Inclusive Leadership in Public Education Administration: Distributed & Ethical Aspects

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ABSTRACT

In this paper we propose an inclusive leadership style for public education administration, conceptualized as distributed and ethical. First, the paper briefly refers to several prevailing features of public administration. We argue that within this framework the emerging role of ethics, the importance of participation, and the shifts in leadership practices, push for the development of an inclusive leadership style. Second, the paper reviews proposed models for inclusive leadership, based on ethical and/or distributed elements. We conclude that developing integrative frameworks, such as inclusive leadership, is an important update for leadership theories.

1. Introduction

Public administration is inseparably linked to public interest and social prosperity (UN, 2001; Karkatsoulis, 2004). This entails that public administration often needs to be governed by principles that differentiate it from private sector organizations, since it is required to serve public values and the public good (Christensen & Lægreid, 2018; Dikeos et al., 2017; Ktistaki 2014). Current dominant models for public administration argue for the co-existence of bureaucracy and governance (Frederickson, 2007, Makrydemetres, 2013; Berman et al., 2016; Lynn & Hill, 2014). Governance

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values, *inter alia*, respect, trust, participation, ethical integrity and col-laboration (Karkatsoulis, 2004), bring ethics to the forefront of emergent public administration approaches (Martinez, 2009; Perry & Christensen, 2015). Public administrators are considered guardians of "global commu-nity interests" that have a global responsibility to act ethically and morally in a coordinated manner and to expose and fight corruption (Farazmand, 1999:519). An ethical public administration should be guided by values such as democratic responsibility and accountability, legality, professional integrity and responsiveness to civil society (Makrydemetres, 2013).

The process of recognizing public education administration, as a 'dis-tinctive field' (Athanasoula-Reppa, 2008) within public administration, has not been easy in several cases (Raffael, 2007). In EU, public education ad-ministration is a relatively recent area of interest. This can be linked to the fact that education is one of the areas in which EU implements the Open Method of Coordination (i.e., Prpic, 2014; Moos, 2012), which is a flexible governance method, and national administrations need to develop their workforce's ability to cooperate and participate policy making networks (Passas, 2016; Nugent, 2006; Busemeyer, & Trampusch, 2011).

Recent literature argues that the distinction between management and leadership is rather inconclusive and suggests the use of the term "leadership" (Bush, 2011:5, Hannah at al., 2014: 603). From an administra-tion point of view, although leadership as a term is fluid and complex, it constitutes a central assumption of the administrative phenomenon (Katsaros: 2008). In his highly cited work, Bush (2011) corresponds six models of education management (formal, collegial, political, subjective, ambiguity and cultural) to ten leadership styles (managerial, participa-tive, transformational, distributed, transactional, postmodern, emotional, contingency, moral and instructional).

To recapitulate, we note a number of trends in current administration discourses and practices: first, there is a discursive turn from administra-tion to leadership and a prevalence of public administrative models which combine bureaucracy with governance. Second, current governance approaches and human resource management practices, which advo-cate moving form "control" to "commitment" (Arthur, 1994), to mobilize workforce, both value ethics and participation. In this vein, we argue that none of the Bush typology leadership styles *per se* can fully respond to the current public education administration needs. We believe that what is needed is a more complex leadership style, which would incorporate

elements of the managerial, the participative-distributed, and the moral leadership styles, as described in the Bush taxonomy. This new tripartite leadership style is, in our view, inscribed within the notion of inclusion and we further argue that such an "inclusive leadership" style can be based on a synthesis of elements of the distributive and ethical model.

2. Inclusion and inclusive leadership

Prima facie, the conceptual conjunction of inclusion and leadership creates a sense of paradox (Ryan, 2006). Inclusion in the workplace, as a notion, mainly appeared since the beginning of 21st Century: It emerged as a core concept with reference to diversity but it is still not clearly defined, and its operational value is still a matter of discussion (Ferdman, 2014: 3-4). The two terms were initially used in interchangeably, but in recent literature we can find instances where references to inclusion replace the ones on diversity. Roberson (2006:227-228) argues that this development is consistent with the tendency to link diversity to heterogeneity and demographic composition of employees, while linking inclusion to their involvement in the organization. Nishii (2013: 1754) argues that the discursive turn from diversity to inclusion can be attributed to the need of organizations to create inclusive environments, which she defines as environments in which "individuals of all backgrounds… are fairly treated, valued for who they are and included in core decision making".

It has been argued (OECD, 2019) that inclusion, in the human resources, could enhance positive outcomes for educational organizations (i.e. well-being, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, performance, organizational citizenship, creativity). Three models of organizational inclusion are the most visible in the literature: these have been developed by Mor Barak (1999), Shore et al. (2011) and Ferdman (2014). In the next section we review and discuss these models.

2.1. Models for organizational inclusion

The above-mentioned models for organizational inclusion, briefly presented in this section, have laid the foundations for a concrete theoretical approach of inclusion in the workplace. Mor Barak links the individual to

the organizational level and discusses inclusion at the level of the individual, whereas Shore et al. emphasize inclusion at the work group level. Ferdman's model defines different inclusion practice levels stressing the dynamic character among them. But, we have to note that the outcomes of organizational inclusion are its less studied aspects (Shore et al., 2011).

In Mor Barak's model, an employee's sense of inclusion in the organization "is a result of the interplay between the individual's personal characteristics that affect their values and norms (the personal dimension) and the organization's environment in the form of policies and procedures (the organizational dimension)" (Mor Barak, 1999: 58). This perception of being included or excluded leads, in turn, to behavioral outcomes such as individual well-being, job satisfaction, organizational commitment and task effectiveness.

Shore et al. (2011:1265, 1276), based on Brewer's optimal distinctiveness theory (Brewer, 1991), define inclusion "as the degree to which an employee perceives that he or she is an esteemed member of the work group through experiencing treatment that satisfies his or her needs for belongingness and uniqueness". In addition, they present a model of antecedents (inclusiveness climate, inclusive leadership, inclusive practices) and consequences of inclusion (i.e, job satisfaction, intention to stay, job performance, organizational commitment).

Ferdman (2014: 14-21), on the other hand, acknowledges the complex nature of inclusion and defines the various levels at which it can operate, stressing that individual experience is not the only aspect that should be examined. His levels of analysis also include the interpersonal behavior, the group-level inclusion, inclusive leaders and leadership, inclusive organizations and, finally, inclusive societies. He particularly stresses the role of the leaders in fostering inclusion, and he regards inclusive leadership the "linchpin for inclusion at other levels of the multilevel framework" (Ferdman, 2014: 19).

Both the approaches proposed by Shore et al. and Ferdman highlight the role of leadership in inclusion and although the concept of inclusive leadership has subtly started to appear in the literature, it still remains tangential. Existing definitions do not illustrate its characteristics with clarity and very few models for inclusive leadership have been developed so far. Nembhard and Edmonson propose a construct of leader inclusiveness "defined as words and deeds by a leader or leaders that indicate an *invitation* and *appreciation* for others' contributions" (2006: 947) and Carmeli et

al. (2010) relate inclusive leadership to managers' openness, availability, and accessibility.

Randel et al. (2018), building upon the framework Shore et al. (2011), conceptualize inclusive leadership as a set of behaviors which facilitate belonginess (by supporting individuals as group members, by ensuring justice and equity and by sharing decision making) and that values uniqueness (by encouraging diverse contributions and by helping group members to fully contribute). They argue that "inclusive leaders facilitate perceptions of inclusion not only by engaging in behaviors directed towards work group members, but also by serving as a role model and reinforcing such behaviors among group members" (Randel et al., 2018:192).

Wuffli (2016: 2-3) contends that leadership should be a holistic and broadly applicable concept, involving as many leaders as possible, and he suggests four guiding principles for an inclusive leadership: a. dynamic and change oriented; b. horizontal; c. holistic and broadly applicable; and, d. explicitly normative, a principle that is associated with ethics.

All these attempts at defining and operationalizing the concept, emphasize that inclusive readership is still at a nascent stage, and it constitutes a challenging field.

2.2. Inclusive leadership as distributed and ethical: A review and a synthesis of the literature

In our literature review, we have found that most approaches of inclusive leadership conceptualize it either as distributed (Ekins, 2013:26; Miškolci et al., 2016: 53, 60; European Agency, 2018:12) or ethical (Thompson, 2011: 201-203). But we have come across only few references towards a synthesis of distributed and ethical leadership to develop an inclusive leadership model. We have found implications of such a fusion in Wuffli (2014) and Randel et al. (2018), as distributed and ethical aspects are inherent to their conceptualizations. Hollander offers a more explicit reference:

'Inclusive Leadership … is about relationships that can accomplish things for mutual benefit. Reaching leadership at this next level means "doing things with people, rather than to people," which is the essence of inclusion. Improving decision making and achieving desired ends are among its goals, without relying on one person's capabilities alone. It also provides an atmosphere that promotes fairness of input and output to all'. (Hollander, 2009:3)

Elements of an education leadership style that includes both distributed and ethical elements have also been suggested by the European Commission Working Group on Schools, which was established within the strategic framework Education and Training 2020 (European Council, 2009). References on elements of inclusive leadership, i.e. distributed leadership, valuing trust, respect, inclusion, justice, and ethos, can also be traced in several EC documents (European Commission, 2018)

In an effort to explain our argument, that inclusive leadership combines, in a unique way, aspects of distributed and ethical leadership, we have reviewed the literature on these two approaches, focusing on the scholarly works which present a synthesis of the two approaches.

Many scholars (Bolden, 2011; Leithwood et al., 2009; Gronn, 2002) agree that distributed leadership offers a possibility for a systemic approach, without being a "distinct theory" of leadership (Bolden, 2011: 257). Others question whether ethical leadership is a distinct leadership style (Anderson & Sun, 2015: 14) while they stress its dynamic and relational character (Jini, 1997: 325; Yukl et al., 2013: 38).

Influential conceptual approaches to distributed leadership do not question the need for positional leaders, or the bureaucratic and governance arrangements of organizations (Spillane, 2006; Gronn, 2009). Responding to this, Lumby (2017) suggests that it is time to experiment with the conceptual pluralism that leadership demands. Spillane and Haeley (2010) in their research of team diversity in formally designated leadership teams, imply linking distributed leadership with inclusion, and they discuss the concept of "deep-level diversity" (Spillane & Haeley, 2010: 269), which involves attitudes, beliefs and values within distributed leadership. To look further into our conceptualization of an inclusive leadership style as distributed and ethical, in the next sections we present the framework within which each style was developed, with reference to relevant seminal scholarly approaches.

2.3. Distributed leadership

Distributed leadership is dominant within an emerging approach to leadership that "goes beyond individual control and management bureaucracy to embrace more sharing and collaboration" (Jones & Harvey, 2014:603), which is usually part of the discourse on post-bureaucratic organizations (Lumby, 2017: 2) It can be viewed as an expansive understand-

ing of leadership, placing an emphasis on leadership-as-practice rather than as leadership-as-role. Shared and distributed leadership are the most common terms used to describe models which do not limit leadership to a designated leader (Fitzsimons et al., 2011: 313). For Jones et al. "the common ingredient of these theories is the acknowledgement of the role of leadership at multiple levels, both formal and informal, and the need for collaborative networks to engage within complex systems" (2014: 604).

Distributed leadership discourse has grown rapidly since 2000 but research remains largely restricted to the field of education (Bolden, 2011: 251) and explorations of distributed leadership in other sectors remain relatively limited (Harris et al., 2022). It is also noted that, until recently there has not been a clear and generally accepted definition of the term (Bolden, 2011; Tian at al. 2015). Harris (2008:173) argues that the term distributed leadership overlaps substantially with relevant terms (e.g. shared, collaborative, democratic and participative leadership), and this results in its misuse. Spillane and Gronn (Gronn, 2002; Spillane, 2006) use a descriptive theoretical lens for looking at the activity of leadership, which employs theoretical constructs form other social sciences, i.e. distributed cognition and activity theory. Several scholars agree that Spillane and Gronn are the makers of distributed leadership and that they have developed a robust conceptualization of the term (Tian et al., 2015; Torres, 2019).

Mayrowetz (2008) describes four uses of distributed leadership: a theoretical framework for educational leadership (based on the work of Gronn and Spillane), a leadership style to reinforce democracy, a way to improve efficiency and effectiveness, and a leadership style for increasing professional learning/human capacity building. In a similar pattern, Tian et al. (2015:4) trace two research paradigms: a descriptive-analytical one that mainly deals with the conceptualization of distributed leadership and a prescriptive-normative that focused on the practical application of distributed leadership.

Below, we present four major approaches to the development of the theoretical framework of distributed leadership, based on the work of Spillane (2006), Gronn (2002), Leithwood et al. (2009) and MacBeath (2004). Tian et al. (2015: 4) have observed that studies following a descriptive-analytical approach, tend to assume that leadership is distributed, without reflecting on whether it should be distributed, and focus on examining social interactions as they perceive leadership as a consequence of these interactions.

Spillane (2006) distinguishes two approaches of distributed leadership: the "leader-plus" and the "practice" approach. The leader-plus approach corresponds to Spillane's understanding of shared leadership, and acknowledges that within it "multiple individuals take responsibility for leadership" (2006: 3). The practice approach shifts the focus from formal and informal leaders "to the web of leaders, followers, and their situations that gives form to leadership practice" (2006:3).

Spillane considers the leader-plus aspect vital but insufficient, and pushes one step further arguing for a practice shaped by "the interactions of leaders, followers and their situation" (2006:12-14). He warns that those who deal with leadership practice tend to equate it only with the actions of leaders, and he considers crucial how leadership is distributed. In this approach he identifies three types of distribution in the co-performance of leadership practice: collaborated, collective and coordinated.

Two elements of Spillane's approach are worth stressing: First, the shift of the unit of analysis, to focus on the school/organization (2001) or on the leadership activity (2004). Second, Spillane and his co-authors are not aligned with approaches that undertheorize power, and, instead, define leadership "using theories of authority and influence grounded in Weberian notions of legitimacy" (Diamond & Spillane, 2016: 150). Therefore, they acknowledge the importance of positional leadership ("a distributed perspective on leadership can coexist and be used beneficially to explore hierarchical and top-down leadership approaches", Spillane, 2006: 103) and propose a style which is compatible with bureaucratic and hierarchical assumptions and applicable to the current systems.

Peter Gronn (2002) presents a sophisticated framework of distributed leadership, that offers "alternatives to conventional individualistic paradigms of leadership" (Watson & Paredes, 2007: 458). Building on the same theoretical base as Spillane and his colleagues, he also identifies two types of distributed leadership: the numerical/additive approach, that corresponds to Spillanes' leader-plus aspect, and the qualitative holistic/concertive action approach (Gronn, 2002: 691). The numerical/additive approach occurs when leadership within the organization is shared and it constitutes the most commonly used version of distributed leadership. The holistic/concertive version includes three patterns: spontaneous collaboration, intuitive working relations and institutionalized practices.

In more recent works, Gronn proposed a hybrid approach to leadership, instead of persisting to distributed leadership as a new orthodoxy.

In his renewed approach, Gronn (2008, 2009, 2016) argues that we need constantly shifting leadership mix that will manifest degrees of both focused and distributed patterns "the overall composition of which should be understood as an adaptive or emergent response to wider environmental and immediate situational challenges that are specific to the context" (2009: 20).

Two more essential elements of his approach need to be noted: First, he makes an explicit reference to the relation between power and leadership (Gronn, 2008), and he stresses the need to include it in the leadership discourse. This emphasis on power is necessary as his hybrid conceptualization of leadership includes hierarchical and heterarchical elements of activities. Therefore, his conceptualization of distributed leadership model, much like Spillane's, is applicable in settings with bureaucratic characteristics. Second, while many scholars observe the differences between democratic and distributed leadership focusing, mainly, on the more normative character of democratic leadership, Gronn thinks that this relation should be further analyzed: He argues that distributed leadership lays the ground for democracy, as it widens the span of employee participation and allows their voices to be heard (2008: 154), an aspect that is also crucial for inclusion.

Leithwood et al. (2009) attempt to move research on distributed leadership beyond its descriptive state, extending Gronn's holistic patterns. They regard "additive approach" to be an "uncoordinated pattern of leadership" and they relate Spillane's leader-plus approach to Gronns' holistic pattern, which they consider a consciously managed relationship of the sources of leadership. In more detail, they define four patterns of holistic distribution: planful alignment (which relates to Gronn's institutionalized practice), spontaneous alignment, spontaneous misalignment (which both relate to Gronn's spontaneous collaboration) and anarchic misalignment (Leithwood et al., 2009: 225-227).

They hypothesize that planful alignment constitutes the most productive pattern that serves both short-term and long-term productivity, while spontaneous alignment has no significance difference to the contribution to short-term organizational productivity. Spontaneous misalignment patterns do not support either long-term nor short-term productivity while anarchic misalignment constitutes an active rejection of the influence of other leaders within the organization. Their results suggest that planful alignment is a dominant pattern when it is related to high priority

initiatives. Most importantly their research stresses the fact that aligned and effective forms of distributed leadership depend on effective forms of focused/solo leadership. In line with Spillane's and Gronn's conceptualization of distributed leadership as applicable in bureaucratic contexts they acknowledge that distributing leadership not only does not demand less leadership from positional leaders but on the contrary formal leaders' role is critical to nurture productive patterns of distributed leadership. Furthermore, they admit that "some hierarchy is unavoidable and necessary in any large organization" (Leithwood et al.,2009:241).

Lastly, MacBeath (2009) identifies six forms of distribution, in an effort to offer an understanding of distributed leadership linked to what happens to schools. His typology includes six forms of distribution, which occurs formally, pragmatically, strategically, incrementally, opportunistically or culturally. These six occurrences constitute a continuum, and their character is situational (MacBeath, 2009:44). MacBeath admits that we would expect as leadership matures that organizations move through these stages but they actually form a repertoire of response models depending on contextual factors.

Discussing in depth distributed leadership is beyond the scope of this paper. However, some conclusions are necessary. Firstly, with regard to the four approaches presented above, it is evident that Spillane's and Gronn's frameworks are the conceptually robust. Bolden (2011: 258-299) argues that their approaches focus on interpersonal dynamics and the ways people can collaborate, whereas the frameworks by Leithwood et al. and MacBeath focus on different forms of distributed leadership. He also stresses that Leithwood and his colleagues suggest which forms of distributed leadership are more desirable and they offer indications of potential benefits.

2.4. Ethical leadership

Ethical leadership is explored in various kinds of organizations and is not confined to education. Cioulla (1995) stresses the centrality of ethics in the practice of leadership, and Gini (1997: 325) claims that "all leadership is value laden. All leadership, whether good or bad, is moral leadership". Ethical elements are present in a large number of leadership approaches, such as the charismatic, servant, transformational and authentic (Anderson &

Sun, 2015). The interest for the relation between ethics and leadership has been renewed as organizations are operating "in complex and often global environments that inherently impose difficult moral challenges on organization members" (Hannah at al., 2011: 663), and due to the reviving of the media interest on scandals involving corporate and public sector leaders, over the past two decades.

We have identified two seminal approaches to ethical leadership. The works of Starratt, which refer to the educational sector, and the works of Treviño and Brown, who focus on enterprises.

Starratt (1991) has created a highly influential framework aiming at explicitly addressing practitioners. His tripartite multidimentional framework is grounded on ethical subjects developed by other theorists. An important aspect of his approach lies in the fact that he is not limiting his interest in the individual choices of administrators, but he focuses in their ethical task, i.e. to create an ethical school environment "in which education can take place ethically" (1991: 187). He suggests joining the "ethic of critique" with the "ethic of justice" and the "ethic of care". He claims that these three expressions of ethics complement each other. Specifically, the ethic of critique (based on critical theory), aims both at the bureaucratic and hierarchal structure of the school and the school community, and the instrumental / technical approach to education. In his view, critical ethics address issues such as sexism, racism, hegemony of certain groups, stressing that no social arrangement is neutral. The ethics of justice asks for the organization to serve both the common good and the rights of the individuals, and this approach entails discussion of discipline policies, the curriculum, the textbooks and the tests. As Furman (2004: 218) notices "if the ethic of justice looks towards fairness, the ethic of critique looks toward barriers to fairness". The ethics of caring focuses "on the demands of relationships, not from a contractual or legalistic standpoint, but form a standpoint of absolute regard and love" (Starratt, 1991: 195). The ethic of care balances the ethic of justice as to what may be fair for a person may not be fair for another, in different circumstances and with different needs (Furman, 2004: 218).

Starratt's model has been expanded twice: Initially by Shapiro and Stefkovich (2001: 19, 27), who concluded it does not provide an adequate view of the factors that need to be taken into account in an educational setting. Therefore, they propose a fourth aspect: the professional ethics dimension, that would go beyond the questions posed within the frame-

work of the ethics of critique, justice and care, to ask what the profession
and the community expect from someone to do, and what should be
done based on the best interest of the students, stressing the education-
specific ethical codes.

Furman (2004) also attempts to complement Starratt's framework: he
proposes the concept of an ethic of community, that focuses on the com-
munal over the individual. Conceptualizing community as process, by
ethic of community he means that administrators, teachers, school staff,
parents and other community members feel morally responsible to en-
gage in communal processes and pursue the moral purposes of schooling.
He stresses that this leads to a practice of moral leadership that is clearly
distributed and based on skills (such as listening with respect, striving
for knowing and understanding others, working in teams, engaging in
dialogue, and allowing all voices to be heard), skills and practices that
need to be developed by the entire community (2004: 222).

Beyond the education sector, Treviño, Brown and their colleagues theo-
rized ethical leadership as a distinct style (Anderson & Sun, 2015), basing
their approach on social learning theory. Their approach offers some im-
portant contributions: first, they argue (Treviño et al., 2000) that manag-
ers need to be perceived both as moral persons and as moral managers,
to develop a reputation for ethical leadership. The moral person entails
traits (e.g. integrity, honesty, trustworthiness), behaviors (e.g. do the right
thing, concern for people, being open) and decision making (i.e. hold to
values, be objective and fair, concern for society, follow ethical decision
rules). These are, in their view, prerequisites for the development of the
moral manager, which mainly relies in role modeling through visible ac-
tions, in using rewards and discipline, and in communication about ethics
and values. Combining these two pillars, the moral person with the moral
manager, they define four possible leader types: the hypocritical leader,
the unethical leader, the ethical leader and the ethically neutral leader,
with the last one being the most difficult to define.

Secondly, they propose a descriptive perspective to ethical leadership,
based on social cognitive theory (Brown et al., 2005). They define ethi-
cal leadership as "*the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct
through personal actions and interpersonal relations, and the promotion
of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforce-
ment, and decision making*" (2005:120). They justify the vagueness of the
definition arguing that it allows for the expression of cultural differences.

Their research focuses on direct supervisors, and they acknowledge that certain circumstances (such as job content) influence the importance of ethical leadership.

Thirdly, Treviño et al. (2006) provide a clear picture of ethical leadership's similarities and difference with authentic, spiritual, and transformational leadership, and they identify three situational factors that influence employees' perception of ethical leaders: ethical role modeling, the ethical context of the organization and the moral intensity of the issues confronted by the leader. Additionally, regarding ethical leadership's outcomes, they propose that ethical leaders influence ethics-related conduct, such as employee decision-making, prosocial and counterproductive behaviors, primarily through modeling and "vicarious learning processes" (Treviño et al., 2006: 606).

Finally, they stress the role of what is included in the job of the leader, the distance between the leader and the followers, and they refer to the importance of trust for influencing the relationship between ethical leadership and outcomes. They conclude that although the content of ethical leadership might be universal, the importance attached to each aspect is culturally specific.

In conclusion, what needs to be stressed about ethical leadership is that although it has been extensively discussed in the literature from a philosophical-normative point of view, and in the last two decades it has been considered a distinct leadership style form a descriptive-empirical point of view, empirical research for understanding what actually happens in organizations is still scarce (Mayer et al., 2009; Toor & Ofori, 2009; Eisenbeiss, 2012). The approach of Treviño and Brown is considered influential, although their widely shared definition is criticized as very broad and simple (Toor & Ofori, 2009: 534), and rather vague and relativist (Eisenbeiss, 2012: 791-793).

Eisenbeiss (2012: 791) stresses the need for further association between the normative and the descriptive approaches to ethical leadership. He identifies four essential aspects of ethical leadership that apply both to Western and Eastern moral philosophy: human orientation and justice orientation (on which current approaches have centered), responsibility and sustainability orientation (which are likely to become more important in the future) and moderation orientation.

Conclusion

As leadership theories the last few decades have shifted on a focus in the interpersonal dynamic occurring within the leadership phenomenon -i.e. "new genre" theories (Hannah et al. 2014)- scholars have stressed the dynamic character of leadership, the complexity of circumstances that have to be taken into account, the role of the context and the situation, and the need for leaders to be able to enact flexible sets of behaviors (Hannah et al., 2014; Snowden & Boone, 2007). These scholars also underline the need for integrative and multi-theoretical frameworks for leadership, and the importance of leaders' ability to deploy potential behaviors from multiple models of leadership, depending on time and context.

Compatible with such relational and integrative leadership approaches, we have proposed an inclusive leadership style, based on an ethical and distributed elements, to meet the needs of the current public education administration. As explained to the first part of the article, the inclusive leadership style aims at serving two fundamental tenets of public education administration: the need for leadership that promotes ethics and strengthens the participation of the workforce and leadership development. Most scholars acknowledge the crucial role of morality, which constitutes part of the ontological basis for leadership and a prerequisite for a positive form of influence (Hannah et al., 2014: 604-605). Distributed leadership, on the other hand, has been the most promising education-specific leadership style proposed the last decades.

We believe that the development of such a leadership style can contribute to positive outcomes for education organizations in various ways. Experimenting with this conceptualization of inclusive leadership can be regarded pertinent, as its elements are well grounded from a theoretical perspective. Nevertheless, empirical evidence is necessary to examine the strength of the conceptualization, especially as empirical research both on distributed and ethical leadership is scarce and the notion of inclusive leadership is still at nascent stage.

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