

# Chapter 3

## Sharing School Leadership: Principalship Empowerment or Relegation?

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**Abstract** In current developments concerning school leadership, the assumption of a single individual taking responsibility for and controlling every single aspect of running a school from the most crucial concern to the most trivial has been put on trial. In the modern approach to school administration, a distributed leadership model is proposed and introduced as a source of empowering teachers towards collective responsibility, creating accountability and developing a sense of encouragement for participating in the decision-making process. However, with the application of these theories in school sectors, the question remains as to whether the implications of sharing or distributing school leadership power were considered when the model was first created. In other words, at a minimum deep deliberation is required during the application due to the potential impacts or repercussions that sharing or distributing leadership and power might have on the role and position of principals. This paper sheds light on the effectiveness of distribution and shared leadership in a school setting, examining the level of power to be shared, and the extent of trust and professional training given to teachers prior to power distribution.

### 3.1 Introduction

During the past few decades, leadership was believed to be an art from trait leadership perspective and to be a science from a behavioural perspective. In the present time, researchers have placed an emphasis on the critical role that school leadership plays in school improvement and student productivity. Empirically, they all have concluded that a great principal stands at the helm of every successful school. Many studies have ranked school leadership as second in importance only to teacher quality (Hechinger 2011). Hattie (2003), Leithwood et al. (2006), Tooley (2009), Day et al. (2009, 2010), *New Leaders for New Schools* (2009),

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and Barber et al. (2010), as cited by England (2012), have all confirmed that school leadership plays a second crucial role in student learning outcomes. In a joint report of the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the National Association of Elementary School Principals in the United States called *Leadership Matters*, school leadership was considered second to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school.

Those findings and reports show the importance of school leadership on teaching and learning. Due to the rapid changes in our today's world, the scope of principalship has widened and new portfolios have been added, especially on issues related to instruction. Fresh demands for new instructional leadership have arisen due to the awakening of globalization as well as with respect to socioeconomic and technology advancements (Ylimaki 2014a). Hence, change is about school principals going beyond their traditional instructional leadership to create a data-driven instructional system to guide the practices of teaching and learning (Halverson et al. 2007).

Those changes require school leaders to step out from behind their managerial desks and go beyond traditional instructional leadership roles by setting new, comprehensive and coherent curriculum aligned with professional standards (Ylimaki 2014b); sustaining a culture of collaboration (O'Connor et al. 2014); and creating a motivating learning environment (Ylimaki 2014b). This change also calls for new supervision of instruction (Burke and St. Maurice 2014); developing assessment and accountability systems to monitor student progress (Ylimaki 2014b); increasing the instructional leadership capacity of staff (Hackney and Henderson 2014); promoting the most effective technology to support teaching and learning (Dikkers 2014); and monitoring the impacts of instructional programs (Brunderman and Dugan 2014). Responding promptly and actively to these new calls and demands at school will definitely put the effectiveness of school leaders on trial and will call for them to evaluate critically their leadership roles in today's modern era.

Meanwhile, many studies around the world have shown the advantage of shared leadership and encouraged the distribution of power due to the complexity of today's educational setting. To deal with complexity, several substantial theories and models have been developed and introduced including distributed leadership, collective leadership, team leadership, horizontal leadership and substitute leadership. Dispersed leadership is another newly introduced leadership theory. This theory shares the same characteristics and features with the rest by advocating the diffusion of leadership and power to all organizational members instead of depending on a single official or formal leader. Self-management of the organization is the most apt term to describe this leadership (Warner 2012). Self-management shares the same meaning with shared and distributed leadership theories because self-management exerts leadership influence at all levels in the organization and in all roles (Bolden et al. 2003).

These theories and models share almost the same meanings, objectives and functions. They have very strong links, and some are even used interchangeably. Hence, their main focus is in general is to empower self-leadership among

organizational members and reduce the tasks of organizational leadership (Lunenburg 2010a). Shared leadership is linked with distributed leadership for broad leadership distribution among teams (Bolden 2011). Shared leadership is assumed to open the boundaries of leadership (Bennett et al. 2003) and duties and responsibilities are shared (Kocolowski 2010). The same is true with respect to transformational leadership, which transforms an organization and inspires people in an organization to be self-dependent.

Notwithstanding, their similarities in functions, the power and benefits that these theories and models have for organizational improvement, especially in terms of distributed and shared leadership in terms of task delegation, sharing, autonomy, collectivity and accountability, is undeniable. A distribution of power throughout the school system is recommended by many studies to improve student learning outcomes (Humphreys 2010).

Within this context, some serious questions have been posted about this distribution of power. These questions include: Whose interests are being served by particular distributions? Are all distributions intended to enhance teaching and learning? It is possible that distributed leadership could support the abuse of power? (Maxcy and Nguyen 2006; Mayrowetz 2008; Humphreys 2010). These are critical questions that need answers, and even further debates are required to warrant the application of these theories and models especially in education sectors.

But, given the scenarios of who is in control under shared and distributed leadership, this current work has mainly focused on shared and distributed leadership and sets out to ask and discuss: (1) to what extent can leadership and responsibility be shared with teachers?, (2) if sharing is inevitable, in which situations or occasions should power or leadership be shared and distributed?, (3) as shared and distributed leadership paves the way for participation, should there be various levels of teacher participation in the decision-making?, (4) as prerequisites, what are the levels of teachers' preparedness for handling external pressures, challenges, expectations and responsibilities? and (5) what is the adequacy of the professional development training that they have obtained? As monitoring teaching and instruction is the core business of every school principal, taking or sharing this role might undermine the principalship role as the sole instructional leader. This work ends with the belief that teachers should be empowered and encouraged to share leadership and responsibility, but not at the expense of school principal's position.

### **3.2 Shared Leadership Effectiveness and Implications**

Relentless efforts have been made to develop concepts to unify shared leadership definitions but achieving this objective has tended to be elusive. One reason, according to Kocolowski (2010) in his meta-survey of leadership studies, is that, although research using shared studies is abundant in healthcare and education, studies outside these two fields are scarce. Kocolowski said (p. 24) that the most

widely cited definition of shared leadership comes from Conger and Pearce (2003), who said that shared leadership is “A dynamic, interactive influence process among individuals in groups for which the objective is to lead one another to the achievement of group or organizational goals or both” (p. 1).

Shared leadership is considered to be a relative new paradigm, shifting leadership from a formal leader to followers by sharing power and involving in decision-making. Based on his review of the relevant literature, Kocolowski wrote that shared leadership generally might be defined operationally as:

a dynamic, collaborative process (Conger and Pearce 2003) whereby influence is distributed (Carson et al. 2007) amongst a plurality of networked individuals, often referred to as teams, for the purpose of achieving beneficial outcomes for the organization. Characteristics of shared leadership teams include decentralized interaction, collective task completion, reciprocal support and skill development (Wood 2005), shared purpose, and a unified voice (Carson et al.), all enhanced via social interaction that involves mutual accountability, partnership, equity, and ownership (Jackson 2000).

According to Goldsmith (2010) in an article in the *Harvard Business Review*, shared leadership is defined as utilizing all of the human resources in an organization by giving opportunities to individuals in their areas of expertise and developing a sense of empowerment to assume leadership roles.

All these definitions indicate that the shared leadership model reduces the complexity of a single individual’s position by sharing power and accountability. This model has been reported to help in developing a team with one common goal, namely, improving learning.

Shared leadership can be defined in educational setting as a collaboration of a school principal with teachers, staff, students and parents to face school challenges. It creates a sense of partnership by asking everyone to contribute to a school climate and each person to be responsible for his or her own actions (Hughes and Pickeral 2013). Traditional theorists, such as Robert Greenleaf on Servant Leadership, Victor Vroom on Expectancy Theory, Douglas McGregor on X and Y Theory, Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard on Situational Theory, and James MacGregor Burns and Bernard Bass on Transformation Theory state that, if employees are intrinsically motivated and empowered, they will be honest and perform well for the organization while taking responsibilities rather than managers solely caring for these responsibilities. In their works and writings, they highlighted the importance of followers’ involvement in the decision-making process and organizational success (Ensley et al. 2006a).

Thus, the following questions may now be asked. To what extent teachers are equipped with decision-making skills and knowledge? What is the level of their experiences in being involved in such kind of decisions? How many decision-making processes they have been involved in and what are the outcomes of the decisions they involved in? What outcomes have they generated from these decisions and what decision outcomes have they derived from these processes?

The Wallace Foundation which is a New York-based philanthropy whose charge is foster improved learning and enrichment for children sought answers to these

questions. In a report, issued in 2010, entitled *Learning from Leadership: Investigating the Links to Improved Student Learning*, the Foundation recommended that the distribution of leadership include teachers, parents, and district staff in order to improve student achievement (p. 103). Among the other key findings were that:

1. An investment in the professional development of school leaders had limited effects on student achievement unless districts also developed clear goals for improvement (p. 145);
2. Planned aligned patterns of distributed leadership seemed more likely to contribute the most to school improvement efforts (p. 177);
3. Priorities included instructional and curriculum leadership, and teamwork and shared leadership focused on improvement objectives (p. 215);
4. Principals were most effective when they saw themselves as working collaboratively towards clear, common goals with district personnel, other principals and teachers; and
5. When leadership is distributed or shared between teachers and principals, teachers' working relationships with each other are stronger and student achievement is higher (p. 282).

### **3.3 Shared, Vertical and Transformational Leadership: Clash of Theories**

In an organization in which leadership numerous theories and styles are incorporated, noticeable clashes of shared leadership can exist with respect to other models and theories in terms of functions, practices and objectives. Vertical leadership functions are said to be difficult to implement when shared leadership is present (Mielonen 2011), but some studies in the United States have reported that shared leadership predicts team effectiveness better than vertical leadership (Pearce and Sims 2002; Pearce et al. 2004; Ensley et al. 2006b; Sui-Yi 2012). However, shared leadership is much most complex and time consuming than vertical leadership (Burke 2006) and less effective when teams have low performance. With respect to maintaining organizational structure and hierarchy, shared leadership might be less effective as organizational hierarchy is crucial in sustaining organization management success and performance.

According to Routhieaux (2015), an organizational culture may pose a big threat to the application of shared leadership. Organizational culture impacts organizational decision-making and a culture of sharing leadership and power might work effectively in one organization and less effectively in another. An organization that has a culture of shared leadership will enjoy the fruits of collective efforts and collaborative process of information while sharing leadership could be very difficult to apply in an organization that has a long history and culture of executive directors making all major decisions.

If leadership must be shared, then all types of vertical leadership, including transformational, transactional, servant, moral, and instructional, among others, must also be shared. As emphasized in earlier theories and models, the question arises as to whether workers or followers who are intrinsically motivated have obtained the necessary skills and professional development training to qualify for a new post. Consequently, the issue of power sharing between leader and follower has caused confusion and unsettled feelings among some scholars. Adding to this concern is that groups may be performing well when they are motivated, experienced, knowledgeable, but do not have a formal leadership structure (Manz and Sims 1984; Ensley et al. 2006a). In reality, this sharing of leadership, power and authority could be understood or seen as a process of relegating formal leadership structure and the communizing of authority. As a result, organization members, teams and followers may lose their purposes, suffering from a less clear vision of the organization and duties.

Philosophically, the belief is often that, if there is no leader, there is no rule. No matter the success or effectiveness of shared leadership, a formal leader is still needed to empower self-leadership among members due to the functions of leadership for influencing, guiding, empowering and controlling others to find the correct path while assuring organizational goals are achieved. A harmful situation may arise in a situation in which an official leader is viewed as redundant and insignificant due to leadership-sharing among members. This state of affairs could backfire and lead to chaos as well as personal issues involved in managing the organization and decision-making.

Pintor (2013) has called for caution in using shared or team leadership, as not all teams or situations are suitable for shared leadership. She recommended that shared leadership be used in situations full of complexity and when interdependent tasks exist for which a group of workers may be dependent on other groups; in creative situations or when alternative ideas are needed; for highly committed employees; and in instances in which the task is not urgent. Other than these situations, she warned against applying shared leadership, as sharing might delay task completion and aggravate conflicts between team members.

### **3.4 Shared Leadership: Implications for the Group Decision-Making Process**

The consolidation of significant findings on the effectiveness of shared decisions-making indicates that, although shared leadership promotes teamwork practices in an organization, at the same time, the application of team-based knowledge work has been reported to have less effect on team work performance (Ashley 1992; Verespej 1990; Bligh et al. 2006). Thus, teams are often reported to fail due to their inability to live up to their capabilities, the failure to coordinate the

actions and behaviours of team members, and the absence of proper leadership guidelines (Burke et al. 2003; Bligh et al. 2006).

In addition, the findings on shared leadership and team effectiveness in educational settings have shown mixed results, as shared leadership sometimes only helps in terms of monitoring group works without increasing their performance (Carte et al. 2006). For example, in Tasmanian schools, school leaders prefer interacting with each other more than interacting with teachers (Boardman 2001; Hall 2001; Koccolowski 2010), while in contrast, teachers were found to be manipulated and unhappy in New Zealand primary schools when their voices were not heard after involvement in decision-making (Court 2003). These inconsistencies may lead to a call for caution in sharing leadership in educational sectors. Nonetheless, sharing responsibility for power and leadership with teachers as well as staff is often advisable and recommended for boosting their talents, allowing a sense of belonging, and permitting accountability to flourish. But this sharing must be justified, as peoples' feelings cannot be ignored, and group members should know their limits and rules and not abuse the complexity surrounding shared leadership (Hall 2001; Koccolowski 2010).

Likewise, when decisions are carried out by means of consensus, such consensus could possibly be difficult to reach and, as a result, a decision might be delayed (Miles and Watkins 2007). The participation of workers in decision-making may pose a dilemma for any organizational decision when problems of team attitudes, internal battles and individual career goals are present (Jackson 2000). In such a critical situation, according to Miles and Watkins (2007), relevance for power and leadership sharing does not exist, especially when ideas that differ among participants are irreconcilable and thus might hinder decision-making and continuous progress (Koccolowski 2010). In addition to this, dealing with daily changes in an organization, it calls for quick action of the management and plans must be executed without delay. The questions that arise then are: how long will an organization's management wait to reach a consensus in decision-making? To what extent has the organization eliminated the differences between workers and internal problems that could hamper organizational decisions and performance?

Nonetheless, in cases of participative decision-making, an employee's participation in decision-making often leads to improved creativity (Zubair et al. 2015). Participation in decision-making has been reported to affect job satisfaction, employee performance, organizational productivity, employee motivation and organizational commitment (Alutto and Belasco 1972; Agwu and Olele 2014; Zubair et al. 2015) and has been reported to have a strong relationship with employee motivation (Irawanto 2015). However, in some instances in which everyone is allowed to participate in making a decision, some authors believe that consistency in making decisions is difficult to achieve. According to Gunnarsson (2010), Lunenburg (2010b), and Schoenfeld (2011), group decision-making is subject to social pressure towards conformity, individual domination, conflicts, conflicting between primary and secondary goals, unwanted compromises, ambiguous responsibility and increased time consumption.

Looking at this issue from a psychological perspective, human beings are different, and each human has different internal or personal values. As a result, each teacher also has different instincts, behaviours, attitudes, competences, personality and backgrounds that he or she bring to his or her respective schools, which potentially could influence decisions. For example, if a worker or staff member is not in good terms with the top management or principal and personal feelings, issues, hostilities and differences exist between them, a possibility exists that decision-making can become personal and that favouritism, arguments and rancorous situations may eventually jeopardize organizational productivity. Shared or distributed leadership in relationship to involvement in decision-making is reported to be successful when a group of workers has great relevant knowledge and the skills and the abilities to contribute, and this involvement should be limited to specific situations (Ensley et al. 2006b). Pearce's (1997) research supports this notion while contextualizing what should and should not be shared.

At this stage, forward and continuous research needs to be conducted on the outcomes of shared decision-making. Perhaps before sharing decision-making, research should examine how team members work and join together to formulate leadership in the team context and the development of members and leadership as time goes by. In addition, if teamwork and participation in decision-making are successful, can shared leadership and decision-making be successful when it comes to organizational policy formulation? Also, to what extent can managerial posts be shared? Moreover, when power is shared with co-workers and the team members, directly or indirectly, they tend act as leaders themselves, and apparently the assigned leader may lose momentum. This issue of moving power to co-workers and team members without referring to a particular leader must be researched and examined in terms of effectiveness when power is relinquished to team members (Crevani et al. 2007, 2010; Friedrich et al. 2009).

### **3.5 Distributed Leadership Effectiveness and Its Implications**

The concept of distributed leadership is considered an old one (see Humphreys 2010 for a more complete discussion). In 1984, Murgatroyd and Reynolds stated that the position of leadership is not meant for a formal organizational leader and can take place at any level depending on the situation (see also, Law and Glover 2003). As years have gone by, this concept has become well established and teacher leadership has become a well-developed and promoted practice (Devaney 1987; Lieberman 1988; Wiess and Cambone 1994; Louis et al. 1996; Wheatley 1999). To date, Spillane (2006), Duignan (2006) have greatly contributed to the enlightenment of the concept of distributed leadership throughout their remarkable works, even though they have different concepts and understanding of distributed leadership. Nonetheless, both have agreed that distributed leadership plays big role in

teaching and learning as well as that distributed leadership engages all members of the school community, not just the principal and deputy principal (see Humphreys 2010, for a more complete list of their contributions).

This leadership is of the type that appeals to the concept of togetherness, teamwork and cooperation among teachers to collectively assume responsibility and accountability in their works at school. Still, sometimes or practically speaking, successful interaction among teachers is difficult to accomplish and not always that easy to achieve as the concept of teamwork among teachers leads to the concept of “teacher leaders” (Humphreys 2010). Conway (1976, 1984), Conway and Calzi (1996), Smylie (1994), York-Barr and Duke (2004; cited in Mayrowetz 2008), uncertainty remains as to whether shared or democratic leadership can lead to school improvement. Correspondingly, scholars and researchers around the world also have expressed their doubts about the effectiveness of distributed leadership in educational settings. Distributed leadership has been opposed in terms of efficiency, effectiveness and being unable to add to school improvement despite its advantages (Humphreys 2010). In addition, the final report of research to the Wallace Foundation (2010) also indicated that leadership can be distributed depending on what is to be accomplished and the availability of professional expertise. The report further stated that no single pattern of distributed leadership is consistently related to student learning. Therefore, the report concluded that, “while there are many sources of leadership in schools, principals remain the central source” (p. 54).

Additionally, Leithwood and Jantzi (1998) have reported about finding less student engagement when power is shared or distributed among school principals and teachers. Timperley (2005) concluded that a risk in distributing leadership exists that could lead to incompetence when leadership is distributed. Despite Harris’s (2004) great support of the distributed leadership approach, some difficulties she outlined apply to distributed leadership in the school sector. These include cultural barriers and the competition for power or position in a school that create an environment unconducive to disagreement between the young and old in terms of freedom of expression. In reality, these difficulties could pose a threat to a school entity. These are strong reasons why leadership should not be completely distributed and power totally shared, as school principals are answerable for whatever happens in the schools. School principals should be solely in control of the school and distributing or relinquishing power could leave the school weakened and uncontrollable, especially when it comes to financing, legal and human resource issues, as well school administration (OECD 2008; Humphreys 2010).

New research by Harris (2012) has evidenced the importance of the school principal in the application of distributed leadership. She highlighted that distributed leadership should take place properly and be fostered in a school when there is support of the principal. She argued further that principals play an important part in the teacher-leadership equation and in bringing distributed leadership alive in schools. However, she conceptualized distributed leadership for principals as allowing necessary change to occur in their leadership position by “letting go” or “passing on” some authority and power to teachers and staff. However, Wright (2008) advised caution despite the shift of leadership paradigm when applying

distributed leadership. Hatcher (2005) reported that improper execution of distributed leadership or its implementation in a “top-down” approach could lead to misinterpretation, wrong delegation, and coercion of distributed leadership. It is also highly debated that less attention is paid to the roles, responsibilities or situations in the exercise of leadership by a formal leader in Spillane’s (2006) distributed framework. With these trajectories, it is ethically and professionally unfair to hold principals accountable for their actions and school performance when legislation and policies defining their roles as school principals are ignored (Wright 2008).

### **3.6 Research Implication for Future Practices**

This work shares some vital implications for the application of shared and distributed leadership in a school setting. Caution is required for adopting the shared leadership model in a school setting, especially when teachers are not well trained to lead, lack instructional leadership skills or are in a situation in which the organizational focus is unclear. Nevertheless, shared and distributed leadership could definitely improve teamwork and promote self-leadership among the people in an organization that is full of complexity if the application is well planned. Distributed leadership is widely acknowledged and empirically shown around the world to instil a sense of collectiveness and encourage teachers and staff to embrace leadership roles and practices. The theory has currently gained much attention in educational settings and lately its effectiveness has been reported to improve school leadership practices.

However, confronted with rapid changes and demands for new instructional leadership model, sharing school leadership without strong preparation or orientation is fragile. Distribution of power without cutting-edge professional development training for teachers makes implementing it even more of a balancing act in practice. The newness of the distributed leadership model in the educational sector perhaps could be one reason why some educational policy-makers and principals remain sceptical of relinquishing power or recommending total distribution. Additionally, some authors and researchers in the literature have debated the level of power and leadership that should be shared and distributed.

In spite of these debates and scepticism, shared and distributed leadership models have provided a new definition of leadership, meaning duties and practices. But due to the different implications given and the strong cautions of authors and researchers on this issue, some limitations to the power and leadership are present. Hence, more research is needed to specific outline areas, powers, duties, responsibilities that are potentially for sharing and levels in leadership and decision-making that are allowed for distribution and involvement without degrading the principalship position as an authorized leader or rendering him or her ineffective as a formal leader.

### 3.7 Conclusion

This work had several objectives. First, this work aimed to give credibility to shared and distributed leadership and the collective roles that such leadership played in achieving organizational goals, empowering workers, especially school teachers, the effectiveness of teamwork and productivity. Second, the work posed several questions on the level of leadership and power that should be shared as well as the context in which it should be shared. It discusses the need for further research in applying shared and distributed leadership successfully, especially in educational sectors. Thus, this paper argues that enhancements in shared leadership should occur without undermining a school principal's position, which at the end could render him or her redundant or powerless.

Unconditionally, the progress and success of a school should not solely rest on shared or distributed leadership. This means that we should not completely believe or conceptualize that a school cannot progress or perform better without leadership and that power sharing is the ultimate solution. On the other hand, other major factors also contribute highly and significantly to a school's success and performance. One critical element is school instructional supervision. This factor fits within the role that a school principal plays in the continuous professional development (CPD) of teachers to improve teaching and learning and is a factor, according to Leithwood et al. (2004), that is second only to classroom instruction in its impact on learning.

An effective school leader always makes a difference in terms of teaching. An effective principal does not always expect a teacher to join forces or always seek help from a teacher before he or she leads the school or perform his or her duties. Although principals do not directly influence learning, indirectly they influence learning through practicing high-quality instructional leadership, supporting teacher professional development and providing a conducive climate for teaching and learning. These are the critical values that an effective school leader must exhibit, which cannot be shared or distributed. Rarely are such values and determinations found in a situation in which leadership and responsibility are shared or distributed. This rarity could be due to the preferences and reservations of everyone brought into an organization, which, as a result, could have significant impacts on organizational practices, decisions and operations.

In light of this, it is likely impossible for all employees, whether new or old, to possess adequate skills, prior knowledge and training in leadership and strategic management. Besides, the assumption can be made that not all of them would like to take upon themselves, the challenge of becoming leaders on their own, taking accountability, or having an appetite for power. From a pragmatic perspective, leadership posts are full of temptations and self-leadership requires strong human beings possessing responsibility and accountability. In some circumstances, some might not want to be independent or want to be a self-leader, perhaps due to additional work, self-responsibility and self-accountability that come along with the duties. In some schools, however, teachers might opt to take self-leadership roles

due to workload and complexity in teaching. Hence, they might opt out for autonomy for the accountability that is attached with it.

Notably, this paper has neither disputed the effectiveness of shared and distributed leadership nor denied their application. Shared and distributed leadership can be the impetus for teacher motivation and a force for empowerment. This work, as part of the requirements for successful self-leadership, seeks a teacher's physical, mental, and spiritual preparedness. Forcing teachers or staff to lead without their readiness may sometimes yield positive results and empowerment, but it also might boomerang. Some may grasp the power gracefully and develop a strong leading practice, while some may perhaps fall short in coping with challenges under shared—and distributed leadership circumstances. Surprisingly, some may take up the challenge as an opportunity for empowerment, while some may look at it in an opposite way.

This work has contributed significantly to the issue of power sharing and leadership distribution in education. It has developed new arguments that need to be tabled, a topic that needs to be debated and questions that need serious answers, especially in the school sector, concerning when power should be shared and leadership should be distributed. This paper calls for additional forward-thinking research examining at which level teachers should be involved in the school decision-making process. It calls for an extensive examination of decision effectiveness when group members of school staff are involved. It contemplates the role of a formal or appointed leader when power and leadership are distributed and shared. At the present time, this theory is still in its infancy, especially in educational settings. This conclusion agrees with researchers around the world in the field of education who have called for further empirical work on the development of theories and models of shared leadership to allow for their proper application in educational settings.

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