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The Recruitment and Selection of School Leaders

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The pivotal role of the school leader as a factor in effective schools has been corroborated by findings of school effectiveness research over the last two decades. School improvement researchers have also demonstrated increasing recognition of the importance of school leaders for all stages of the school improvement process. The school leader is most often cited as the key figure in the individual school's development, either blocking or promoting change, acting as the internal change agent, overseeing the processes of growth and renewal. The school leader's role has to be seen in relationship to the broad cultural and educational contexts in which the school is operating.

Since schools are embedded in their communities and in the particular national educational system, and these in turn are embedded in the particular society, schools and their leaders have to cope with, to support or otherwise react to the social, economic and cultural changes and developments taking place. Schools, and consequently the expectations on school leaders, also change as a result of more subtle and indirect forces in society — social, political and economic changes — that are gathering pace across the world. Moreover, direct changes in the educational system have a particularly strong impact on the school leader's role. In most countries, the tasks and structures of schools and of the education system are changing. These change processes strongly influence the leadership of schools.

For these reasons, it is essential to select (and develop) suitable individuals for school leadership positions. Furthermore, in many educational systems around the world it is a difficult (if not an impossible) process to dismiss an incompetent leader to correct problems stemming from mediocrity in management. Therefore, the issue of who is allowed into formal educational leadership positions is indeed of fundamental importance for educational systems around the globe.

There is broad international agreement about the need for school leaders to have the capacities needed to improve teaching, learning, and pupils' development and achievement. To establish and modify appropriate training and development opportunities has become a major focus of professional development programs in many countries, as shown by an international comparative research project (Huber, 2004) about school leadership development. But — different than questions of selecting leadership personnel in the economic sector — in the educational sector, insights into appropriate selection procedures and criteria for school leaders are still lacking to a great extent.

This chapter looks at the growing importance placed on activities to select and recruit school leaders that has led to the development of systematic selection procedures in many countries in recent years. The central question is: do we have policies and strategies that ensure that qualified individuals are recruited to be principals?

The chapter is organized into three main sections, as follows. The first section briefly outlines the changing context in which school leaders find themselves as more and more countries devolve significant management decisions to the school level. It focuses on the new expectations this brings to the school leader's role, and how these expectations have placed a new emphasis on the development of management and leadership skills. It reports contemporary thinking about how the leadership role can be most effectively exercised, and considers what combinations of knowledge, skills and attributes are stipulated for school leaders, and therefore, what requirements should be addressed in the recruitment and selection process of these school leaders.

The second section offers an overview of current practices to select and recruit school leaders. This overview is international in scope, drawn from experience and a synthesis of existing literature as well as from the first findings of a comparative research study that embraces some 20 countries worldwide (in this first exploratory phase, data from around ten countries were gathered; see Huber & Hiltmann, *in press*). For the purpose of illustration, we offer brief summaries from five countries, including examples from Europe, Asia, Australia, and North America. The countries selected are: England, Germany, Singapore, Australia, and the United States.

The respective Country Reports focus on providing answers to questions such as:

What is the overall approach?

Are the selection procedures conducted centrally or de-centrally?

Who is responsible for conducting the selection procedure?

Do the countries have standards for school leaders?

Do the countries have prerequisites for applicants for leadership positions?

What are the steps of the selection process?

What methods are applied?

What criteria are relevant for the decision on who is selected?

The final section examines similarities and differences in approach. It asks what can be learned more generally about the selection and recruitment of school leaders from these examples and looks for common solutions. Finally, it identifies emerging issues.

THE ROLE OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

School Leadership and School Effectiveness

Extensive empirical efforts of quantitatively oriented school effectiveness research — mostly in North America, Great Britain, Australia and New Zealand, but also in the Netherlands and in the Scandinavian countries — have shown that leadership is a central factor for the quality of a school (see, for example, in Great Britain: Reynolds, 1976; Rutter et al., 1979; Mortimore et al., 1988; Sammons et al., 1995; in the US: Brookover et al., 1979; Edmonds, 1979; Levine & Lezotte, 1990; Teddlie & Stringfield, 1993; in the Netherlands: Creemers, 1994; Scheerens & Bosker, 1997; in Cyprus: Pashiardis, 1998; Kythreotis & Pashiardis, 2006; Huber, 1999a, offers a critical overview).

The research results show that schools classified as successful possess a competent and sound school leadership (this correlates highly significantly). The central importance of educational leadership is therefore one of the clearest messages of school effectiveness research (Gray, 1990). In most of the lists of key factors (or correlates) that school effectiveness research has compiled, 'leadership' plays an important part, so much so that the line of argument starting with the message 'schools matter, schools do make a difference' may legitimately be continued: 'school leaders matter, they are educationally significant, school leaders do make a difference' (Huber, 1997).

'Professional school leadership' is described as firm and purposeful, sharing leadership responsibilities, involvement in and knowledge about what goes on in the classroom. That means that it is important to have decisive and goal-oriented participation of others in leadership tasks, that there is a real empowerment in terms of true delegation of leadership power (distributed leadership), and that there is a dedicated interest in and knowledge about what happens during lessons (effective and professional school leadership action focuses on teaching and learning and uses the school's goals as a benchmark).

School Leadership and School Improvement

Studies on school development and improvement also emphasize the importance of school leaders, especially in the view of the continuous improvement process targeted at an individual school (see van Velzen, 1979; van Velzen et al., 1985; Stegö et al., 1987; Dalin & Rolff, 1990; Joyce, 1991; Caldwell & Spinks, 1992; Huberman, 1992; Leithwood, 1992a; Bolam, 1993; Bolam et al., 1993; Fullan, 1991, 1992, 1993; Hopkins et al., 1994, 1996; Reynolds et al., 1996; Altrichter et al., 1998; Huber, 1999b, offers a critical overview).

In many countries, the efforts made to improve schools have illustrated that neither top-down measures alone nor the exclusive use of bottom-up approaches have the effects desired. Instead, a combination and systematic synchronization of both has proved most effective. Moreover, improvement is viewed as a continuous process with different phases, which follow their individual rules. Innovations also need to be institutionalized after their initiation and implementation at the individual school level so that they will become a permanent part of the school's culture; that is the structures, atmosphere, and daily routines. Hence, the goal is to develop problem-solving, creative, self-renewing schools that have sometimes been described as learning organizations. Therefore, the emphasis is placed on the priorities to be chosen by each school individually, since it is the school that is the center of the change process. Thereby, the core purpose of school, that is education and instruction, are at the center of attention, since the teaching and learning processes play a decisive role in the pupils' success. Hence, both the individual teacher and the school leadership provided are of great importance. They are the essential change agents who will have significant influence on whether a school will develop into a 'learning organization' or not.

For all phases of the school development process, school leadership is considered vital and is held responsible for keeping the school as a whole in mind, and for adequately coordinating the individual activities during the improvement processes (for the decisive role of school leadership for the development of the individual school see, for example, studies conducted as early as in the 1980s by Leithwood & Montgomery, 1986; Hall & Hord, 1987; Trider & Leithwood, 1988). Furthermore, it is required to create the internal conditions necessary for the continuous development and increasing professionalization of the teachers. It holds the responsibility for developing a cooperative school culture. Regarding this, Barth (1990) and Hargreaves (1994), among others, emphasize the 'modeling' function of the school leader.

A Complex Range of School Leadership Tasks

The managing and leading tasks of school leadership are both complex and interrelated, so that there is no clearly defined, specific 'role' of school leadership, but at best a colored patchwork of many different aspects. Some areas or role segments relate to working with and for people, others to managing resources like the budget. All are part of the complex range of tasks the school leader faces in the 21st century (see e.g. Huber, 1997, 1999c, 2004).

International school leadership research already features a number of different alternatives for classifying school leadership tasks. Various approaches allocate school leadership action within various ranges of duties and assign responsibilities and activities to these (see the analysis of Katz, 1974, as an important 'precursor' for classifications of management tasks, but also classifications of school leadership tasks, for example, by Morgan, Hall, & Mackay, 1983; Jones, 1987; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1986; Glatter, 1987; Caldwell & Spinks, 1992; Esp, 1993; Jirasinghe & Lyons, 1996).

Louis and Miles (1990) also distinguish between 'management', referring to activities in the administrative and organizational areas, and 'leadership', referring to educational goals and to inspiring and motivating others. For them, 'educational leadership' includes administrative tasks like, for example, managing and distributing resources or planning and coordinating activities as well as tasks concerning the quality of leadership, such as promoting a cooperative school culture in combination with a high degree of collegiality, developing perspectives and promoting a shared school vision, and stimulating creativity and initiatives from others.

Given the manifold tasks and responsibilities of school leadership, as well as the necessary competencies, school leaders might be propagated as a kind of 'multifunctional miracle beings' (Huber, 2004). But, nobody can safely assume that they are or will or should be the 'superheroes of school'. What may be deduced, however, is that their role can hardly be filled by persons with 'traditional' leadership concepts. The idea of the school leader as a 'monarchic', 'autocratic' or 'paternal' executive of school has increasingly been seen as inappropriate, but viewing a school leader as a mere 'manager' or 'administrative executive' is inadequate as well, despite the managerial pressures of the present situation.

Other concepts describing the role of school leadership are transactional, transformational, instructional leadership, and distributed leadership (see e.g. Burns, 1978; Leithwood, 1992b; Caldwell & Spinks, 1992; De Bevoise, 1984; Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Gronn, 2002; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001, 2004; Moos & Huber, 2006; Hallinger, 2005).

In the German-speaking context, the notion of 'organizational education' (see Rosenbusch, 1997b) refers to the mutual influence of the school as an organization on one hand and the educational processes on the other. The core question of organizational education raises a two-fold issue: which educational effects do the nature and conditions of school as an organization have on individuals or groups within the organization — and, vice versa, which effects do the conditions and the nature of individuals or groups within the school have on the school as an organization. Concretely speaking: how does the school need to be designed in order to guarantee favorable prerequisites for education and to support educational work? Hence, the influence of the organization on the teaching and learning process needs to be acknowledged. Administrative and organizational structures have to be brought in line with educational goals. This does not only concern the structure of the school system or the management of the individual school, but also the leadership style with aspects of the distribution of tasks and responsibilities among the staff. Hence, empowerment and accountability issues seem to be important and have to be considered seriously in the light of educational aims and goals. In the context of organizational

education, school leadership action becomes educational-organizational action, and educational goals become super-ordinate premises of this action. This means that school leadership action itself must adhere to the four main principles of education in schools: that school leaders themselves assume or encourage maturity when dealing with pupils, teachers and parents, that they practice acceptance of themselves and of others, that they support autonomy, and that they realize cooperation. This adjustment of educational perspectives affects the school culture, the teachers' behavior, and the individual pupils, particularly through the teaching and learning process on classroom level. Administrative and structural conditions have to be modified accordingly, and be in compliance with educational principles. Thereby, the unbalanced relationship (which is historically conditioned in many countries) between education on the one hand and organization and administration on the other hand can be clarified.

The leadership concept of 'organizational-educational management' assumes a definition of 'educational' which not only incorporates teaching and education processes with pupils, but also the interaction with adults, as well as organizational learning. Organizational-educational management is committed to educational values, which are supposed to determine the interaction with pupils and the cooperation with staff as well.

SELECTION AND RECRUITMENT AROUND THE WORLD

For this section, we have chosen five countries to give some examples across the world. We include examples from Europe, Asia, Australia and North America. The countries selected are: England, Germany, Singapore, Australia, and the United States. In each report, we will provide information regarding the context, the overall approach and organization of the selection procedure, advertising and marketing, prerequisites and pre-selection, job profiles in use, selection methods and selection criteria applied, and whether there is any evaluation of the selection procedure available.

England

In England's decentrally organized education system, nationally, the responsibility for education policy lies principally with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES).¹ Regarding the selection of school leadership personnel, the Department has set standards for their education and development programs. At the district level, the Local Education Authorities (LEAs) remain responsible for the performance of publicly financed schools in their respective districts, and their tasks include ensuring that there are sufficient school places and school buildings suitable for the education of children living in the district. The regional differences which shape the school system in England can be accounted for by the freedom with which the LEAs can establish schools and design and implement individual school profiles. In the course of the 'Education Reform Act 1988', the LEAs' capacities to determine the distribution of funds to schools, to develop curriculum locally, to appoint teaching staff, and to inspect schools have all been eroded, as the national policy has moved towards a partnership built around a strong government and strong schools that has squeezed the LEAs' powers. The individual schools have obtained considerably increased powers, which extend to the selection of teaching staff, and, significantly, the appointment and suspension of the teachers and of the head teacher. Specific regulations regarding the appointment of a head teacher and deputies, other teachers and support staff are laid down in the "The Education (School Staffing) England Regulations 2003" made under sections 35 and 36 of the Education Act 2002.

The following information about the current school leader selection procedure is primarily based on a recent two year study by the National College for School Leadership (NCSL, 2006).

Organization of the Selection Procedure The responsibility for the selection of teaching staff, the establishment of salary and promotion policies and, significantly, the appointment and suspension of the teachers and of the head teacher lies with the respective school governing body. Members of this committee (governors) include the school leader, elected representatives of the parents, representatives of the teaching and the non-teaching staff and of the LEA, and partly so-called 'co-opted members' (invited influential representatives of politics and economy). This board is in charge of selecting and appointing new head teachers, too. A specific panel of five to seven governors is appointed to conduct the selection process.

Altogether, the selection and appointment procedure of school leaders can be divided in the following seven phases (see NCSL, 2006): (1) Continuous Preparation, (2) Defining of Need, (3) Attraction, (4) Selection, (5) Appointment, (6) Induction and (7) Evaluation.

The proper selection procedure (following the preceding marketing and other preparatory measures, and without the design of job profiles) typically starts with long-listing. It results in a first pre-selection on the basis of all applications received, and it defines which applicants will be invited to interviews with the board members. Due to the results of the interviews, another and more restricted selection is made (short-listing). Sometimes, the applicants chosen take part in an assessment center as the next step. In those cases the selection procedure in the narrow sense is finalized with the decision making process after the assessment center.

Advertising and Marketing The School Governing Body informs the LEA of the vacancy and advertises the vacancy. The most commonly used recruitment efforts comprise the Times Educational Supplement, advertising in online job boards, publishing advertisements in regional newspapers, relying on word-of-mouth recommendation, and using the LEA-networks. Since 1985 the "Annual Survey of Senior Staff Appointments in Schools in England and Wales" carried out by the Education Data Surveys (www.educationdatasurveys.org.uk) provides information on the number of advertisements and vacancies. The 2007 report indicates a high need of head teachers and problems in filling vacancies: many schools failed to appoint a new head teacher after their first advertisement (36 per cent in the primary sector, 29 per cent in the secondary sector and 48 per cent in the special needs school sector).

The process of personnel marketing includes all the advertising efforts, the provision of application packs, visiting schools, providing information on the school's website, and letters by the Governors. According to a survey of the NCSL, 2006, the advertising costs per school ranged from 500 to 1000 pounds sterling. In regions with particularly difficult recruiting conditions, additional 'incentives' such as 'Golden Hellos' or relocation packages are offered to attract potential candidates.

Prerequisites and Pre-Selection Since 1997 teachers aspiring to headship take part in a training and development program, the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH), in order to qualify for application. From April 1 2009 on, it will be mandatory to have completed NPQH prior to appointment to a first headship. The program consists of six modules, whose contents are aligned to the National Standards for Headship (a national catalogue of requirements relevant for the qualification and assessment of candidates aspiring to headship; see Starkebaum, 1998). Besides going through the NPQH, applicants have to meet further requirements (Eurydice Report, 1996; now known as Eurybase):

'Qualified Teacher' status (teachers of special needs schools must have an additional qualification, e.g. as a teacher for students with sight defects), adequate teaching experience, appropriate management knowledge and skills.

There are no explicit demands regarding the time span of being a teacher and the kind of functions held so far. However, often some experience as a deputy head teacher is expected.

Job Profiles According to the survey by the NCSL, 37 per cent of the schools included have formulated specific demands for the head teacher role based on the 'National Standards for Headteachers' (edited by the DfES). In most cases, this national catalogue was only slightly adapted or modified to fit to the local conditions.

Selection Methods After screening incoming applications, various methods are employed to screen the candidates: panel interviews by the committee (75.3%), presentations by the applicants (89.2%), and finalizing interviews (88.5%). Psychological tests (7.2%) and talks with representatives of the parents (5.4%) are applied more rarely. External assessment centers are seen to be useful even though not widely used (NCSL, 2006). They can be conducted with external support by 5.7 per cent of the schools. Providers are e.g. the Secondary Heads' Association (SHA), the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL), and the National College of School Leadership (NCSL).

Provision of Assessment Center in England Linked to the increase of demands on school leaders in the course of the Education Reform Acts, the assessment center as a method to find suitable candidates was introduced in 1990. The National Educational Assessment Centre, NEAC (1995), was developed by SHA and Oxford Brookes University, in cooperation with industry and economy. According to Schneider (1997), the pilot scheme was widely supported by authorities during the 1990s. It is the objective of an assessment center to gain evidence for the actual capacity and competencies of a candidate with regard to the criteria described in the National Standards or additionally formulated by the schools. The assessment center developed by NEAC is underpinned by a development model with twelve competencies, which can be grouped to four areas:

Administrative Competencies: problem analysis, judgment competence, organizing competence, decision making competence

Interpersonal Competencies: leadership potential, empathy, stress resilience

Communicative Competencies: oral and written communication

Personal Versatility: a broad range of interests, motivation, educational value.

The candidates taking part in the AC go through four to six position-related exercises: discussing a case, to which consensus should be found within a given time span; working on ten in-tray tasks related to every-day or more rarely occurring situations; analysing individual position-specific problems and presenting the results; watching a video of a lesson and discussion of the professional development plan of the teacher; analysing a current study on education and instruction in schools. After all observations have been recorded and coded, the team of assessors goes into the final assessment process. The selection process itself is completed after the AC with the decision making process. If an assessment center is used, the selection process itself is completed after the AC with the decision making process.

TABLE 10.1

	<i>Primary Schools</i>	<i>Secondary Schools</i>
Expertise in teaching and learning	94%	88%
Leadership and management skills	87%	94%
NPQH qualification completed	49%	57%
Proficiency in budgeting and finances	32%	37%
Experience in collaboration with the community	34%	35%
Former school leadership experience	13%	23%

Selection Criteria The last phase of the procedure comprises information and feedback to the candidates (if judged not suitable, the candidates are entitled to be given reasons for rejection and another chance to apply again in the following year), the reference checks, and the finalizing of the contract. According to the NCSL (2006), there is widespread agreement on the conduct of reference checks. Due to their rather low validity, they serve more as an additional confirmation of the decision already made rather than as an actual basis for the decision. The appointment is made by the LEA in charge on the basis of the respective school committees' recommendation (for community, voluntary-controlled, community special or maintained nursery schools). In the case of a foundation, voluntary-aided or foundation special school, the school itself makes the appointment.

The newly appointed head teachers get most often an unlimited contract but unlike tenure track as civil servants they can be made redundant. Moreover, salaries vary to a great extent.

Information about the criteria relevant to the decision making process is provided by the survey by the NCSL as well. The governors interviewed regard the following criteria as most relevant, as shown in Table 10.1.

The newly appointed head teachers get a contract equivalent to that of employment in the civil service. Hence, in most cases they get a permanent contract (Eurydice, 1996).

Evaluation of the Selection Procedure The school governing body is strongly advised to carry out an evaluation of the recruiting process. However, evaluation takes place in an informal manner, if at all. The NCSL survey found that in just 47 per cent of the cases evaluation had taken place.

First general findings regarding the practice and effectiveness of the English scheme for the selection of school leaders are as follows (NCSL, 2006):

Errors may occur in any phase of the actual selection procedure, yet the interviews seem to be particularly prone to mistakes. To guarantee that the best possible candidate is appointed to their school, the Governors have to be capable of correctly 'translating' the demands and needs of their school into selection criteria that the successful candidate will have to meet. Apparently, however, sometimes the Governors prefer the 'safe route'. In these cases they seek for an individual as similar as possible to the previous school leader in post instead of focusing on the future needs of the school. Moreover, there are great differences concerning the quality and the amount of support (e.g. interview training) that Governors get from their LEAs.

TABLE 10.2

<i>Aspect</i>	<i>Description</i>
Overall Approach	distinctive decentralization (responsibility lies with the schools)
Selection Body	School Governing Body
Advertising & Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – advertised throughout England and Wales: Times Educational Supplement, in regional newspapers, online job boards – provision of application packs, visiting schools, providing information on the school's website, and letters by the Governors – advertising costs per school ranged from 500 to 1000 pounds sterling
Job Profile	based on national standards, formulated in 37% of the schools
Prerequisites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – participation in The National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH); mandatory from April 1st 2009 – 'Qualified Teacher' status, adequate teaching experience, appropriate management knowledge and skills (e.g. from experience as a deputy head teacher)
Selection Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – presentations by the applicants (89.2%), finalizing interviews (88.5%), interviews by the committee (75.3%), psychological tests (7.2%), talks with representatives of the parents (5.4%), sometimes reference checks (percentages refer to secondary schools) – depending on number of applicants and funding: an assessment center
Selection Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – leadership and management skills (94%), expertise in teaching and learning (88%), NPQH qualification finished (57%), an understanding of budgeting and finances (37%), experience in collaboration with the community (35%), former school leadership experience (23%) (important criteria to governors) – appointment made by the LEA in charge on the basis of the respective school committees' recommendation
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – differences in experiences and preparation of Governors influences quality of interviews – analysis of the NEAC assessment centre

Regarding formal evaluations, an evaluation of the NEAC-model, the progress of the first hundred AC-participants was examined. According to Schneider (1997), the collecting of competence-related evidence has a much higher validity (0.40 to 0.60) than the formal interview with a validity of 0.30 with regard to the prognosis of future success in the job. Unfortunately, in Schneider's (1997) study, details of how the data were collected and of the kind of interview conducted remain unclear. To sum up, Table 10.2 provides an overview.

In summary, the NSCL expects "some basic changes to rationalise the processes of recruitment and appointment. Possibilities include: changes to resignation dates and notice periods; the provision of formal, regional or national assessment centers; the proliferation of fast-track schemes to accelerate candidates; technology-enabled advertising and matching of candidates to posts; formalised training and support to governing bodies; advertising and looking for candidates beyond the teaching profession; standardisation of procedures across different children's services; the formalisation of different career paths; the development of context-specific job descriptions and person specifications; increased emphasis on succession planning and talent management at the school and local level" (NCSL, 2006, p. 54).

Germany

The German school system is under federal control. At a national level, independence in matters of education and culture lies with each state due to the federal principle. This means that

each of the 16 federal states (the German 'Länder') has an individual school system ensured by jurisdictional and administrative laws. Hence, the legal basis for the selection and appointment of school leaders is within the responsibility of the respective state as well as formulated in its respective laws. School leaders are employed by each state as civil servants and in general have non-terminable (lifelong) tenure. Hence, for promotion the career regulations for civil servants are valid. Legally, all appointments have to be in accordance with the goal laid down in the 'Grundgesetz' (constitution), article 33, postulating an equal access to any public position for every German, according to her or his aptitude, competence, and professional performance.

For the first time, Rosenbusch, Huber and Knorr investigated in an unpublished exploratory study the selection of school leadership personnel in Germany in 2002 (see Huber & Gniechwitz, 2006).

Organization of the Selection Procedure The selection and appointment of a school leader lies within the responsibility of the ministry for education of the respective German federal state. Regulations of the school laws vary from one 'Land' to another regarding how detailed they are. Summing up, however, it is evident that all states (with the exception of Berlin, Bremen, Lower Saxony, and North Rhine-Westphalia) do not go beyond a general description of the selection procedure. In the states mentioned as exceptions, criteria are formulated a priori in the school law, and, more precisely, in the official regulations and stipulations.

One finding of the 2002 exploratory study is that the departments of the ministries for education and the education authorities not only are in charge of the selection and appointment procedure, but they are also involved in the development of the selection methods. In some states, the authorities are supported by state academies or state-run teacher training institutes or the personnel department.

The filling of a vacant position needs long-term personnel planning by the authority. In this context, in a publication of the German School Leader Association (ASD, 2005) the creation of a 'pool' of applicants by the state is regarded as a relevant condition for a successful selection and appointment procedure. In Bremen, Berlin, Hamburg, Hesse, Lower Saxony, Saxony, Schleswig-Holstein, and Thuringia, the creation of such a 'pool' on the basis of the candidates' taking part in development programs early in their careers is being considered and realized in some pilot schemes. Other federal states are following.

Advertising and Marketing In all federal states, vacant school leader positions (or those expected to become vacant) are advertised in the official information publications of the ministry, in regional official newsletters, and partly on the Internet. Generally speaking, advertisements comprise the name of the school, the details of the school profile, the exact title of the position, the level of salary, and relevant information about the formal requirements and deadlines for the application procedure. States such as Brandenburg and Hesse additionally use regional and national newspapers, and so does North Rhine-Westphalia, where (like in Lower Saxony) optionally public advertising by the 'Schulträger' (institution or political community in charge of the maintenance of the school) is not unusual. Only in exceptions (e.g. in Bremen and Lower Saxony), the text of the advertisement is precisely adapted to the individual school's needs. According to the authorities in charge of selection and to the School Leader Associations of the individual federal states, on a national average there are 1.3 to 5.6 candidates per vacant position. In some 'Länder', such as Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, Berlin, Bremen, Hesse, Lower Saxony,

North Rhine-Westphalia, Saxony and Saxony-Anhalt, interviews with potential school leader candidates are conducted. Marketing measures in a classic sense are not in use.

Prerequisites and Pre-Selection In all federal states, a new school leader is required to have had teacher training for, and teaching experience in, the respective type of school. Moreover, additional qualifications are an advantage, like experiences as a deputy school leader, in leading teams, working as an instructor in charge of the induction phase of teacher training, etc. Mostly, however, the state examinations after teacher training are decisive as well as the regular official performance assessments by superiors. The candidates who are evaluated as most suitable are appointed school leaders for life (see Eurydice, 1996; Huber, 2004).

With the exception of Bavaria, where the regular official performance assessment by superiors is taken into account, in all states the teachers aspiring to school leadership are evaluated for this purpose. Consequently, the assessment of one's professional performance and achievements is not only a basis for promotion (see the section about selection criteria), but also the central precondition for the application. In some states, there is a systematic training before the application as a prerequisite for taking over school leadership, as is the case in some other European countries (Knorr, 2004).

Job Profiles Job profiles or competence profiles have been set up in eleven (out of sixteen) federal states (Huber & Schneider, 2007a, 2007b). Others may have them now as well. However, they are not always explicitly formulated as job profiles. Besides, it is striking that most of the descriptions comprise tasks and demands on, competencies required for and goals of school leadership. Some states explicitly claim that the advertisements for vacant positions are to be based on the criteria formulated in the profiles, which should be adapted to the local conditions. In some states, these descriptions also function as a basis for the evaluation/assessment of school leaders.

Selection Methods The choice of selection methods differs widely across the federal states so that there is no Germany-wide selection procedure (Rosenbusch et al., 2002). After the applications have been received and passed on to the authorities in charge, the first step is a general check if the candidate is suitable with regards to the results of the regular official assessments by his superiors.

In Bavaria and Hesse, the focus is only on these formal criteria indicating performance and abilities as stated in the regular official assessment. This selection method is the explanation for the fact that the complete selection procedure takes comparatively little time. Interviews play only a minor part in Bavaria and Hesse. They are only a fall back if the applicant's documents and evaluation results do not show a clear match to the criteria in terms of selecting the best.

In the federal states Baden-Württemberg, Brandenburg, North Rhine-Westphalia and Saxony-Anhalt, among the selection methods are classroom observations (and analyses), chairing of conferences (not in Baden-Württemberg), and interviews.

In Lower Saxony, Thuringia, Saxony, Hamburg, and Berlin, the emphasis is on the interviews, though the type and length of interviews differ. The impression of the applicant gained through the interview is most influential on the decision as to who is selected. In those states, the time span of the procedure is the longest.

In Schleswig-Holstein und Bremen, too, the personal presentation of the applicant plays a decisive part. In Schleswig-Holstein, the interviews are conducted in the selection committee; in Bremen, however, the applicants do not personally introduce themselves to the panel. There, the interviews with the pre-selected candidates are conducted by the respective board at the school

itself. A further particularity of those two countries is that they establish a pool of candidates on the basis of professional development talks, potential analyses, and training and development programs, which can, in the case of new appointments, shorten the length of the procedure to approximately three months.

For some years, in Lower Saxony, Hesse, and Schleswig-Holstein an explicit restructuring of the school leader selection procedure has been planned with regards to selection methods (see Niemann, 1999; Hoffmann, 2003; Denecke, Simon, & Wiethaup, 2005; <http://www.modelle.bildung.hessen.de>). New conceptions particularly stand out due to a linking of personnel planning, staff development and selection, in which different potential analysis procedures and/or components of an assessment center are applied after the candidates have taken part in a development program.

Selection Criteria According to an unpublished study by Rosenbusch, Huber and Knorr (2002), in all federal states there is consensus that the best candidate shall be selected for a school leadership position. The written criteria of Bavaria, Berlin, Bremen und Schleswig-Holstein state that above all the objectivity and lucidity of the procedure are the most relevant factors in the selection process. The applicants shall get the chance to fully understand the decision made. In all federal states, in a genuine selection procedure, the aptitude, capability, and professional performance of the applicant are assessed on the basis of his or her evaluation of achievements as a teacher.

The assessment of the professional abilities and performance of the future school leader is the central basis for promotion and appointment (see Eurydice, 1996). In quite a number of states, additional emphasis is put on performance in the personal interview. With the exception of countries that only focus on assessments of professional performance, the criteria for the

TABLE 10.3

<i>Aspect</i>	<i>Description</i>
Overall Approach	centralized selection process in most federal states
Selection Body	the departments of the Ministries of Education in the respective German federal state
Advertising & Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – in the official information publications of the ministry, in regional official newsletters, and partly on the internet – general advertisements of open positions (no specifications about the individual school's needs) – no information about any marketing activities
Job Profile	job profiles or competence profiles in eleven federal states, however, not always explicitly formulated as such
Prerequisites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – teaching experience in the respective school type – good results in previous performance assessments – completion of a qualification program (is currently under discussion)
Selection Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – general check of the results of the regular official performance assessments by superiors – mostly focused on formal criteria indicating performance and abilities as stated in the regular official performance assessment – additional selection methods such as classroom observations and analyses, chairing of conferences and interviews are used in some federal states
Selection Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – additional qualifications are usually an advantage – the weighing of single selection criteria differ widely across the federal states; the criteria for the final selection remain mostly unclear
Evaluation	no information on the reliability or validity of the selection procedures or methods

final selection remain unclear. In some federal states, the individual schools have a say in the procedure, in most cases, however, in terms of having a counseling voice. In Hamburg, Bremen, Schleswig-Holstein, and Lower Saxony, the individual school actively takes part in the process through a specific panel.

Evaluation of the Selection Procedure When comparing the duration of the selection procedures of the German federal states, there are some striking differences. In Bavaria, Bremen, and Schleswig-Holstein the average time span is between two and three months. Those three states are below the German average of approximately four to six months. In Saxony and Thuringia, for example, the procedure takes one year on average and is clearly longer than the German average.

As far as we know, interviewing authorities and school leader associations in Germany did not bring about any insights into the reliability and validity of individual selection procedures and methods, as no state could provide any information about such results. This situation has not substantially changed in Germany. At present, studies focusing on the validation of selection methods cannot be found. To sum up, Table 10.3 provides an overview.

Singapore

From 1824 to 1945, Singapore was a British colony. During those 120 years, Singapore replicated England's education system. In that time, the management, supervision, evaluation, selection, and the training and development of staff were within the responsibility of the schools themselves. After independence from the British Empire in 1945, the government decided to manage the education sector centrally and to control it more strictly.

Singapore's present school system is determined by a meritocratic policy approach with a strong emphasis on achievement, efficiency and economic success. Most influential in the education sector is the Ministry of Education (MOE). The ministry formulates and implements education policies, and it is responsible for the design of the curriculum and allocates resources. Furthermore, it controls the development and administration of the government and government-aided schools and also supervises private schools. The school division of the MOE aims to ensure that schools are effectively managed and that the education provided is in accordance with national objectives.

Moreover, the ministry is in charge of the selection, training and development of school leaders. The school leaders and the whole school leadership team are supervised, guided, supported, and assessed regarding their effectiveness by superintendents. Hence, school inspection is allocated directly at the ministry level.

The responsibility for the individual school lies with the school leaders, yet most schools actually are directly administered by the ministry (with regard to selecting staff, admitting pupils, buying material needed, etc.). Thus, the tasks of school leaders are almost completely reduced to implementing the stipulations of the ministry, assessing whether the quality of instruction is good, and launching improvement efforts if necessary. Singapore's education system is extremely competitive, and there is much pressure on the schools, the teachers, and the pupils, as pupil achievement is evaluated through standardized tests and the results are published in ranking lists (league tables).

Since the end of the 1980s, there have been calls for a decentralization of educational governance. School leaders have demanded more responsibility at school level in order to be able to

introduce initiatives and respond more flexibly to changes. Since the beginning of the 1990s, the demand for more autonomy has met with a positive result.

In 1997, the MOE introduced the 'Thinking Schools, Learning Nation' concept. The school principal obviously plays a key role in this transition from a very result-oriented approach to viewing schools to a more process- and learning-oriented one. The principal has to make sure that the school reacts to varying needs and challenges, and she or he supervises the development of school programs. The main emphasis will be on character building, motivation and innovation, creative and committed learning. This could mean even more pressure to succeed for the single principal, since there will still be ranking lists and competition among schools while the range of criteria for all that has changed and increased. It could thus be argued that school principals in Singapore have to cope with conflicting demands. On the one hand, they need to holistically drive forward the vision of a thinking school: developing into a more organizationally independent and self-reflecting entity, even as they are ranked. In fact, schools are supposed to develop contrary to what has shaped them for decades. The school principal, therefore, plays an important role in this politically propagated societal change.

Organization of the Selection Procedure Possible further career steps for teachers within their school (e.g. to become a head of department or deputy school leader) are regulated by a formal Career Advancement Chart (CAC). It was developed to plot the training needs and career prospects of all teachers, and it functions as a formal guideline for promotions, positioning a teacher within a school according to his or her academic achievement and teaching experience as well as evaluation reports.

Advertising and Marketing Unfortunately, we could not access any information about the means of recruiting suitable applicants and ways of advertising vacant positions.

Prerequisites and Pre-Selection As a prerequisite for a school leader position, the preparatory program Diploma in Educational Administration (DEA) was a requirement. The program was developed and implemented in conjunction with the MOE and the National Institute of Education of the 'Nanyang Technological University'. Recently, a new program has replaced the DEA. This shorter qualification called Leaders in Education Program (LEP) is, at its core, an executive program conceiving of the principal's role as that of a Chief Executive Officer. It is shorter in duration than the previous DEA, adopts an innovative process-as-content model to place the emphasis on learning, problem solving and decision making, draws on the expertise available in industry, and provides opportunities for field trips abroad.

Job Profiles There is no information available about job profiles.

Selection Methods In the selection procedure in a narrow sense, teachers are invited to interviews upon the recommendation of the district superintendent. The main criteria for the selection of school leaders are their academic achievement, their teaching experience and their evaluation reports.

Selection Criteria The school leaders should at least hold a Masters degree. If there is an exception, the degree can later be completed at the ministry or at a university of education. The final decision regarding the appointment is made by the Board of Education.

TABLE 10.4

<i>Aspect</i>	<i>Description</i>
Overall Approach	highly centralized
Selection Body	– the Ministry of Education (MOE) – basis: a formal Career Advancement Chart
Advertising & Marketing	no information available
Job Profile	no information available
Prerequisites	– mandatory prerequisite: participation in the 'Leaders in Education Program' (LEP) – a Master degree
Selection Methods	interview on the recommendation of the district superintendent
Selection Criteria	– academic achievement, teaching experience and performance according to assessment reports (career up to now). – final decision regarding the appointment by the so called 'Board of Education'.
Evaluation	no information available

Evaluation of the Selection Procedure It seems that evaluation is not conducted, as there is no information available about evaluation of the school leader selection procedure. To sum up, Table 10.4 provides an overview.

Australia

New South Wales (NSW) is one of the six federal states of Australia. Australia's federal structure of government assigns most of the responsibility for schooling to the six state and two territory governments. The federal government, through the Department of Education, Science and Training and (DEST) provides national cohesion across the various school systems, a system of vocational training, funding for universities, which operate relatively autonomously, and a policy framework linking education to the economy, society and culture of the nation. Each state and territory has developed its own system of educational administration within this framework, New South Wales is the largest public school system, with 2,200 schools, 750,000 pupils and 46,000 teachers. In New South Wales, as in most other states of Australia, reforms in the field of educational policy took place in the course of the 1990s. Central administration was reduced and schools were given more self-management in terms of site-based management, by which local school committees and school leaders were delegated an increased level of responsibility. Since then, to some extent, individual schools and their leaders have become more accountable. In the course of these developments, a new conception of leadership has become operational, namely School Leaders in Learning Communities. It is based on seven principles (Dawson, 1999):

- leaders are responsible for learning,
- leaders model effective learning,
- leaders lead teams,
- leadership is a function of ability, not position in the hierarchy,
- leaders exist throughout the school learning community,

- leaders are creative,
- leaders are ethical.

On the basis of this new conception of school leadership, the NSW Department of Education and Training launched a comprehensive training and development program, the School Leadership Strategy (SLS), which was centrally developed and implemented, with support being provided through local Inter-District School Leadership Groups (ISLGs) and the principal associations. The School Leadership Strategy (SLS) is a multi-phase systematic program, based on an understanding of schools functioning as learning communities with leadership distributed widely within each school. It is underpinned by the NSW DET School Leadership Capability Framework and the NSW Institute of Teachers' Professional Teaching Standards. The programs address the needs of future school leaders, and the broader leadership group within each school. The School Executive Induction Program and the Principal Induction Program are designed to induct new appointees into these leadership functions. The Principal Development Program and the School Executive Development Program provide continuing professional development for established school leaders, and for faculty with other leadership roles.

Organization of the Selection Procedure Regarding the filling of vacant school leadership positions, different contexts have an impact on the process. In the case where a member of the school leadership team has to be appointed for an interim period, the selection is made by a committee within the school. When school leadership personnel have to be appointed for a longer period, until recently, a distinction was made between the appointment for lifetime or 'merit-based' for a specific time period. In the meantime, however, only merit based selections for limited periods are made. A panel comprised of different members according to the respective federal state is usually in charge of the organization of this selection procedure. In NSW, the panel consists of one representative of the NSW Teachers Federation; one representative of the Director-General, and one administrative/clerical representative of the Education Department.

Advertising and Marketing Vacant positions are advertised in the Commonwealth Government Gazette and additionally in the ACT Schools Bulletin (in most cases in March). The advertising period is about 6 to 12 months, which is quite long, due to the effort to advertise and fill all vacant positions for the coming term at the same time.

Linked to the various training and development programs, there are extensive marketing activities: Since the entire qualification program is mainly organized and implemented by the ISLGs, these groups are of major importance. There are 20 of these groups altogether. They have been formed by two or three individual school districts respectively. The main task of each ISLG is to disseminate information about the programs, to coordinate the implementation at the local level, and to facilitate mentoring opportunities and the development of local collegial networks. It may be assumed that networks can also be used for recruiting applicants for vacant positions.

Prerequisites and Pre-Selection Applicants for a school leadership position are expected to have taken part in one of the development programs and to hold the 'Certificate of School Leadership'. However, this is not a mandatory requirement for appointment to school leadership positions. All teaching staff are free to apply.

Job Profiles The NSW Department of Education and Training through the Training and Development Directorate formulated a conceptual basis for a notion of leadership that is expected to cope with the enlarged demands on school leaders. Hence, this may be called a comprehensive job profile. There is, however, no information about the extent of this job profile being taken into account in the selection procedure itself or whether it is supplemented by any further locally decided demands.

Selection Methods Within the frame of merit based selection, classic methods are applied. First, the written applications are considered. References are checked. The support of external consultants is used. On the basis of this pre-screening, a more restricted selection is made (short-listing). Applicants on the short-list are invited to an interview by the panel. While Chapman (1984b) still reported that the "most senior eligible applicant must be offered the position" (p. 45), today a merit based selection is made.

Evaluation of the Selection Procedure Some basic evaluation was undertaken in the 1980s (Chapman, 1984a, 19984b). A team of the Commonwealth Schools Commission was founded with the primary objective to identify ways of supporting and improving the professional development of principals. For this purpose, four studies were conducted, one of which aims at developing a descriptive profile of principals, and another at summarizing the procedures which are currently followed in selecting and appointing principals and to identify the assumptions underlying these processes. Due to the changes in the 1990s, it must be assumed that the modes of selection and the criteria for the decision were modified. There is no information about evaluation studies on school leader selection and appointment after those changes in the 1990s.

However, there are some hints at general problems in the Policy Statements of the Australian Secondary Principal Association (ASPA). The Policy Paper School Leaders: Shortage and Suitability in Australian Public Schools from November 1999, for example, indicates some improvements of the selection procedure.

TABLE 10.5

<i>Aspect</i>	<i>Description</i>
Overall Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – interim position: fully decentralized (appointment by schools) – long-term positions: relatively decentralized (selection panel)
Selection Body	mixed selection panels
Advertising & Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – in the Commonwealth Government Gazette and the ACT Schools Bulletin – long advertising period of 6 to 12 months – extensive marketing activities linked to the development programs
Job Profile	no information about profiles; but conceptual basis for the new leadership in schools is formulated by NSW Department of Education and Training
Prerequisites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – all teaching staff are free to apply – 'Certificate of School Leadership' (expected)
Selection Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – screening of written applications, references checks, interviews by the panel – partly supported by external consultants
Selection Criteria	principle of a merit-based selection process highly emphasized.
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – no information about evaluation studies on school leader selection and appointment after the changes in the 90s. – some critique is formulated by the ASPA

More importantly, ASPA notes that some jurisdictions are questioning the ability of the merit based selection processes to ensure that the best person is actually offered the job. ASPA strongly endorses the principle of selection by merit but notes there are some strongly held views that current processes by which merit is determined are not always working well. Issues surrounding existing selection processes are: self-promotion is rarely a reliable predictor of future performance. Information about past performance is a more reliable indicator but is hard to obtain.

To sum up, Table 10.5 provides an overview.

The United States

In the United States, distinctive decentralization of decision making processes in the education sector — as well as open enrolment and the accountability of schools to the public — has had serious effects on the principals' functions and range of tasks. The states have established standards, and various state universities have founded bodies for collaboration in order to be able to create consensus across the states and to assure as high a level of quality as possible. Thus, when issues of personnel marketing and the selection of principals are discussed, this should be closely linked to the characteristic features of the US education system and the present 'market' for educational leadership qualification programs. Generally speaking, the responsibility for the training and development of teachers aspiring to a leadership position lies with the universities.

Organization of the Selection Procedure Due to the special role of university-based training and development programs, the selection procedure basically is two-phased. In the first phase, the teachers must obtain an adequate university degree as a prerequisite. This is closely linked to getting a license, which is a precondition for consideration as a potential candidate for a vacant position. It is only on that basis that the selection procedure takes place. As mentioned above, the tradition of university-based training and development programs is highly relevant. Of similar importance are the states' responsibility for education policy, which leads to a very great differentiation between states, and the development of school site management (including the individual school's autonomy in matters of personnel), which further increases individualization and differentiation.

Hence, the responsibility for the design of the selection procedure ultimately lies with the schools. In most cases, the selection committee, established by the school, is responsible. Quite often, the committee delegates the (pre-) selection procedures to other agents or implements them with the support of personnel consultants or personnel recruitment agencies. Services of that kind exist (according to a survey of the School Boards Associations of 2001, quoted after Riede, 2003a) in more than 34 states. Among them are private companies as well as services of the School Board Associations (see Riede, 2003b).

Advertising and Marketing Advertisements for vacancies can be found on the career boards of the various professional associations or on the board of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP, 1998, 2002, 2004), which can be accessed by members only. Some companies and districts also set up their own candidate pool, circulate emails and leaflets around schools, or publish advertisements in newspapers. The United States may be the country in which most marketing is practiced (in terms of leaflets for programs, etc.), as these programs are integrated in the university culture of the American higher education system with its typical marketing culture.

Prerequisites and Pre-Selection In general, the prerequisite for the application of teachers for a leadership position as a principal is a Masters degree in Education, Educational Leadership, Educational Administration or similar. Additionally, applicants for principalship have to earn a certificate (valid in the respective state or district). To acquire that, they must have taken the respective courses, have professional experience, and often have passed a special test or an assessment center interview. For a detailed survey of the conditions for licensing in the different states see the information offered by the National Center for Education Information in Washington (2003). Korostoff and Orozco (2002) also provide detailed information about all state agencies and universities and various ways to get a license.

Job Profiles Evidence for fulfilling the demands of the profile can be provided by candidates through their license. However, in the selection procedure, there are additional demands specific to the individual school, which are individually formulated by private personnel agencies and the school itself.

Selection Methods Little is known about the selection methods applied in the procedure of filling the position. Essentially, there is supposed to be an analysis of the curriculum vitae and a sequence of interviews with the personnel agency and members of the hiring committee. Analysis of various advertisements suggests that the following documents are usually required: current résumé, current transcripts, cover letter outlining qualifications for the position, professional letters of reference, copy of principal certification, and quite often, additionally the response to questions regarding the school or the vision of the future development of the school.

In an effort to find out more about what factors are really important in predicting performance for future principals, the assessment center method came into play in the United States in the 1950s as a tool for personnel selection.

The 12 leadership indicators identified by the NASSP (1998, 2002, 2004) are supposed to constitute a good predictor for future levels of performance for newly hired administrators in education. The assessment center (AC), a growing trend currently used in various areas of the United States, has several characteristics: (1) The use of multiple contrived situations (e.g. business simulations) to observe behavior, (2) the presence of several trained assessors who pool their evaluations along a variety of specified dimensions (e.g. the assessee's leadership, risk-taking, and administrative abilities), (3) the evaluation of several candidates at one time, and (4) extensive feedback, written or verbal, to either the candidate or management, or both.

Selection Criteria The decision very often lies directly with the school, i.e. with the hiring or selection committee of the particular school. The heterogeneous composition of those bodies on one hand has the advantage that various perspectives can be taken into account. On the other hand, the members of committees usually have not been trained in the selection of personnel at all, or given access to criteria which may differ from the search for the "best-suited individual". Riede (2003a), for example, reports on issues of very able candidates having not been accepted out of 'political reasons' and less able ones having been favored. Roza et al. (2003) state that human resources directors and superintendents draw on different criteria for selection, the former preferring professional experience — typically defined as years of teaching experience — and the latter focusing on leadership competences and often being dissatisfied with the individuals appointed to the position.

Evaluation of the Selection Procedure The NASSP has had their assessment center procedures (in place since the early 1980s) evaluated continuously (see Schmitt, 1980; Schmitt,

TABLE 10.6

<i>Aspect</i>	<i>Description</i>
Overall Approach	distinctive decentralization (responsibility lies with the schools)
Selection Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – hiring or selection committees, established by the school – sometimes supported by personnel consultants or personnel recruitment agencies or services of the School Board Associations
Advertising & Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – in career boards, newspapers etc. – recruiting companies also send leaflets around
Job Profile	national standards serve as a general job profile, complemented by specific requirements of the respective school
Prerequisites	teaching licenses, adequate university Master degree, principal license
Selection Methods	great variation among: tests (for licensing); analysis of the curriculum vitae, answers to written questions, reference checks, interviews, and assessment centres
Selection Criteria	no data (probably a result of the very decentralized process)
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – studies on the validity of the NASSP assessment centre – no research findings on further selection methods – heterogeneous composition of the selection committee is not always an advantage

Meritt, Fitzgerald & Noe, 1982; Schmitt & Cohen, 1990a, 1990b; Williams & Pantili, 1992; Pashiardis, 1993; Schmitt, 1994). The research findings confirmed sufficient prognostic validity of the assessment center for the future achievement of principals. Research in further selection methods applied during the process of filling positions (e.g. interviews, potential analyses, self-assessment through psychological tests) still is a desiderate. By comparison, the effectiveness and the quality of preparatory training and development programs, including specific methods such as principal internships, and the effectiveness of the standards, are regularly evaluated and broadly discussed. To sum up, Table 10.6 provides an overview.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has drawn heavily on a recent comparative international study (Huber, 2007b; Huber et al., 2007; Huber & Hiltmann, in press) which describes current practice from around the world and identifies commonalities and differences. As this project is only in an exploratory first phase, we are still restricted in drawing our conclusions. Interestingly, there seems to be little international work available on how school leaders are selected and recruited.

Given our first five case study countries, some central similarities and differences can be highlighted.

First, as would be expected, the overall approach of school leader selection ranges from a distinctive decentralized one (with responsibility lying with the schools as in England and the USA) to a centralized one (as in many German states and particularly in Singapore, where the ministry is in charge). Accordingly, the selecting body is either a committee established by the school, the community (or district) or the department of the ministry itself. These decentralized versus centralized approaches impact on the advertising and marketing activities undertaken to fill vacant school leader positions. They are either quite intense and widespread (in the countries with a decentralized approach) or restricted to official information publications.

Second, different kinds of job profiles seem to be in use in many countries. Some are based on standards, some are solely driven by school law and school regulations in which the role of school leaders is described. In countries where the selecting body is school or district based, there is a variety of different kinds of profiles. Some are context rich, taking the local situation into account; others are less detailed.

Third, a *conditio sine qua non* as a prerequisite for applying for a school leadership position in most countries is having a teaching license and some experience of teaching in the respective type of school. Further prerequisites, however, range from relying mostly on the previous performance of the candidates as teachers, as in Germany, or their participation in a preparatory training course, to completion of a more extensive development program concluding with a certificate or a license, as is the case in England and the United States.

Fourth, the selection methods applied differ widely. While in Germany the emphasis is put on formal criteria indicating abilities (albeit adding further selection methods if considered desirable), in Singapore they rely solely on interviews. Although a great variety of methods are used in the England and the United States, interviews, however, seem to be indispensable.

Fifth, the evaluation of the selection procedures, of selection methods, is a research desideratum: It is usually the case that no information about the reliability and validity is available. In England and the United States, however, some studies on selection methods are being undertaken.

It is clear from this brief review that there is further need to compare both common and distinct elements and to include more countries in the wider second phase of our study. It can rightly be assumed, however, that increasing efforts concerning the selection of school leaders will be made in the near future. This is due to the rising awareness of the central role of school leaders, corroborated by international research findings, as well as to the increasing importance of school leadership in the change process of many school systems from a centralized towards a more decentralized system of self-managing schools.

In general, it seems a rigorous and systematic approach is needed.

First, the approach should be based on what is expected from school leaders in general but also in a specific organizational context. What expectations by regulations, professional standards, or the voices of different stakeholders exist and must be taken into account? The approach should also be based on what we know from research about good or competent school leadership with regards to school quality and school improvement.

What is needed is not only to take the more general perspective into account but also the specific organizational context. Given the desired fit of a person's competences to the requirements of a specific organization, more is required than just backmapping individuals against a general compilation of generic competences; a contextual fit is required.

Second, selection processes should use a wide range of diagnostic means in a kind of mixed method approach, for example, test instruments for attributes and traits, but also for cognitive competences, simulation exercises and observations in real situations for present behavior (skills and abilities), biographical documents and references for past performance and achievements, interviews and letters of motivation to find out about the candidate's motivation and attitudes.

Besides the use of diagnostic instruments for selection and recruitment purposes, some of these methods can be applied to the external evaluation/assessment of established school leaders, and also for candidates' self-assessment for orientation before applying for a leadership position or for a needs-assessment to plan one's individual professional development. Moreover, some of the instruments may be used to select participants for training and development programs. According to the respective purpose in terms of whether it is more self-reflection-and-develop-

ment-oriented or whether it is external evaluation/assessment-oriented, different strategies by the candidates may be needed. When a self-assessment or a needs-assessment is the focus, an atmosphere of trust can be assumed and the participant can be supposed to behave authentically and reply without anxiety concerning social acceptance. If assessment (e.g. for selection) is the purpose, the candidate will be alert and less ready to show her or his weaknesses. This bias has to be taken into account when using certain instruments and methods.

Moreover, when using selection instruments from the economic sector, it is important not only to adapt them linguistically to the education context but also to check their reliability and validity and use a standardization procedure which is relevant to the population. This adjustment to the specific context and the population seems very important, as does the evaluation of the instrument.

In this respect, Huber et al. (2007) developed an online inventory for self-assessment comprising around 30 test scales related to the competence profile to undertake school development and school management (with around 400 items) and a complex problem analysis tool (in form of an in tray exercise), which have been standardized with around 500 teachers (the Competency Profile School Management - CPSM).

Finally, a professional selection approach focuses on a prognostic perspective. It is about assuming the future performance of a candidate positioning a specific role/context. It is not about 'rewarding' experienced individuals as teachers for their merits. We do not have empirical evidence for the existing practice in some countries, which is based on the assumption that a good teacher automatically becomes a good school leader. There is a risk of losing a competent teacher whilst not necessarily gaining a competent school leader. Professional diagnostics aim at prediction on a prognostic base, not solely on a retrospective base. In this respect, an even less valuable criterion would be the mere age of the candidate in terms of the years of experience in the profession.

As to what is missing but needed, we see several emerging issues.

First, there is still some need for a clearer conception of the competencies required for school leadership. It is clear from the brief country reviews that there is a further requirement to compare both the common and the distinct elements that we find in different countries, and to recognize that, though a competency based approach may have some advantages, there is still less consensus about what the key competencies are than there might be. However, school leadership has to deal with a great amount of complexity and uncertainty but also with dilemmas and contradictions and with different expectations, given all the different stakeholders from the system context as well as the local context. Agreement on competencies may therefore be problematic.

Second, we have become increasingly conscious during our work in this field that the conception of school leadership, even taken internationally, is a rather narrow one. Perhaps there does need to be 'one supreme head' in each school. Maybe school leadership requires other conceptualizations like collective leadership and the re-conceptualization of the school leader's role as simply one part of a team. This would allow a move away from the school leadership concept as a position for one person, the 'multifunctional miracle being' (Huber, 2004), the one-man/one-woman at the top, and to conceptualize school leadership as a function that a team serves to fulfill. It is this last issue which seems to us to challenge most forcibly the orthodoxy underpinning current approaches to recruitment and selection, and which offers the most interesting avenue of exploration for the future.

Third, we need research on the instruments' reliability and validity in particular, and on the effectiveness of selection procedures in general. Reliability of instruments is especially important and therefore, internal consistency methods in order to calculate reliability are extremely useful.

Especially Rasch analysis, Kendalls' W, and Cronbach's alpha, become very useful in order to determine the reliability of each of the factors included in questionnaires which will be used for selection processes.

Fourth, in this context, there are further considerations of efficiency that have to be determined in terms of a cost-benefit analysis. It can be assumed that there is higher efficiency and effectiveness when individuals take over leadership who have been carefully selected and are suitable for the demands. Undeniably, however, there are the costs associated with the various selection methods. As stated above, the more different sources of information or the more different perspectives one includes in the selection procedure, the more objective and reliable, but also the more expensive the process. Consequently, the dilemma is higher expense in tension with greater reliability and validity of the selection process. Yet, it is also important to ask how much has to be spent if the wrong individuals are selected, let alone the educational damage that an incompetent principal can inflict. In essence, a cost-benefit analysis of the type described above would probably prove that it is far more beneficial to spend greater resources initially during the selection process as opposed to having the wrong person in the job for a number of years, particularly in countries where school leaders become appointed as civil servants and retain the position and the salary level for many years.

Finally, it is very interesting to look at potential links between diagnostic procedures, leadership experiences, and training and development opportunities. Among the diagnostic procedures are self- or needs-assessment and assessment in terms of selection or external evaluation. Leadership experiences may comprise a position in the middle management or the senior management team or elsewhere in the school, or as a previously established school leader. Training and development opportunities may have different phases: orientation, preparation, induction, and continuous professional development. The kind of triad of diagnostic procedures, leadership experiences, and training and development opportunities might serve to illuminate and to enhance practice in terms of quality assurance and quality development in leadership.

NOTE

1. Reconstituted in 2007 as the Department for Children, Family and Schools. Scotland and Northern Ireland have different far-reaching ranges of freedom of decision in education policy and therefore differ from what is described here for England.

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EDITED BY

JACKY LUMBY

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