. PLEASE GIVE US YOUR OPINION AS TO WHETHER THE IP HAS BEEN CARRIED OUT IN A DEMOCRATIC FASHION?

73% felt this had been true.

A6. PLEASE GIVE US YOUR OPINIONS ABOUT HOW CONFIDENT YOU HAVE FELT TO EXPRESS YOUR VIEW IN FORMAL AND INFORMAL SETTINGS?

94%. Again ‘core groups’ rated highly in achieving this.

“Again thanks to the help of the people in the core groups, we feel really confident” (Turkish student)

A7. DO YOU THINK THAT THE CONTENT AND PROCESSES (THE CURRICULUM) HAS BEEN FLEXIBLE TO RESPOND TO YOURS AND THE GROUP’S NEEDS?

67% agreed. The view that the timings were too ‘rigid’ was the main reason cited for answering ‘No’ to this question. However acknowledgement was made by a number of students as to what they viewed as the limitations imposed on an intensive programme. This view was reiterated in the informal interviews.

“The first week, as we understand from the name ‘IP’, was very condensed” (Turkish student)

A8. DO YOU THINK THE IP HAS DEEPENED YOUR KNOWLEDGE ABOUT YOUR’S AND OTHERS LEARNING (META-COGNITION)?

83% said “yes”. The presence of people from differing cultures, countries and the experience that they brought with them was the prevailing positive view
amongst students. Again this was reiterated in the formative evaluations and informal interviews.

“Yes, definitely. The students within the programme bring with them a wealth of knowledge, experience from different cultures and countries” (English student)

**A9.** DO YOU THINK THE IP HAS ENABLED YOU TO CO-CONSTRUCT YOUR KNOWLEDGE ABOUT LEADING INCLUSION WITH THE HELP OF OTHERS?

87%. responded positively.

**A10.** DO YOU THINK THE IP HAS ENABLED YOU TO SEE MORE CLEARLY SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS OF INCLUSION IN YOUR PLACE OF WORK?

84%) replied “yes”. There were no common reason identified for answering ‘no’ however there was a general acknowledgement of achieving a deeper knowledge on which to find solutions.

**A11.** DO YOU THINK THAT THE IP HAS ENABLED YOU TO DEVELOP TRUST WITH OTHER PARTICIPANTS (STUDENT AND STAFF)

Overwhelmingly this was seen to be true (92%)

“Yes because I’m very comfortable in my core group. They spoke to me more slowly.” (Spanish student)

**B1.** HAVE THERE BEEN PARTICULAR THEORIES/ CONCEPTS/ MODELS THAT HAVE AFFECTED YOUR THINKING?

92% said “yes”. ‘Transformational Leadership’ and ‘Students Voice’ both rated very highly amongst the students.

**C1.** HAVE THEIR BEEN MOMENTS WHEN YOU HAVE BEEN CHALLENGED?

90% felt that this had been so.

Core groups featured strongly in answering ‘Yes’ to this question.

“Many – when asked to justify actions in school at core group, and debate within core group. (and over a Guinness!)” (English student)

**C2.** HAVE THEIR BEEN MOMENTS WHEN YOU HAVE BEEN CONFIRMED IN YOUR THINKING?

86% replied “yes”. Core groups came to fore in all nationalities. (65 % of Turkish students)

“When agreement was reached /identified in core groups and we represent 5 different countries!” (Irish student)

“Of course when I was with core group and at the core group” (Turkish student)
D1. HAS YOUR PERCEPTION OF YOUR IDENTITY AS A TEACHER (ALL OF US CAN BE LEADERS) CHANGED?

70%. Generally the reason given for answering ‘Yes’ was increased knowledge as a result of the programme. This was very prevalent in the informal interviews with statements such as ‘opportunity of a lifetime’ and ‘fantastic experience’.

“Yes, I feel empowered to be a leader of inclusion within my own teaching practice and want to share what I have learned during this course.” (Irish student)

“No, not really – but 30yrs of identity building isn’t going to change in 10 days” (English student)

“It would be very strange if it hadn’t changed after all of these ideas and discussions!” (English student)

“To a certain limit – I have grown!” (Norwegian student)

D2. HAS YOUR PERCEPTION OF YOUR IDENTITY AS A TEACHER (ALL OF US CAN BE LEADERS) BEEN CONFIRMED?

73% responded in the affirmative.

“Listening to other perspectives (from other countries)” (English student)

“Yes, I am on the right path and I’ll engage more positively in activities of leadership.” (Irish student)

“During the programme I have learned that there is still a lot that I must do to improve myself” (Turkish student)

E1. IS THERE ANYTHING THAT YOU WILL CHANGE IN YOUR PRACTICE WHEN YOU GO BACK TO WORK?

90% replied “yes”. There was a presence of a common theme of greater inclusion of students (students’ voice) and others in future practice.

“Reinforced values to listen and consciously include ‘others’.” (Irish student)

“Try to include special needs children in ordinary classroom teaching in a better way.” (Norwegian student)

“Now I am aware about the importance of leadership, so I will try to involve the rest of the teachers in my school to do more inclusive practices.” (Spanish student)

7: WHAT HAS BEEN LEARNT FROM THIS?

Clearly the evaluation is mainly based on the opinions of participants so it is perceptual. Whether the learning on the IP helps them become transformational or even transformative leaders in the longer term requires more research.
7.1: KEY THEMES

The key themes identified within the learning framework that worked particularly well were the ‘networking beyond previous experience’ and ‘Increasing political, social and economic awareness’. Exposure to people with different experiences from different cultures and countries certainly encouraged, discourse, dialogue and ‘interrupted thinking’ leading to those desired awakenings with majority of the students.

7.2: CORE GROUPS

Core groups were identified by the students as being instrumental in building trust and criticality which allowed for the achievement of many of the themes identified within the learning framework. Careful thought had gone into the processes that would enable trust to develop as quickly as possible to encourage learning to flourish. Feedback from students expressed a desire for more emphasis to be placed on the core groups with a view to more time being allocated to it, a mentoring system put in place within them to assist those students struggling with English and the ability to allow movement within the core groups where a need is identified. Groups were observed by Erasmus graduates (students who had participated in former IPs and who were invited back to assist). They focussed on listening, challenging and clarification skills and feedback was given to participants to deepen their learning about their behaviours in relation to learning to transformational learning.

7.3: COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS

A community of learners was certainly established by the end of each of the IPs. This was evidenced by participants – students and staff - continuing contact for learning beyond the 10 days through social networks on the internet (Facebook, use of the Virtual Learning Environment (Blackboard)) as well as face to face contact-study visits to each other’s schools and countries and doctoral student placements in partner universities researching IP themes e.g. Alternative Education. This community has developed organically in relatively unstructured and strategically unplanned ways.

7.4: EFFECTIVE LEARNING

Was there learning effective? Moore sees this as…”not simply by measuring outputs such as their students' test scores, but through an attempt to evaluate what was learned, by whom and how more effective learning might take place in the future” (Moore, 2001: 129). The evidence suggests that the IP seems to have facilitated effective learning. Particularly powerful were the techniques used to deepen learning (such as spaces for reflection, questioning, clarification) and also opportunities for meta-cognition and unpicking the learning processes at work. The main barrier to this was language. With English as the main medium those without the necessary skills had a significantly different and inferior experience. For them learning was less inclusive and less transforming.

7.5: THE VALUE OF THE TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The results indicate that using the Framework to plan, prepare, facilitate and evaluate programmes that wish for transformational leadership learning is very

*Developing the Leaders We Want to Follow (Precey & Entrena)*
helpful. After the first year of the IP, the Framework was adapted (see Appendix 1) keeping the components and structure of the original and adapting it to suit the particular context. A clear structure ensured that the main ingredients for successful learning were in place and not overlooked. It is also vital for such leadership development programmes to model inclusive practices if they are to have integrity and thus credibility and stand most chance of being effective. This requires skilled facilitation developing trust and criticality. Moreover, evidence suggests that programmes such as the IP that use the framework do indeed lead to significant shifts in people’s thinking and, more important, their professional behaviours.

8: CONCLUSION

Leadership matters. Leadership that values people matters. The development of leaders who value people matters. In order to achieve this we need clarity over what type of leadership values people most. This article has argued that transformational and transformative leadership are more likely to be effective and sustainable over time than that which is transactional. This inclusive leadership happens through a transformation of the school culture and implies a deep change in the values, norms, beliefs and in the social relations and power that cannot be imposed, but it must be born from a conviction of all involved (González, 2008).

Such leaders need opportunities to develop and keep developing. The results from this study indicate that using the Framework to plan, prepare, facilitate and evaluate leadership development programmes that wish to be transformational, is very helpful. A clear structure ensures that the main ingredients for successful learning are in place and not overlooked. This can indeed lead to significant shifts in people’s thinking and, more important, their professional behaviours. If we wish to develop the leaders we want to follow then there are indeed lessons to be drawn from this international programme.

References


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