School leadership: perceptions and actions
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Chapter 1

Theoretical background

School leadership has been examined in many different ways. Much school leadership research has been derived from general organizational and leadership theories, but it seems that school leadership research is becoming more and more isolated. Researchers focus to a great extent on educational leadership theories and they leave out other aspects of leadership. We believe that a broad perspective is necessary to examine the concept of school leadership and that general leadership theories are crucial in the search of relevant aspects of successful school leadership. Therefore, this chapter starts (1.1) with an outline of general leadership theories and typologies. Further, we present school leadership as a special type of leadership and give an overview of specific leadership theories and typologies in education (1.2). The next section (1.3) discusses the effectiveness of school leaders. In section 4 we describe specific models for measuring school leadership.

1.1 General leadership approaches

1.1.1 General approaches

“Leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth” - James MacGregor Burns (1978), p.2

Leadership is a phenomenon that has fascinated mankind throughout the centuries. As early as the ancient Greek times, leaders stood up and were admired for their qualities, like wisdom, justice and valor. Leadership is intriguing. Unfortunately, there is no widely accepted definition of leadership and what’s more, the concept of leadership has rarely been defined. Barker (1997) refers to an analysis by Rost (1991) of 587 studies that referred to leadership in their titles. Rost found that 366 of these studies did not specify any definition of leadership. Definitions of leadership are indeed rare and
the existing definitions diverge. This can be illustrated by the following two examples of definitions.

Burns (1978) defined leadership as follows:

“leadership is the reciprocal process of mobilizing, by persons with certain motives and values, various economic, political, and other resources, in a context of competition and conflict, in order to realize goals independently or mutually held by both leaders and followers” (p. 425)

Later, DuBrin (1990) defined leadership as:

“the process of influencing the activities of an individual or group to achieve certain objectives in a given situation” (p. 255)

In these and many other definitions, we can discern two common elements. First, the importance of goal realizing, and secondly exercising influence. In our view, this is the core of leadership. Leaders activate others and work together to achieve shared goals (Leithwood and Riehl, 2003), but what makes a ‘good’ leader? What are important leadership qualities? Can everyone become a leader? Questions like these, have always been a major point of interest in leadership research. The effectiveness of leaders is a hot topic. By knowing what makes an effective leader, we can distinguish ‘good’ from ‘bad’ leaders and help leaders to become (more) effective. However, there is no clear single profile that exists for a great leader, nor is there a consistent definition of a successful leader (Horner, 1997). There are several views on the success of leaders, and there are also several definitions:

“A leader is successful when the person he or she is trying to influence demonstrates the desired behavior” (Forbes, 1991, p. 70).

“Good leaders successfully manage attention, meaning and trust. A successful leader is a role model of enthusiasm, competence, diligence and concern for others’ involvement in his or her work efforts. People are drawn to the leader and his or her 'mission' because of the way in which the leader talks about his or her vision of it, and the way in which
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*the leader demonstrates personal commitment to it*” (Sandwith (1993) borrowing from Bennis, 1989).

“The most appropriate leader is one who can lead others to lead themselves” (Manz & Sims, 1991).

In order to be successful, leaders need to facilitate each individual in the process of leading himself or herself. Leaders become great by unleashing the potential and abilities of their followers, and thus by gaining access to the knowledge of many people instead of relying solely on their own skills and abilities (Horner, 1997).

The common factor in these definitions is the ability to influence others. However, the aim of influencing others and the way in which it is done differ. In some views successful leaders motivate followers to be their own leaders and in other views effective leaders motivate their followers to achieve organizational goals. Successful leadership depends on the perspective from which it is studied.

We would like to link our view of effective leaders to the core elements of leadership. Above we concluded that the achievement of goals is important in leadership, so leaders are effective when the goals are realized. This can be achieved by influencing (the activities of) people in the organization. In the definitions above, no criteria were put forward for successful leadership, but the types of goals that leaders strive to achieve can differ. Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1983) distinguish four types of organizational goals:

- Value and development of human resources
- Growth - resource acquisition - external support
- Productivity - efficiency
- Stability - equilibrium

Success can be achieved in each of these four criteria. Each goals requires different behavior, so the success of the leader depends on the goal and the behavior.

In order to examine effectiveness and other issues concerning leadership, researchers have studied leaders, and developed
leadership theories, leadership typologies and leadership models. Leadership theories try to explain the factors involved in the nature of leadership and its consequences, and typologies differentiate between types of leaders. They categorize leaders by dividing them into groups that share the same characteristics. The typologies can be based on qualities of character of leaders, or on their leadership styles. Both theories and typologies can be translated into models, which makes it possible to measure the concept of school leadership. Models show the interaction between the variables that are considered to be involved. They are a reconstruction of reality (Bass & Stogdill, 1990).

The great number of leadership theories can be roughly divided into four groups, depending on the focus of research: personal theories, behavioral theories, contingency theories and cognitive theories. Each theory explains leadership effectiveness from a different perspective. The first group of theories is person-oriented and looks at qualities of character, the second takes the behavior of the leader as a starting point. In disagreement with the behavioral theory, we discuss the contingency and the cognitive theories, which respectively take situational characteristics and mental processes into consideration when it comes to the effectiveness of leaders.

1.1.2 Personal approach

Early studies of leadership focused on a hunt for the personal characteristics possessed by leaders. It was all about who the leader was, not about what the leader did. The leader was defined as the person with the most desirable character traits, like charisma or promptness of action. Successful leaders were studied in order to discover the desirable traits. In this view, a leader is born, not made. The key to success is to identify the people who are born as leaders. Two famous examples of personal theories are the person-oriented approach, also referred to as the great-man theory, and the trait theory.

The person-oriented theory states that history is formed by the leadership of great men, or as Carlyle put it: “the history of the
world was the biography of great men” (Carlyle, 1907, p. 18). Stalin, Napoleon and Mao are examples of great man. According to Carlyle these leaders were ascribed exclusive qualities that appealed to the imagination of the people. They would make a difference anywhere. Leadership was defined as a unique property of extraordinary individuals whose decisions are capable of sometimes radically changing the course of history. It is nevertheless questionable whether the great-man theory explains the broad concept of leadership. Most historians today believe that economic, societal, and technological factors are far more important to history than the decisions made by any individual.

The trait theory elaborates on the question of great men. It does not assume that the course of history is solely within the reach of a few great men, but it does suppose that (effective) leadership depends on the personal traits of the leader. To be more specific, some people have traits and skills that increase the likelihood that they will seek and reach positions of leadership and be effective in these positions. Traits are individual attributes, including aspects of personality, temperament, needs, motives and values. Traits are relatively stable dispositions to behave in a particular way. Examples of traits are extroversion, energy level, self-confidence, and emotional maturity. Skills refer to the ability to do something in an effective manner and like traits, they are determined by learning and inheritance. Intelligence and verbal reasoning are examples of skills (Yukl, 2002). Trait theorists reasoned that if leaders have unique qualities that distinguish them from others, it should be possible to identify these desirable traits and skills.

Until 1940 most leadership studies compared leaders to non-leaders and they concentrated on traits. In 1940 Bird listed 79 leadership traits and skills, after studying 20 psychologically oriented studies. The traits and skills included knowledge of human nature, accuracy in work, and moral habits. Stogdill (1948) reviewed 124 trait studies conducted in the first half of the twentieth century and he found, next to traits skills like speech fluency, interpersonal skills, decisiveness in judgment, and administrative abilities as stable leader qualities. However, the review did not confirm the as-
sumption of the trait theory that a person must possess certain traits or skills to become a successful leader. The effectiveness of the skills and traits depended on the situation. Forty years later, Immegart (1988) concludes, after reviewing extensive reviews of research findings on leadership, that the following traits are most often associated with successful leadership: intelligence, dominance, high energy/activity and self-confidence. Other traits that were found in qualitative reviews of the leader trait perspective include self-confidence, adjustment, sociability, integrity and dominance. None of these traits, however, was consistently found in all of the reviewed studies.

Despite the absence of empirically based personality theories, trait researchers still searched for a psychological basis in leadership studies. A lot of research in psychology deals with the personality of individuals and soon personality tests became a tool in the categorization of leaders. A frequently used and widely accepted typology based on personal characteristics is the Myers-Briggs typology. This personality test is used in many different areas. In 1985 Myers and McCaulley used the typology to classify the thoughts of leaders who are faced with decisions and problems. The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) was tested on a sample of 875 U.S. managers, and the leaders were sorted into 4 types and 16 subtypes. The four types are extroverted versus introverted, sensing versus intuitive, thinking versus feeling and judging versus perceiving. The 16 subtypes are combinations of the four types described above (i.e. EIFJ: extravert, intuitive, feeling, judging, or ISTJ: introvert, sensing, thinking, judging). Each (sub)type has a distinctive way of attending to the world and making decisions. Later, Myers & McCaulley (1989) used the MBTI on 7,500 managers and administrators. In 1995, Mitchell and Shuff tested a group of hospice volunteers and found that hospice volunteers as a group prefer extraversion over introversion, intuition over sensing and feeling over thinking. The Myers-Briggs typology categorizes leadership types in an orderly way, but it does not say anything about leadership effectiveness.
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Until the mid-twentieth century, the number of personality traits and scales to measure them seemed infinite (Goldberg, 1971). Many personality researchers hoped to find a common structure in all these personality scales and this was more or less achieved with the development of the Big-Five-model, a general taxonomy of personality traits (John and Srivastava, 1999). According to the Big-Five model, personality, as observed by others, can be explained by five broad dimensions (the name ‘Big’-Five refers to the broadness of the five factors). The dimensions are: agreeableness, surgency, intellect, emotional stability and conscientiousness (or: neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, conscientiousness and agreeableness according to Judge and Ilies, 2002). The Big-Five model was used by trait theorists to link personality to leadership effectiveness. Several authors found correlations between measures of leadership effectiveness and the Big-Five (Hogan, Curphy, Hogan, 1994; Stogdill, 1974; Bentz, 1990). Judge, Bono, Ilies and Gerhardt (2002) found that extraversion and openness revealed effect sizes that were consistent with and similar to those of leader effectiveness. Other authors found significant correlations between leadership effectiveness and emotional stability, agreeableness, surgency and conscientiousness (Stogdill, 1974; Bentz, 1990). Personality tests have been a valuable contribution to leadership research, but the significant results that were found in trait studies using tests like the Big-Five, have the problem of limited applicability due to the relatively stable nature of personality within individuals over time. It therefore provides a deterministic approach of leadership. A person is a leader or not, and leadership can not be learned. Some claim that the desirable traits can be learned, but the focus on personal characteristics is still tantamount to a rather deterministic view on leadership.

Due to the difficulties mentioned in the above, the trait theories have been out of favor for a long time. As Zaccaro, Foti and Kenny (1991) noted, “trait explanations of leader emergence are generally regarded with little esteem by leadership theorists” (p. 308). However, nowadays there is a revival of personal theories (Zaccaro, 2007). While in the past the focus was primarily on desir-
able characteristics of the leader, there is now also interest in destruc-
tive characteristics of leaders. Yukl (2006) points out that de-
spite the small number of characteristics that tend to be correlated
with leadership effectiveness (dominance, self-confidence, intelli-
gence and high energy level), the personality variables studied in
leadership context are mostly desirable traits, i.e. characteristics that
are probable attributes of effective leaders. Recently there has been
more interest in potentially destructive attributes of leaders
(Schaubroeck, Walumbwa, Ganster & Kepes, 2007; Conger, 1990;
Frost 2004; Tepper, 2000). This new perspective deals with traits
and skills that have negative consequences for individuals, groups
or organizations. Hostility and trait negative affectivity (NA) are
examples of personality traits that have a negative effect on others
as well as on the owner of the trait (Schaubroeck et al., 2007). Judge,
Bono, Ilies, and Gerhardt (2002) found several studies reporting
that high trait NA individuals are less likely to emerge as leaders,
or, if they are leaders, they tend to be perceived as less effective
than low negative affect leaders. The same results were found by

Despite the renewed interest in personal characteristics, we
question the value of the trait theory in the measurement of leader-
ship effectiveness. First of all, there is no trait that is consistently
related to successful leadership. Sometimes this was due to differ-
ent labeling, but House and Aditya (1997) attribute it to the lack of
empirically substantiated personality theory to guide the search for
leadership traits. House and Aditya conclude, “It appeared ... that
there were few, if any, universal traits associated with effective
leadership. Consequently, there developed among the community
of leadership scholars near consensus that the search for universal
traits was futile” (p. 410).

Secondly, and more important, the trait theory is a determi-
nistic approach of leadership. As said in the beginning of the para-
graph, traits are relatively stable dispositions to behave in a particu-
lar way, which means that they cannot be influenced. So from this
perspective, leadership cannot be learned. And even though recent
studies did find interesting results concerning the destructive effect
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of some traits, we still point out that deterministic approaches are not the best path in the search of effective leadership. Even if consistent results are found, how can leaders profit from it?

Thirdly, it is difficult to develop an inclusive list of leadership traits and to operationalize these desirable traits. To measure traits, researchers had to rely on constructs which lacked reliability and, given differing definitions, also lacked validity. In fact, trait theories focussing on traits only lack the power to explain leadership or leadership effectiveness.

In the first section of this thesis we stated that two things are important in leadership: goal realizing and exercising influence. In other words, leadership is about behavior. A person leads an organization by displaying particular behavior and this behavior can be observed and understood by others. Certain traits may increase the likelihood that a leader may be effective, but they do not guarantee effectiveness (Yukl, 1981). At best they explain a fraction of the leaders’ effectiveness, but in the end the leader’s behavior plays a far larger role. The effectiveness of behavior depends on the goals that are tried to attain. Horner (1997) stresses that the situational and environmental factors that play a role in a leader’s level of effectiveness may not be ignored. Other authors comment that the effect of any trait on leadership behavior will depend on the situation (Hughes, Ginnett, and Curphy, 1996; Yukl and Van Fleet, 1992). In the same line, Conger and Kanungo (1998) remark that the trait theory is too simplistic, because it proposed that the success of leaders could be attributed solely to their personalities and physical characteristics without taking into consideration manifest behavior in a given situation. We will address the issue of manifest behavior in the paragraph below and the situational aspects in section 1.1.4.

1.1.3 Behavioral approach

As shown in the previous paragraph, personal theorists are interested in the subjective aspects of a leader’s personality. Their successors, behavioral researchers, criticized the trait-tradition for its silence about what leaders do and started to examine leadership as a set of behaviors (Spillane, 2004). They focus on more objective
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aspects, like observable behavior and at the same time they see a more prominent role for the leader. The leader provides the stimulus or sets the occasion to elicit the subordinates’ behavior. Work in this tradition searches for a link between behavior and effectiveness. As an advantage to the person-oriented approach, behavior can be measured more adequately than elusive traits. Researchers use observations to establish the behavior of leaders, and they develop typologies of leadership tasks to classify the observations. Another advantage of defining good leadership in terms of certain behavior is that it is easier for a person to learn how to act in a certain way (to copy good behavior) than to adopt certain intangible 'traits'.

In contrast to behavioral research focusing on single instances of leader behavior there has been interest in styles of leadership in which not merely the behavior of a leader is studied, but the patterns in his/her behavior. A style of leadership is a consistency in the activities of a leader and it depends on factors such as the personality of the leader, earlier experiences with leadership, and the norms and values of the leader. Often leaders do not consciously choose a certain style.

In order to observe the behavior of leaders or styles of leadership, various methods like diaries, observations, self-reports or questionnaires are used (Yukl, 1981). The diary method works with pads of sheets with specified response categories that leaders have to fill in. The observation method consists either of continuous observation or interval observation. In the latter, leaders are observed for brief intervals of time on randomly selected occasions by a behavioral scientist (Kelley, 1964). Continuous observation means that researchers continuously observe and record all the activities of leaders over a period of several work days. This could be either structured or unstructured observation. In the self-report method leaders are asked to describe their daily activities. Questionnaires are a more structured way of self-reportings. Most studies on leadership behavior so far have used questionnaires to describe what leaders do.
The first studies that examined leadership styles by means of questionnaire research were conducted at the Ohio State University during the 1950’s (Fleishman, 1953; Hemphill & Coons, 1957). This work is classified under the ‘classical approach’ by Yammarino, Dionne, Chun and Dansereau (2005). For a long time, this work dominated questionnaire research on leadership. They started their programs in the late 1940’s and focus on the identification of leadership behavior that is beneficial to the attainment of organizational goals (Yukl, 1981). Their study is an example of leadership style research. At first, a list of 1800 examples of leadership behavior was compiled, which was later reduced to 150 items. These 150 items were used to develop a questionnaire that was given to subordinates to describe their leader’s behavior. The responses to the questionnaires were factor analyzed and the outcomes suggest that subordinates perceive their leader’s behavior in terms of two distinct categories of leadership behavior. Thus there are two constructs that describe the dual behavioral requirements of a leadership role: consideration (C) and initiating structure (IS) (Harris & Fleishman, 1955). Consideration involves behavior that emphasizes a deeper concern for the needs of group members, like mutual trust, warmth and respect. Initiating structure entails behavior that emphasizes overt attempts to achieve organizational goals. The leader organizes and defines each role he or she expects each member to fulfill. Cann and Siegfried (1990) studied how respondents judge the relationship between the C and IS leadership styles on the one hand, and feminine and masculine behavior on the other. They found that consideration is perceived as more feminine and initiating structure as more masculine. Originally, the C and IS dimensions were thought to be orthogonal, or independent; a leader can display both behaviors. However, Kavanagh (1972) found in his study amongst 164 undergraduate students taking business courses, that C and IS are not perceived to be independent behavioral dimensions. He found a consistent negative relationship and concluded that for the situations he created in his study, C and IS are the ends of a bipolar continuum.
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Research on initiating structure and consideration had great impact, partly because of the notion that leadership is not necessarily a character trait, but something that can be learned (Saal & Knight, 1988). Behavior was found that differentiates leaders from followers, and as a consequence effective leadership methods could be taught to employees.

Blake and Mouton (1964) developed a two-factor model similar to the one developed by the researchers at the Ohio State University, but with an expansion of people- and task oriented activities. In their managerial grid they discern 5 theories of managerial behavior, based on two variables found in organizations: an orientation towards tasks and an orientation towards relations. A manager can either have a high or low concern with production and a high or low concern for people. This results in five possible scores: high on production, high on people; low on production, low on people; high on production, low on people; low on production, high on people; and a ‘middle of the road’, or balanced score on these dimensions. Reddin (1977) elaborated on this taxonomy and added an effectiveness dimension. The result of this type of research is primarily descriptive and helps categorize leaders based on their behavior or management style.

Typologies and taxonomies within the behavioral approach have been useful in distinguishing types of leaders and types of leadership behavior, but they do not account for all the behavior that leaders display. Mintzberg (1973) became aware of this imperfection of behavioral research and noticed that an activity in itself does not explain leadership behavior. According to him, the focus of behavioral studies was too often at a concrete level of activities and seldom in terms of activity content, so he developed a typology of ten managerial roles to cope with the shortcomings of other behavioral research. Roles are thus different from behavior. They focus on ideal types of behavior. Mintzberg used unstructured observations to develop new content categories. He interpreted the meaning of the activities by identifying ten managerial roles that accounted for all of the activities he had observed. Each activity
could be explained in terms of at least one role. The roles can be grouped into three categories: three roles deal with interpersonal behavior (figurehead, leader, liaison), three roles deal with information processing behavior (monitor, disseminator, spokesman) and four roles deal with decision-making behavior (entrepreneur, disturbance handler, resource allocator and negotiator). All roles are relevant for all managers, but their relative importance may vary from one manager to another.

A more contemporary approach (Yammarino et al., 2005), is the distinction between transactional and transformational leadership. This dichotomy has gained more importance as a result of the large-scale innovations initiated by the government in the Netherlands as well as in other countries (Geijsel, Sleegers, Van den Berg, 1999; Leithwood, Tomlinson, Genge, 1996). Transactional leadership is generally sufficient to keep the status quo in schools, whereas transformational leadership is necessary to achieve change. Transactional leadership is characterized by goal setting, clarifying desired outcomes, giving feedback and rewarding. Transformational leadership is often referred to as charismatic and visionary. The transformational leader exerts influence by creating commitment among staff, elevating the goals of his/her followers and encouraging them to perform extraordinarily. These leaders inspire, stimulate and motivate, thus transforming their followers to higher levels of performance and aiding them to reach their full potential (Bass & Avolio, 1990). The greatest difference between transactional and transformational leadership is the extent to which the leader stimulates his followers to develop themselves and think for themselves. The transactional leader expects his staff to perform as planned in pre-set objectives, whereas the transformational leader expects more (Dvir, Eden, Avolio & Shamir, 2002). Transformational leadership is important in the implementation of large-scale innovation programs (Leithwood et al., 1996), because transformational leaders positively affect the concern of teachers and their motivation, two factors that are needed for educational improvement (van den Berg and Sleegers, 1996; Leithwood, 1994). According to Bass and Avolio (1994) the success of transformational leaders is

One of the interesting aspects of transformational leadership is its hybrid origin. It is derived from the personal, behavioral and contingency perspectives. Transformational leadership presumes that leadership is contingent on a combination of traits and situations involving a transaction between the leader and the followers (Hollander, 1986). Transformational leadership transforms the led into leaders.

Bass and Stogdill (1990) asserted that in the end many leadership typologies can be placed under the dichotomy autocratic versus democratic. A leader who exhibits democratic behavior encourages his subordinates to participate in the decision making process. Autocratic leaders, on the contrary, discourage subordinates to participate in decision making. The dimension of participative and directive leadership is bipolar: the two styles are incompatible with each other. However, we think this claim is too narrow. Participative and directive leadership are certainly elements that play a role in leadership, but there are also other possible dichotomies, for example a goal- versus people orientation, like the Consideration versus Initiation structure by Harris and Fleishman (1955) or the two factor model developed by Blake and Mouton (1964). This is a completely different dichotomy that cannot be subsumed within the autocratic versus democratic dichotomy. In fact, it can even be questioned whether the dimensions are really bipolar and whether we should view as such. Leaders may display both types of behavior, to a different extent or in different situations. One dimension does not necessarily exclude the other. It can even be effective to have the capacity to focus on both people and goals. Yukl (1981) describes how three types of leadership behavior differ-
entiate between effective and ineffective leaders. The three types of behavior derive from the dichotomies mentioned earlier in this paragraph: task-oriented behavior, relations-oriented behavior and participative leadership. Effective managers concentrate on task-oriented functions and guide subordinates to set high but realistic goals (Initiating Structure), they are more supportive and helpful with subordinates (Consideration) and they use more group supervision instead of individual supervision (participative leadership). In this perspective, effective leaders have a broad focus. After all, organizations are complex constructions with several aspects that need to be attended to. A leader who only focuses on the organizational goals, ignores the fact that it is the people in his/her organization that achieve the goals. Without the employees, no goal will be attained, so the leader needs to keep the employees satisfied. The same is true for a unique focus on the organization itself. If a leader is only interested in what is going on inside the organization, he or she may lose contact with the world and the clients outside, which will eventually lead to stagnation in growth. Interestingly, all the formulations in typologies and dimensions from the behavioral view focus exclusively on internal aspects. None of them devotes any attention to the external or representative aspects of leadership. This is a serious shortcoming. Effective leaders have to address more than one aspect of their organization and, as we will see in the next section, the context of an organization is very important.

1.1.4 Contingency approach

The main criticism on the personal and behavioral approach is the lack of context variables. As mentioned earlier, already in 1948 Stogdill critized the narrow focus on personal traits in leadership research. He pointed out that situational factors also play a role. Yukl (1981) also indicated that the importance of traits depends on the nature of the situation in which the leader was situated. However, Fiedler (1967) was the first author to introduce the contingency perspective. His work will be introduced later in this section.
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Contingency theories deal with the interaction between a leader’s traits, his/her behavior and the situation in which the leader exists. These theories assume that the effects of one variable on leadership are contingent on other variables (Horner, 1997). Saal and Knight (1988) notice the importance of this insight: leadership can be different in every situation. The contingency approach allows for the complexity and situational specificity of overall effectiveness (Horner, 1997). In the contingency tradition, the effectiveness of a leadership style depends on both the leadership task and the context (Stogdill, 1974). For example, a task-oriented style is more effective when employees do not have much experience and are less competent; a combination of a task- and relationship-oriented style works best with more competent groups (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977).

Before Fiedler worked out his contingency theory, situational factors had already become topic of research. An early theory that ascribed importance to situational factors, is the situational theory. In this view, situational factors determine who will stand up as a leader. The emergence of a leader is the result of time, place and circumstances. In other words: a certain situation calls for a certain type of action (Murphy, 1941), thus making leadership a function of the occasion. A more differentiated situational perspective recognizes that a situation in itself is not enough to explain leadership; whether a leader stands up in a certain situation also depends on his/her personal characteristics.

Later, situational or contingency factors were used as independent variables that affect the dependent variable of behavior. In other words, behavior depends on the context and not every context requires the same management behavior or style. This view is referred to as the contingency theory and Fiedler (1967) set the wheels in motion for this line of reasoning. Fiedlers’ early research belongs to the trait theory, but with time, he worked towards a more contingent perspective. He regards two variables in defining leader effectiveness: leadership style and the extent to which the leader’s situation is favourable for influence. According to the contingency theory, leadership styles are more or less stable, but their
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effectiveness depends on the situation. Situational favourability is defined as the combination of leader-member relations, task structure and position power. As can be seen, in this study the goal versus people orientation from the behavioral theory is expanded with position power. The scores on these three variables can be either high or low, resulting in eight classifications. For example, high on leader-member relations, high on task structure and low on position power, or high on leader-member relations, low on task structure and high on position power.

In order to measure leadership styles, Fiedler developed a measure of leader attitudes called the ‘least preferred co-worker’ (LPC) score. Leaders were asked to indicate the coworker with whom they could work least well and then they had to fill out a questionnaire about this least preferred co-worker. A high LPC score is awarded to leaders who are soft in their judgements and a low LPC score is given to leaders who are critical in their ratings. Fiedler explains different results for different kinds of leaders by means of a contingency model. This model specifies the type of situation in which a leader with a high LPC score will be more effective than a leader with a low LPC score, and vice versa. A review by Rice (1978) on research on LPC scores shows that leaders with low LPC scores value task success and leaders with a high LPC score value interpersonal success.

The LPC contingency model was one of the earliest contingency theories of leadership and it stimulated other researchers to consider situational factors in their studies. House (1971) for example, added situational variables to the path-goal theory in order to explain how the behavior of a leader affects the contentment and functioning of subordinates. The effect of a leader’s behavior on the contentment of a subordinate is not automatically the same as the effect on the functioning of the subordinate. The situation determines whether they are affected in the same way or in a different way, or whether one is affected and the other not.

Another approach that builds on the contingency theory of Fiedler, is the multiple-linkage model (Yukl, 1981). The model includes four types of variables: managerial behaviors, intervening
variables, criterion variables and situational variables. In this model, the interacting effects are described of the leader’s behavior and situational variables on the intervening variables that determine the performance of a work unit. The situational variables moderate the leader’s behavior, they have an direct effect on the intervening variables and they determine the relative importance of the intervening variables (Yukl, 2006).

In 1986 Fielder and his colleagues developed a new situational model: the cognitive resources model. This theory assumes that the performance of a leader is determined by a complex interaction among two leader traits (intelligence and experience), one type of leader behavior (directive leadership) and two aspects of the leadership situation (interpersonal stress and the nature of the group’s task (Yukl, 2006). The effect of intelligence of the leader on the performance of the subordinate is is moderated by the stress for the leader. Stress also modeates the effect of the leader’s experience of the performance of the subordinate.

The applicability of Fiedler’s early contingency theory can be questioned because of its relative simplicity, but the discussion about the relevance of contingency factors is still alive today. As we have seen in the above, situational factors are often taken into account, but they are now included in more complex models. Osborn et al. (2002) argue that ‘one cannot separate the leader(s) from the context any more than one can separate a flavor from a food’. Context is incorporated in leadership and should thus be part of the leadership approach. This will automatically lead to a more complex model.

The value of the contingency theory in leadership effectiveness research lies in the possibility to measure leadership styles and situations. It adds an external component to the internal focus we observed in the behavioral approach. Once the style and the situation are known, the match can be evaluated and the leader can either change his/her behavior, or he/she can be assigned to a more appropriate situation. This will increase the effectiveness of the leader. However, at this moment the contingency theory lacks an
empirical foundation. We need more research devoted to the factors that play a role in leadership.

1.1.5 Cognitive approach

In behavioral studies, not much attention has been paid to the way leaders think about their work. The cognitive approach focuses on leaders' and followers' thinking about their work, and the relation between these cognitive processes and their behavior (Pfeffer 1977; Weick, 1995).

What is new in this approach is the position of the variable behavior. A lot of behavioral studies consider the behavior of leaders as the independent variable: a certain behavior leads to certain results. Studies taking context into account consider behavior as a dependent variable: a certain context leads to a certain behavior. However, context is not the only factor affecting the behavior of a leader. Why do leaders act as they do? What is the steering power behind an action? What is the meaning of an activity? These questions are center of focus in the cognitive approach. Writers in this view assume that it is not only about the tasks a leader performs, but more about his/her perception of the tasks. In other words, the intentions behind the conduct are just as important as the behavior itself.

In cognitive theories, not only the intentions of the leader play a role, but also the perceptions of the followers and the leader's own perception of his/her role. In the leader-role theory, attention is given to the leaders perception of his/her role as a leader. The features of the individual and the requirements of the situation interact in such a way as to permit a person to emerge as a leader. According to this theory, leaders act upon expectations, and as a result of how they perceive their roles to be defined.

An example of the leader-role theory can be found in Goffman (1959) who includes the perceptions of followers in his work. He believes that social learning creates a difference between the leader’s intentions and the understanding of the follower of what the leader is trying to do. A leader may act in a certain way based on certain intentions, while the subordinate interprets the action in
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a completely different way. For example, a leader tells his employee to take a vacation because he/she is concerned with the well-being of his/her employee and believes that the employee will be more productive after a vacation. However, the employee might interpret the advice to take some vacation as ‘I am not needed anymore’ or ‘my boss wants to get rid of me’.

Quinn and Hall (1983) elaborated on the idea that perceptions are important and they constructed an integrated theory using a cognitive and a perceptual dimension. They distinguish between two dimensions, an internal versus external orientation of the leader and the flexibility and control of the leader. Carrier (1984) used these dimensions in order to locate leadership traits in reference to them.

With the focus on the leaders’ intentions, beliefs and values, research within the cognitive tradition is at risk of ignoring organizational, cultural, and political factors that also influence what school leaders do (Cuban, 1993). This perspective, like all the previously mentioned perspectives, does not sufficiently clarify leadership (effectiveness). Leadership cannot be fully understood if it is viewed from only one perspective. The intentions of the school leader, the behavior of the leader, or the context of the organization all play a role.

1.1.6 Integral models

In the paragraphs above we have described four different groups of theories on leadership: the trait theory, the behavioral theory, the contingency theory and the cognitive theory. Each of the theories has contributed to a better understanding of leadership, but as we concluded in each section, none of them fully explains the concept. The separate theories only account for single elements of leadership. The leadership models developed within each theory are also too limited. Depending on the approach they belong to, these models only look at certain aspects of leadership, not at the complete picture. Osborn et al. (2002) explain that leadership analysis is not made up of separate theories. Selecting one theory allows the scholar to see some aspects at the cost of missing others. Osborn
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stresses that leadership theory is part of a larger chain of theoretical perspectives ‘that specify the system, its boundaries, the types of criteria to be examined and the basic causal mechanisms seen to be evoked by the leaders, wherever they may reside in the system. The theory selected allows the researcher to see some features at the cost of missing others. Even if the actions of leaders are almost identical, a minor change in theoretical focus could so substantially alter what is to be predicted and why the actions are linked to the criteria that even the most skilled leadership researcher would be unable to see the commonality’ (p.799). One sees what one is looking for, and not necessarily what is important. For this reason, Fidler (1997) recommends choosing one or more conceptualizations of leadership which seem appropriate in order to understand a certain situation and using these to formulate actions. The choice of conceptualization depends on the situation.

Already in the eighties, Yukl (1981) pointed out that leadership should be examined by means of integral leadership models, models that are characterized by the synthesis of a chain of variables. Recently, Spillane, Halverson and Diamond (2004) argue that ‘in order to understand leadership practice, leaders’ thinking and behaviour and their situation need to be considered together, in an integrated framework’ (p.8). Despite pleas like this, today it is widely acknowledged that leadership research lacks integrative frameworks (Bass et al., 1990; Bryman, 1996; Mintzberg, 2004; Yukl, 2006). According to Fidler (1997) no single theory or approach can include all facets of the complex construct of leadership, so a search for an all-encompassing theory may be illusory. A good solution is to integrate the separate leadership theories and create an integral leadership model.
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1.2 School leadership approaches

1.2.1 School leadership

As can be seen in the above, in leadership theories several classifications of leadership types have been made. We can also classify according to the sector leaders work in and discern leaders of crowds, public leaders, educational leaders, business leaders and institutional leaders. Each type of leader has its own characteristics. In this thesis, we are interested in school leaders.

‘...In ... educational settings ... leadership plays a critical, if not the most critical role, and as such, is an important subject for study and research.’ (p. 20 Stogdill’s Handbook)

In this statement the crucial role of teachers seems to have been forgotten, but the quote does show the importance of school leaders.

Scholars examining school leadership have often leaned on general leadership theories. A great part of their theories and models has been derived from those general leadership theories. This is one of the reasons why the development of school leader theories runs parallel to the development of general leadership theories. It is in fact a specification of general leadership theories. Despite the similarities, however, we prefer to consider the concept of school leadership as a concept in itself, because leaders in school organizations are different from leaders in other organizations and school organizations are different from other organizations.

Mintzberg (1979) developed a typology in which he distinguishes five types of organizations. The typology is based on four dimensions. According to Mintzberg, stability and complexity are two important dimensions in the context of an organization. Stability refers to the predictability of the context of the organization and complexity refers to the nature of the primary process. A dynamic, unpredictable context requires an organization that responds quickly and promptly. In a stable context, however, standardization can be a functional mechanism of coordination. Based on combinations of these dimensions, Mintzberg distinguishes five types of or-
ganizations: simple structure, machine bureaucracy, professional organization, division organization and ad-hocracy.

A simple, dynamic context requires a ‘simple structure’, a configuration in which the top management makes the decisions and in which direct management is the most effective mechanism of coordination. A simple and stable context matches best with a decentralized and bureaucratic structure: the ‘machine bureaucracy’. Managers have a lot of power and coordination is executed by standardization of the operating work processes. In a complex and stable context, the organizational structure must be both decentralized and bureaucratic. In ‘professional organizations’, the executing workforce has the most power and standardization of skills is the leading coordination mechanism.

The ‘division organization’ is effective in a highly heterogeneous context, in which many different products or services are delivered to many different countries or clients. In this case the management will form several divisions and standardization of the proceeds will be the main mechanism of coordination. The middle line is the key part of the organization, they coordinate the output, acting between the strategic apex and the operating core. The final organization type is the ad-hocracy. A complex and dynamic context are served best with a decentralized and organic culture. The supporting staff has the most power and coordination is accomplished through mutual tuning.

Based on Mintzberg’s typology, school organizations can be considered as professional organizations. The operating core consists of professionals who have considerable control over their work, and who work relatively independently of their colleagues, but closely to the students.

Fidler (1997) points out that, in comparison to other organizations, schools have special features that might have implications for leadership:

- Diffuse, value-based and, to some extent, self-selected outcomes
- Means and ends are both important
- The organization has a moral purpose
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- The core workforce is professional

Even though organizations differ, there are tasks that all leaders, regardless of their type of organization, need to fulfill, like directing the core process of the organization, staffing, finances and external relations. According to Morgan et al. (1983), leaders of professionally staffed organizations may have additional requirements and leaders of schools even more so. Hughes (1985) adds that school leaders, in addition to their regular management tasks, need to be the leading professional or at least a leading professional.

Thus, school leaders are a special category of leaders who need to be regarded and studied as such. However, as we argued before, educational leadership theories can not be seen apart from general leadership theories: general leadership theories have always affected school leadership research. For this reason, we consider it important to use general leadership theory as well as educational leadership theory in order to measure educational leadership.

Bush and Glover (2003) found that there is no agreed definition of the concept of leadership, let alone school leadership. They examined literature on school leadership and deduced a list of elements that is assumed to play a role in school leadership, like vision, personal values and influence. Based on this list, they developed a working definition of school leadership:

“Leadership is a process of influence leading to the achievement of desired purposes. Successful leaders develop a vision for their schools based on their personal and professional values. They articulate this vision at every opportunity and influence their staff and other stakeholders to share the vision. The philosophy, structures and activities of the school are geared towards achievement of this shared vision.”

Based on our findings regarding the definitions of leadership, in our section on general leadership theories, in which we conclude that three elements are important in leadership (goal setting and achieving, the process of leading others and activating others to achieve shared goals), we see the same aspects in above quotation which we consider an apposite definition of school leadership.
In the educational literature several views on leadership and several research methods have been developed to learn more about school leadership. Many of them have been derived from general leadership theories. In the next sections, we will follow the structure of the section on general leadership theories and discuss the behavioral, contingency and cognitive theories in school leadership research and the typologies related to these theories. The personal theory is not included here, because it is a general theory that is applicable to all kinds of leaders. The same effectiveness traits apply to educational leaders as well as other leaders. Also, there simply has not been much attention for the personal theory in educational leadership research.

1.2.2 Behavioral approach in school leadership research

In the behavioral approach, the starting point is the behavior of school leaders. Often, observations or questionnaires are used to gain a better understanding of leadership. This research method provides insight into the multitude and diversity of the tasks and actions of leaders in educational settings. Based on the observations, typologies of school leadership tasks have been worked out. In leadership typologies, dichotomies are often used to characterize the types of leaders.

An important and frequently used contribution of the behavioral approach of school leadership in educational leadership studies, is the distinction between administrative and educational leadership. Hughes (1985) refers to this dichotomy as the dual role of school leaders: chief executive and leading professional. School leaders have to perform general management tasks as well as tasks aimed at the primary process. Administrative leadership is what we would refer to as constituting the task of a general manager. This kind of manager keeps the school running and takes care of preconditions. Educational leaders, on the other hand, are oriented towards the primary, or educational, processes in the school. They focus more on the instructional program. We should note that the two roles are closely related and the distinction is only possible in an analytical perspective. Research results indicate that the role of
the school leader as instructional or educational leader is decisive when it comes to the effectiveness of the school (Krüger, 1994).

The concept of educational leadership was initially referred to as instructional leadership. Leithwood et al. (1999) define instructional leadership as follows:

“Instructional leadership... typically assumes that the critical focus for attention by leaders is the behaviour of teachers as they engage in activities directly affecting the growth of students”. (p.8)

A frequently used conceptualization of instructional leadership was developed by Hallinger (2000). He developed the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) to measure instructional leadership of school leaders. Based on the outcomes, he proposed a model with three dimensions of the instructional leadership construct: defining the school’s mission, promoting a positive school-learning climate and managing the instructional climate. These dimensions are further subdivided into a total of ten instructional leadership functions. Defining the schools mission has two functions: framing the school’s goals and communicating the schools goals. Promoting a positive school learning climate focuses on 5 functions: protecting instructional time, promoting professional development, providing incentives for teachers, maintaining high visibility and providing incentives for learning. The last dimension, managing the instructional climate, includes the following leadership functions: supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating the curriculum and monitoring student progress. The PIMRS proved to be a reliable and valid instrument (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985).

Krüger (1996) used the PIMRS to examine instructional leadership in the Netherlands, but she found no evidence for the three dimensions. However, she did find six other dimensions of instructional leadership: mission-oriented instructional leadership, culture-oriented instructional leadership, classroom-oriented instructional leadership, instructional leadership via teachers’ reward, instructional leadership via promoting professional development and instructional leadership via promoting an orderly task-oriented cli-
mate. Krüger concluded that school leaders in the Netherlands differ from school leaders in the United States of America. She reasons that the differences are a reflection of differences existing in the educational contexts in which American and Dutch school leaders perform their jobs. In the US, the accountability is stronger and the responsibility for the quality of education is higher than in the Netherlands.

Instructional leadership has proved to be an important aspect of school leadership but it can be questioned whether instructional leadership as a concept covers the whole range of behavior that makes a school leader effective. The newer term ‘educational’ leadership seems more appropriate. Educational leadership is broader than instructional leadership. Krüger (1997) defines the educational leader as follows: a leader whose actions are always aimed at influencing the primary processes in the school and thus at influencing the effects at student level.

Even though the job of a school leader requires both educational and administrative leadership, educational leadership is expected to be more effective than administrative leadership. Results of school effectiveness research indicate that educational leadership is an important characteristic of effective schools. Student outcomes are supposed to improve if the school leader has more time for educational tasks. Effective school leaders are characterized by the performance of leadership tasks which are positively connected to student achievements, such as emphasis on basic subjects, provision of an orderly atmosphere and a learning climate, setting instructional strategies, coordination of instructional programs, supervising and supporting teachers, orientation towards educational development and innovation, mission-orientation and dissemination of the school’s vision (Krüger et al., 2007). Leithwood, Begley and Cousins (1990) point out that school leaders indeed consider educational tasks as more desirable, but that they are mainly occupied with administrative issues. This is in line with Cuban’s (1988) findings. According to him, most time is spent dealing with administrative issues. Stoel (1994) confirms this for the Netherlands. Research also indicates that female school leaders appear to be more involved in
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educational activities and male school leaders in administrative activities (Lee, Smith, & Cioci, 1993; Krüger, 1994). Women carry out more instructional activities and spend more time on instructional matters.

Behavioral research in education was soon extended with an interest in styles of leadership, in which, like in general leadership research, the patterns of behavior rather than the stand-alone behavior, are the objects of study. Bush and Glover (2003), for example, identify eight types of school leaders. They use an adapted typology derived from Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach (1999), who identified six models as extracted from over a hundred articles in international journals.

Bush and Glover come up with the following eight typologies: instructional leadership (focus on teaching and learning, and on the behavior of teachers), transformational leadership (influence is exerted through increasing the commitment of followers to the goals that are set), moral leadership (based on beliefs and values, makes the purposes clear), participative leadership (democratic, empowers teachers), managerial leadership (rational, focus on functions, tasks and behaviors), post-modern leadership (no objective reality, the individual is acknowledged), interpersonal leadership (focus on relationships with teachers, students and external contacts), contingent leadership (leaders adapt to organizational circumstances). In this typology we find many elements that were found in general leadership typologies as well, but under different names. For example, managerial leadership is more or less similar to transactional leadership, participative leadership can be retraced to the people-orientation of Blake and Mouton (1964) or Initiating Structure (Harris & Fleishman, 1955) and transformational leadership can be found in general and educational leadership theories.

An example of leadership styles in school leadership research that can also be found in general leadership research is the distinction between transactional and transformational leadership. As mentioned in section 1.1.3, transactional leaders set goals, clarify desired outcomes and give feedback and rewards. The transformational leader creates commitment amongst his/her staff and en-
courages extraordinary performances. They stimulate their staff to reach their full potential. In contemporary educational leadership literature, Leithwood and Jantzi (1999) developed a model that combines transformational leadership and transactional leadership, because transactional practices are relevant to organizational stability. They describe the model of transformational leadership in schools along six dimensions: building school vision and goals; providing intellectual stimulation; offering individualized support; symbolizing professional practices and values; demonstrating high performance expectations; and developing structures to foster participation in school decisions (Leithwood, 1994; Leithwood et al, 1999). Each dimension is related to more specific leadership practices. The four dimensions of transactional leadership that Leithwood and Jantzi include are: staffing, instructional support, monitoring school activities, and community focus. They found - consistent with other large-scale quantitative school leadership studies - that transactional leadership has weak but significant effects on the affective and psychological dimension and on the behavioral dimension of student engagement. They also found an effect of transformational leadership practices on organizational conditions. In the Netherlands research into transformational leadership has identified three core dimensions of transformational leadership in Dutch schools: vision building through initiating and identifying a vision for the school’s future, providing individual support and providing intellectual stimulation (Geijsel, Sleegers, & Van den Berg, 1999; Geijsel, Sleegers, Stoel & Krüger, 2009).

Leadership studies within the behavioral approach are a valuable contribution to the understanding of school leadership, because these typologies help in the identification and categorization of leadership behavior. The behavioral approach, however, does not fully account for a clear and dependable definition of (effective) school leaders. The main criticism on the behavioral approach in educational settings is, just like in general leadership research, the absence of context variables (Witziers, Bosker, & Krüger, 2003). It appears that effectiveness does not entirely depend on the
behavior of a school leader. Other factors, like school context play a role too.

1.2.3 Contingency approach in school leadership research

Taking the assumption that school context is important as an starting point, the contingent leadership approach emerged. In the contingent approach the context is essential when it comes to measuring school leader effectiveness. According to this theory, the match between a leadership style and the context of the school determines the effectiveness of the school leader. Although a school leader may have a preferred leadership style, this style should vary according to the situation. Not every context requires the same style. In fact, a certain leadership style may be effective in one context and highly ineffective in the other.

Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan, and Lee (1982) studied the leadership construct from this perspective and examined contingent factors that affect school leadership, like the school and the context of the school. Their research gave an empirical basis for contextual thinking.

More recently, contingency factors have been studied in school effectiveness research and their impact has been growing. Hallinger, Bickman and Davis (1996) found that leadership is indeed influenced by contextual variables. They confirm the aptness of viewing the role of the school leader in school effectiveness within a conceptual framework that situates the behavior of school leaders in the context of the school organization and its environment. The results of the study by Krüger, Witziers, and Sleegers (2007) suggest that a contingency approach to leadership could be useful in understanding the paths through which the school leader influences school effectiveness. They recommend that the contingent characteristics of school leadership must be included into future studies concerning the effects of school leadership on school effectiveness. We agree with this recommendation, but stress the importance of a broader view than just the contingency approach.
1.2.4 Cognitive approach in school leadership research

Behavioral and situational factors are important in the explanation of the behavior of school leadership, but they do not account for all the actions. School leaders also have ideas why they act in a certain way, and what the importance is of a certain action. Their thoughts play a role. The line of reasoning that includes the mental processes of a school leader is called the cognitive perspective. In this view researchers not only examine the actions of a school leader, they also ascribe importance to the intentions behind the actions. Why do school leaders act as they do? (Leithwood, 1995; Sleegers & Spillane, 2009).

Leithwood (1995) supports the cognitive perspective and assumes that the mental processes of school leaders determine their actions. Krug (1989, 1992) hypothesized in his research that effective school leader behavior is not so much based on the management of proportions of skills, but more on the integration of skills, a matter of higher-order thinking. His study showed that it is important to distinguish between the actions of school leaders and the intentions behind those actions. Similar behavior could be based on completely different intentions. And vice versa: actions that at first sight do not seem to be related could be classified under the same leadership dimension based on the objectives of the school leader. Krug concludes that the best classifications of school leaders are based on intentions rather than actions. In this view, effective school leadership is determined to a greater extent by intentions than by behavior.

The interest in the mental processes of school leaders resulted in research that gave a central role to the cognitive schemes of school leaders (Sleegers, 1999). Researchers in this perspective believe that the essence of school leaders can not only be found in the steering of behavior, but also in the steering of mental processes in the school. The significance of measuring the behavior as well as the values of school leaders was endorsed by Witziers, Bosker and Krüger (2003) too. However, despite the increased interest of researchers in the mental processes of the school leader, the motives, intentions, and values that are part of the daily thinking process of
school leaders, still constitute a black box in research in educational administration (Wassink, 2004; W.D. Greenfield, 1995; Heck & Hallinger, 1999; Leithwood, Begley & Cousins, 1990).

Conclusion

The three types of theories discussed in the previous paragraphs give an overview of major views in school leadership research. Each theory contributes in its own way to a better understanding of school leadership. The behavioral theory gives more insight in the daily activities of school leaders, the contingency approach explains the effectiveness of the school leader by examining the relationship between the behavior of school leaders and the context of the school, and the cognitive perspective searches for an explanation of effective leadership behavior in the mental processes of the school leader. However, none of these approaches takes all important factors into consideration. They only examine leadership from one point of view, which is a major shortcoming of each theory. School leadership, like general leadership, is not just about one factor, it is a complex concept that encompasses a combination of several factors. The effectiveness of school leaders does not only depend on their behavior or on the perfect match between their behavior and their context. Rather, it can be accounted for by all of the above mentioned variables. In fact, selecting one theory allows the scholar to see some aspects at the cost of missing others (Osborn et al., 2002). We therefore chose not to examine leadership from a single perspective, but to use an integral model. Integral models provide an appropriate and contemporary tool to measure school leadership (Yukl, 1981; Spillane et al., 2004). They will allow us to study school leadership from a broader point of view and to learn more about the relationship between contingency factors, cognitive processes and behavior. The relationship between factors that affect the school leader variables, like his/her behavior or cognitive processes and his/her effectiveness will be discussed in the next paragraph.
1.3 Effectiveness of school leaders

What is apparent in this line of research is that the effectiveness of leaders is a central theme in all leadership theories. Since the seventies and eighties, effectiveness has been a common topic of research in the educational setting. Researchers became interested in the outcomes of the school (students’ results), and therefore tried to find factors that affect these student results. Until the seventies it was common belief that it did not matter what school a child attends (Coleman, 1968). Intelligence and social background of the student were supposed to determine the school results (Dronkers, 1978; Peschar, 1975). Contrary to this belief, Edmonds and his colleagues (1979) discovered that school factors did indeed affect student outcomes. Five factors were identified which correlate with student results: strong educational leadership, orderly atmosphere, high expectations, emphasis on basic skills and an evaluation of student progress; these are referred to as the five-factor model of Edmonds (Edmonds, 1979). The discovery that the school leader plays an important role in the effectiveness of a school led to an increased interest in the school leader as subject of study. Leithwood and Riehl (2003) posited that school leadership has a significant effect on student learning, pointing out that large-scale quantitative studies conclude that the effects of leadership on student learning are small but significant. Even though leadership only explains 3-5% of the variation of student learning across schools, the effect is nearly a quarter of the total effect of all school factors.

It is clear that not all school leaders have the same effect. Some school leaders have a good influence, others hardly have any influence at all. One can assume that every leader wants the best for his/her school, but not every leader knows how to achieve his/her school’s ultimate potential. This is partly due to the lack of a clear profile of the perfect school leader. School leadership has been studied for a long time and from multiple perspectives and still several scholars emphasize that more insight is needed into the everyday functioning of leaders (Greenfield, 2005, 1995; Revell, 1996; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001; Vandenberghe, 1995; Witziers &
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Bosker, 1997). We pointed out earlier that integral models could contribute to this.

The saying: 'effective school leader, effective school' highlighted the importance of the school leader from the earliest days of research addressing successful schools. Today, we know it is not that simple; effective school leadership is more complex and differentiated. In order to understand school effectiveness, the concept has often been related to normative criteria of various approaches in organizational science (Cameron, 1984; Cheng, 1993; Scheerens and Bosker, 1997). Faerman and Quinn (1985) connect effectiveness criteria to developmental stages of the organization and Cheng (1993) elaborates on this idea by stating that the organizational learning model comes closest to his definition of school effectiveness. In general, the definition of effectiveness depends on the school of thought it belongs to; this can vary from achieving the goals that are set to satisfying all of the powerful constituencies.

In this thesis we do not strive to clarify the concept of effectiveness as this has been done by many others (Sammons, et al. 1995; Luyten, 2006; Kilchan, C. & Junyeop, K., 2006; Teddlie, C. & Reynolds, D., 2000; Hargreaves, D, 2001). In our view, the value of school effectiveness research is that it teaches us the importance of the school leader as a factor that influences student outcomes. For this reason, we are interested in the role of the school leader: what kind of behavior do school leaders display? What are the perceptions behind these actions? How are these perceptions and actions affected? Since we strive to examine behavioral, cognitive and contextual aspects, it is an obvious choice for us to answer these questions by adopting a perspective that integrates the behavioral, cognitive and contingency theories.

Each theory has a different perception of effectiveness. In the behavioral theory, effective school leaders are characterized by behavior that is positively linked with student achievement. From the cognitive perspective, that focusses on a higher order of integration of skills instead of on control of proportions of skills, the essence of effective leadership is not solely a matter of directing ones behavior, it is also about steering the mental processes or perceptions. The
contingency theory assumes that the effectiveness of a leadership style depends on the context; not every situation demands the same management style. Likewise, a certain management style may not be effective in every context.

Leithwood and Riehl (2003) identify three broad categories of practices that are important for leadership success in almost every context and organization: setting direction, developing people and developing the organization. The first category, setting directions, focusses on actions aimed at setting goals for schooling and inspiring others with a vision of the future. The second category, developing people, is about accomplishing goals through the efforts of other people by managing the development of human resources within the school. In the last category, developing of the organization, effective leaders guide the school toward becoming a professional learning community in which all workers are encouraged to perform at their personal best.

The HayGroup (2008) acknowledges the importance of the school leader, but relate effectiveness to leadership styles instead of leadership practices. The claim is that an effective leader has a broad repertoire of leadership styles and he or she is capable of displaying one of several styles depending on the style best suited to the situation. Six leadership styles are described: forceful (“do as I tell you”), aimed at relations (people first, then the job), decisive (“do as I do”), authoritative (clear and fair), coaching (improvement by development) and democratic (working together). The HayGroup found that in educational settings, leaders often have a one-sided focus on democratic leadership. Excellent leaders in schools show at least three leadership styles: democratic, coaching and authoritative. The notion that a broad range of behavior and leadership styles are crucial in the effectiveness of school leaders, plays an important role in our search for a model to measure school leadership.

The effectiveness of school leaders is a central theme in models measuring school leadership; these models and how they integrate school leadership effectiveness, will now be examined.
1.4 Models for measuring school leadership

Research on school effectiveness produced insight into the role of the school leader and his/her daily activities, but the important question of how a school leader affects student results remained.

As mentioned in the introduction, the first attempts to measure the effect of the school leader on student outcomes were by using direct-effect models that assume that the school leader affects the student outcomes directly. It was supposed that the effects could be reliably separated from other variables that could affect student outcomes and then directly measured; researchers did not control for the effects of other variables. The results of the direct-effect studies were disappointing. Hallinger and Heck (1998) reviewed, among other models, 13 studies using direct-effect models and found that no consistent evidence of leadership effects on student outcomes were found. It was concluded that these direct-effect models have limited utility for examining the effects of school leadership on student outcomes.

Even though the direct-effect models did not show any effect of the school leader on student outcomes, scholars still expected school leaders to play an important role in school effectiveness. It was hypothesized that school leaders do not achieve their effect on student outcomes directly, but indirectly. This is logical in that the school leaders are not the (only) people interacting with students. In addition, school leaders certainly have considerably less direct interaction with students than, for example, teachers do.

Early studies recognized this; however, it was still believed that if there was an effect, it should be possible to measure it directly. Direct-effects models proved that the relationship is more complicated than direct-effects models can identify. To test the hypothesis of an indirect effect, scholars examined several factors that could affect student results (e.g. schoolclimate, schoolculture, coordination of curriculum, schoolorganizational factors). Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan & Lee (1982) was one of the first studies that assumed that the effects of school leaders on student results is not a
direct effect, but rather runs through school climate and instructional organization. In their model, based on a behavioral and contingent perspective, school leaders act intentionally from an overall perspective of the school and also consider the context of the school (Witziers, Bosker, & Krüger, 2003). They state that the actions of a principal are guided by factors external to the school. The three factors they distinguish outside the school that affect the principal's behavior are personal characteristics, district characteristics and external characteristics. Antecedent factors like these will be discussed in detail in section 2.6.1.

Hallinger and Heck (1998) refer to frameworks such as mediated-effects models in which leaders achieve their effect on school outcomes through indirect paths. The results of their review show that studies using the mediated-effects models produce evidence of positive effects of the school leader. The more antecedent variables were included in the mediated-effects models, the more consistent patterns of effects on student outcomes were found.

Heck (1993) and Leithwood et al. (1990) substantiate the necessity of antecedent variables in mediated-effect models. These authors claim that the school leader is too often considered to be the only independent variable. Bossert et al. (1982) suggested that the actions of a school leader are guided by the non-school factors: personal characteristics, district characteristics and external characteristics (Bossert, et al., 1982). Bolman & Deal (1991) furthered this approach with the slogan 'things make leadership happen'. In this view, the school leader variable stands as both a dependent and as an independent variable. As a dependent variable, the school leader’s actions are influenced by other variables in and outside the school, while as an independent variable, the school leader influences (processes within) the school, such as school organization, school climate and finally, student outcomes.

Several researchers elaborated on the work of Bossert et al. (1982). The model was tested by Hallinger, Bickman and Davis
(1990) who validated the connections between school context, principal's behavior, school climate and organization, and student outcomes. Leithwood, Begley and Cousins (1990) developed a mediated-effects model similar to the one proposed by Bossert et al., modifying the model by adding the school leader’s mental processes as a factor that influences the principal's actions. It is suggested that ‘what principals do (…) is most directly a consequence of what they think’ (p. 5). This resulted in a model based on an integration of three theories: the behavioral, contingency and cognitive theories. This new view is broader than the former behavioral research and can be referred to as an integral leadership model. Leithwood (1995) also states that the tasks of a school leader should be interpreted from a broader perspective that includes cognitive processes. His integral perspective includes more contingency factors that affect the behavior of the school leader than just the mental processes of the school leader him-/herself. According to Leithwood, the mental processes, or the beliefs of a school leader are influenced by factors both inside, and outside the school.

The work of Leithwood is in line with the widespread plea for the use of integral models in general leadership research (see paragraph 1.1.6). As Yukl (1981) and Fidler (1997) pointed out: no one, single, theory can encompass all aspects that make up the multifaceted construct that is leadership. Leadership must be examined by means of integral models that include a synthesis of a chain of variables.

1.4.1 Model use

In the literature on school leadership we can roughly distinguish two movements that both work with integral models; however, these two movements approach school leadership from different angles. The first movement, led by Bossert et al (1982), has a content-related belief in integral models. Bossert et al (1982) integrate the behavioral, cognitive and contingency perspectives into their model claiming that all three are necessary in order to explain leadership effectiveness. Leithwood et al. (1990) later joined this integrative model framework.
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The second movement, led by Hallinger and Heck (1998), modifies the model of Bossert et al., claiming methodological reasons for adopting an integral model. It is stated that the direct-effect models are too simple and that they do not fully explain school leadership and its effects; therefore, more complex models in which several views converge are needed. The advantage of complex models lies in their acknowledgement of the large variety of variables affecting the outcome. In addition, complex models recognize the reciprocal nature of the variables.

The two approaches in this section give adequate support for integral models. As explained in the introduction, the current study is part of a larger project by the University of Twente and the University of Amsterdam in which the whole chain of school leader impact on student outcomes is examined. In Figure 1.1 the model is presented, as well as which parts of the chain are examined by which university.

![Research model diagram]

Figure 1.1. Research model of the total research program by the University of Amsterdam and the University of Twente

In the complete research program, as well as in this thesis, the behavioral, contingency and cognitive perspectives are combined. The research program not only recognizes the necessity of integral models, but also acknowledges that direct-effect models are...
too simple, because these models are insufficient in explaining the effectiveness of school leaders. We believe that the influence of the school leader is exerted on student outcomes through several variables, such as school climate and school structure. In order to measure the effects of school leadership, other factors need to be taken into account as well. Not only are factors affected by the school leader necessary variables, but also factors that have an effect on the school leader him/herself are necessary variables to be included.

Here, Leithwood is followed in the belief that there are more contingent factors than just the mental processes of the school leader; the ideas and actions of a school leader are not the beginning of the chain, rather, the ideas and actions of a school leader are influenced by antecedent variables. For this reason, the chain of variables in this thesis starts with antecedent factors that influence the school leader, including the context and characteristics of the school, as well as characteristics of the school leader. This leads to a certain role perception of the school leader and to certain behavior. The school leader behavior affects school organization and school climate, which in turn influence student outcomes. The model of Bossert et al. (1982) is, still today, a good example of an integral model that is suitable for measuring school leadership.

There is, however, an important shortcoming in their model: namely, the assumption that school leaders are effective as long as they focus on the student outcomes (cognitive and affective). According to Bossert et al. (1982), instructional leaders are effective leaders because they always bear in mind student results. We find this definition of effective school leaders to be too narrow. There are more output measures than just the student results, such as teacher satisfaction, display of citizenship, and perceived effectiveness by others. Therefore, a model that has a broader definition of effective leadership as its starting point is needed. The Competing Values Framework by Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1983) is one such model. It assumes multiple measures of effectiveness and requires multiple behaviors from leaders in order to be effective. Like Bossert et al. (1982) and the HayGroup (2008), Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1983) state
that there is no such thing as a leadership style that is effective in all situations. According to the Competing Values Framework, the effectiveness of leaders can be judged by considering their behavioral complexity, or the extent to which they can display more than one type of behavior. The Competing Values Framework and the concept of behavioral complexity will be explained in the next chapter.

The Competing Values Framework of Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1983) also takes into consideration various measures of effectiveness, thus avoiding the shortcoming of Bossert et al. (1982). We therefore work inside the framework of an integrative conceptual model that explores the interaction of leaders' thinking, behavior, and their situation, while assuming that multiple measures of school leader effectiveness are necessary in order to accurately measure effectiveness.