

Ontario and Quebec School Principals: A comparative study of leadership role perceptions

Abstract

This paper reports the results of a study focusing on school principals' differing perceptions of their leadership roles in majority or minority language school settings in the provinces of Ontario and Québec. Data were obtained from 455 randomly selected school principals across the two provinces. Four cultural and linguistic groups were identified. Respondents' self-reported scores on the Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ - Form XII) were treated with multiple regression and the discriminant function to investigate differences between groups. Results suggest differences in leadership perceptions according to socio-linguistic group membership, differences that have practical implications.

Résumé

Cette communication renvoie aux résultats d'une étude de la manière dont les directions d'écoles perçoivent leur rôle de leader éducationnel selon qu'elles pratiquent en milieu de langue officielle majoritaire ou en milieu de langue officielle minoritaire dans les provinces de l'Ontario et du Québec. Les données proviennent de la participation de 455 directions d'écoles de ces deux provinces choisies au hasard. Quatre groupes culturels et linguistiques ont été identifiés. Les scores que chaque participant et participante a obtenus en répondant soi-même au Questionnaire descriptif du comportement en leadership (LBDQ - Forme XII) ont été traités au moyen de la régression multiple et de l'application de la fonction discriminante afin de détecter les différences entre les groupes. Les résultats révèlent des différences de perceptions du leadership éducationnel des répondants selon leur groupe socio-linguistique, différences qui ont des implications d'ordre pratique pour la profession.

Principals' discharge of their functions within schools and communities constitutes a pivotal element of the culture in which it takes place. The effective school research conducted during the past fifteen years (Blumberg & Greenfield, 1980; Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan, & Lee, 1982; Brookover & Lezotte, 1979; DeBevoise, 1984; Edmonds, 1979; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982) underlined the leadership attributes of successful principals and magnified the impact effective principals have on the growth of their school. In the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, however, French-speaking principals as well as English-speaking principals alternately find themselves operating in a majority or a minority situation. Thus, four types of school cultural memberships are always identifiable: English-majority and French-minority in Ontario, English-minority and French-majority in Quebec. The purpose of this study was to determine whether principals' leadership role perception, when measured on the twelve subscales of the *Leadership Behaviour Description Questionnaire* (LBDQ) - Form XII, significantly differ on the criterion variable of their school's cultural membership.

The principal characteristics of age, gender, length of experience in the principalship, and the school characteristics of level, type, degree of autonomy, enrolment, and community demographics identified in earlier studies were controlled for. Therefore, the study consisted of two interprovincial group comparisons on the basis of school's cultural membership (Ontario majority-language school principals vs Quebec majority-language school principals and Ontario minority-language-school principals vs Quebec minority-language school principals) and two intraprovincial group comparisons on the basis of linguistic group membership (Ontario majority-language school principals vs Ontario minority-language school principals and Quebec majority-language school principals vs Quebec minority-language school principals).

The instrument and Its Measures

"The most significant contribution of the Ohio State leadership studies, conducted from 1946 to 1956, was the isolation of *Consideration* and *Initiating Structure* as basic dimensions of leadership behaviour in formal organizations" (Johns & Moser, 1989, p. 116). It is from those studies that the *Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire* (LBDQ) was derived and later refined to expand to twelve dimensions rather than the initial two that had originally been isolated. The *LBDQ - Form XII* (Hemphill & Coons, 1957), was used in the study to obtain a measure of principals' perception of their leadership role. Rather than providing a cumulative score on one or more variables indicative of a certain leadership behaviour, Form XII covers 12 subscales, each composed of five to ten items. In turn, each subscale represents a complex pattern of behaviour classified under the following concepts:

- *Representation* (REP): the leader speaks and acts as the leader of the group;
- *Demand Reconciliation* (REC): the leader reconciles conflicting demands and reduces disorder to the system;

- *Tolerance of Uncertainty* (TUN): the leader is able to tolerate uncertainty and postponement without anxiety;
- *Persuasiveness* (PER): the leader uses persuasion and argument effectively and exhibits strong convictions;
- *Initiation of Structure* (STR): the leader clearly defines his or her role and lets followers know what is expected;
- *Tolerance of Freedom* (TFR): the leader allows followers scope for initiative, decision, and action;
- *Role Assumption* (ROL): the leader actively exercises the leadership role rather than surrendering leadership to others;
- *Consideration* (CON): the leader regards the comfort, well-being, status, and contributions of followers;
- *Production Emphasis* (PRO): the leader applies pressure for productive output;
- *Predictive Accuracy* (PRE): the leader exhibits foresight and ability to predict outcome accurately;
- *Integration* (INT): the leader maintains a closely knit organization and resolves intermember conflicts;
- *Superior Orientation* (SUP): the leader maintains cordial relations with superiors, has influence with them, and is striving for higher status. (Stogdill, 1963)

Over the years the instrument has been used to conduct substantive leadership studies with a variety of professional groups. In the United States, air force pilots were the first to be studied and Halpin (1969) described extensively his findings. Five essential observations were made: (a) superiors and subordinates are inclined to attribute opposite value to each dimension of the leadership behaviour; (b) leaders who score high on leadership dimensions are likely to be rated high in overall effectiveness; (c) the leadership style appeared to influence favourably the initial group-learning experience; (d) the interaction between group dimensions and leader behaviour were underlined; (e) the leader's knowledge of how one should behave does not appear to correlate significantly with the way in which he or she is perceived.

Those five findings were all confirmed in further studies conducted with educators (liberal arts college department heads). "Educational administrators however were found to differ from aircraft commanders in both leadership style and ideology" (Halpin, 1969, p. 302). This conclusion led the author to recommend further investigative use of the instrument in different institutional settings as well as other cultural milieus, hypothesizing that it might be preferable to study specific conditions imposed on leaders by these other settings. It was in this light that this study was conducted.

More recent works based on the direct use of the LBDQ in school settings identified a number of additional elements that further helped in selecting appropriate variables when studying principals. Feitler (1972), for

instance, linked the four dimensions of *tolerance of freedom*, *tolerance of uncertainty*, *consideration*, and *integration* to the operation of participative group process in schools. Brown and Sikes (1978) looking at morale and leadership style concluded that educational leaders' *consideration* was inversely related to both system and school size and was a factor in teacher morale. The variable of school level (elementary or secondary) was confirmed to be a factor by Williamson (1981) in Alabama and by Knoop (1981) who conducted his study in eastern Canada. Interestingly, the latter also confirmed Brown and Sikes' (1978) initial findings. Gender proved to be a factor of significance in Mulkerne and Mulkerne's study (1984) and a number of biographical characteristics of respondents (such as age, gender, years of experience) were also noted of importance by Huber-Dilbeck (1988) and Williamson (1981).

Appropriate changes in instructions appended to the LBDQ - Form XII have been made prior to administration of the instrument so that leaders may directly describe their own behaviour through their responses. Application of the modified Kuder-Richardson formula to LBDQ subscale ratings obtained in previous studies of educators has yielded reliability coefficients varying between .54 and .86 (Stogdill, 1963). The LBDQ was translated into the French language for use with French-speaking principals in Ontario and Québec. The French translation was tested for validity by a panel of independent experts before the study was conducted. It was also tested for internal reliability with a group of Ontario French-speaking principals from the south-central region of the province. This group was excluded from the main study. Application of the modified Kuder-Richardson test to the French LBDQ subscale ratings yielded reliability coefficients varying between .52 and .85.

Principals

"Leadership is the process of persuasion by which a leader or leadership group (such as the state) induces followers to act in a manner that enhances the leader's purposes or shared purposes" (Sergiovanni, 1987, p. 213). A distinctly human and humane endeavour, leadership redefined in the above terms, extracts itself from its initial grounding in scientific research. Educational research dealing with the skills and abilities of the principalship has first mirrored and then directly applied the benefits of developments in the larger field of business management and leadership. In order for this to occur, the principals' role in the school had to be equated with the CEOs' in the enterprise; that is, principals had to be recognized as the central driving force behind each and every school achievement; they had to be effective performers in newly defined effective schools. Because "the typical school board in Canada has adopted a concept of the effective principal as an instructional leader" (Leithwood & Avery, 1987, p. 143), all twelve leadership dimensions measured by the LBDQ subscales are highly applicable and relevant to principals' exercise of leadership.

Numerous scholars, among them Sergiovanni (1987), and Fredericks and Pitch (1988), insisted on the pivotal role of the principal in school development and success. "No other school position has greater potential for monitoring and improving quality schools" (Sergiovanni, 1987, p. 51). These qualities are a function of the principal's ability for *Demand Reconciliation* and *Predictive Accuracy*. Principals' drive and determination to bring about change and influence progress has often been noted as the *sine qua non* of school effectiveness (Aldrich, 1985; Blumberg & Greenfield, 1986; McCary, 1980) and denote their degree and exercise of *Representation*. Giammatteo and Giammatteo's conveniently aphoristic description of the principal's role (1981): the individual that goes from "groping to griping to grasping to grouping" (p. 30) reflects the principals' sense of *Tolerance of Uncertainty*, *Role Assumption*, *Persuasiveness*, and *Integration*. The type Z school principal defined by George (1983) as provider of symbolic and instructional leadership and group facilitation offers a strikingly similar image where *Tolerance of Freedom* and *Consideration* are essential dimensions. Hall (1984) analyzed the role of the school leader in the facilitation of change and saw that group dynamics bore the same responsibility in schools as they did in business. Thus, he tied the transformational leadership theory to school administration.

Sergiovanni (1990) sees "empowerment, enablement, and enhancement" (p. 28) as the tenets of value-added leadership. For him, a marked difference between effective principals and other principals lies in the vision each type develops, projects, radiates, and often embodies in the school. DuFour and Eaker (1987) and Blum, Butler, and Olson (1987) associated the principal's ability to communicate such a vision and formulate the school's purpose in clear terms with a true ability to tolerate uncertainty and to foster freedom within the group of followers. Kasten and Ashbaugh (1988) as well as Lemley (1987) also point out in independent studies the strongest leadership dimensions of principals: attention to the comfort of their personnel and a tendency to clearly define roles and expectations.

Jenkins (1988), Corbett (1982), and Acheson (1985) emphasized the principals' dealings with their internal public as vital to their success. A vivid portrayal of the leader-principal's personas and an epitome of the transformational-charismatic administrator was adroitly drawn by McCall in *The Provident Principal* (1986). Only Blank (1987) in the United States and Moorhead and Nediger (1989) in Canada dwelt on the *Superior Orientation* dimension as they demonstrated the importance of fit between principal leadership style and district-level orientation, policies, actions, and especially expectations. Finally, Sussman (1986) examined the *Role Assumption* dimension and associated principal success in this domain with the ability to recognize the major importance of school context when setting priorities. Grady, Wayson, and Zirkel (1989) caution educators against the shortcomings of the strong princi-

pal paradigm, high in *Production Emphasis*, *Initiation of Structure*, and *Role Assumption*. They note it may lead to top-down administration that simply inhibits change instead of fostering it.

Therefore, while being unequivocally part and parcel of principals' leadership roles, the twelve dimensions examined in this study articulate the many spheres of activity through which principals lead their schools. As was just discussed, it does not follow, however, that a high score in all areas reflects leadership excellence in the effective schools context. This is the result of a balanced exercise of these leadership dimensions as imposed by constantly evolving situational, human, and time constraints.

Population

The population of interest to this study is the principals of all majority language and minority language schools in the Canadian provinces of Ontario and Québec, exclusive of school administrators of privately supported schools. Because of the presence of the four identified groups, a method of random stratified sampling with equal representation was used. In Ontario, a group of 200 English-language school principals and a group of 200 French-language school principals were selected from the 1989-1990 edition of the *Ontario Directory of Education*. In Quebec, a group of 200 English-language school principals and a group of 200 French-language school principals were selected from the 1989 edition of the Québec Ministry of Education repertory of schools (*Le répertoire des organismes et des établissements d'enseignement du Québec*).

Results

Of the 800 questionnaires that were mailed out to Ontario and Québec principals randomly selected for this study, a total of 503 completed questionnaires was returned from 234 participating school districts across both provinces. They accounted for a gross return rate of 62.87%. However, 26 of these questionnaires, received after the one-month deadline that had been set for the duration of the survey, as well as 22 questionnaires showing missing data were excluded from the study, leaving a total of 455 questionnaires that were used for statistical treatment and analysis, thus resulting in a net return rate of 56.87%. Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents according to their province of origin and their school status. Table 2 shows the distribution of respondents according to the principal and school variables selected.

Returned completed questionnaires have been scored for each of the twelve subscales on leadership behaviour. Multiple regression, applying the discriminant function technique, was used.

1. Statistical data generated in the comparison of Ontario majority-language school principals vs Quebec majority-language school principals ($n = 237$, $R^2 = .34$, $F[12,224] = 11.25$, $p = .0000$) reveal (Table 3) that the three

LBDQ subscales of *Tolerance of Freedom*, *Role Assumption*, and *Production Emphasis* (TFR, ROL, PRO) are responsible for most of the difference between the two majority language groups, with some variation due to the subscales of *Representation* and *Reconciliation*.

Table 1

Distribution of respondents according to school status and province
($N = 455$)

Province/Status	Frequency	Percent
Ontario Majority	108	23.6
Ontario Minority	129	28.4
Québec Majority	129	28.4
Québec Minority	89	19.6
Total	455	100.0

2. Statistical data generated in the comparison of Ontario minority-language school principals vs Quebec minority-language school principals ($n = 218$, $R^2 = .29$, $F(12,205) = 7.4425$, $p = .0000$) show (Table 4) that the six LBDQ subscales of *Tolerance of Uncertainty*, *Role Assumption*, *Consideration*, *Production Emphasis*, *Integration*, and *Superior Orientation* (TUN, ROL, CON, PRO, INT, SUP) are responsible for most of the difference between the two minority language groups, with some variation due to the subscale of *Persuasiveness*.

3. Statistical data generated in the comparison of Ontario English-language school principals vs Ontario French-language school principals ($n = 224$, $R^2 = .38$, $F[12,211] = 12.19$, $p = .0000$) indicate (Table 5) that the four LBDQ subscales of *Tolerance of Freedom*, *Role Assumption*, *Production Emphasis*, and *Superior Orientation* (TFR, ROL, PRO, SUP) are responsible for most of the difference between the two minority language groups, with some variation due to the subscales of *Representation*, *Consideration*, and *Integration*.

4. Statistical data generated in the comparison of Quebec English-language school principals vs Quebec French-language school principals ($n = 213$, $R^2 = .23$, $F[12,200] = 4.98$, $p = .0000$) identify (Table 6) the four LBDQ subscales of *Persuasiveness*, *Role Assumption*, *Consideration*, and *Production Emphasis* (PER, ROL, CON, PRO) as mostly responsible for the difference between the two minority language groups, with some variation due to the subscales of *Reconciliation*, *Tolerance of Uncertainty*, *Integration*, and *Superior Orientation*.

Table 2
*Distribution of respondents according to school variables
 and principal variables (N = 455)*

School Variables	Frequency	Percent
Community Demographics		
Rural Farming	66	14.5
Rural Non-Farming	70	15.4
Suburban	138	30.3
Urban	181	39.8
School Autonomy		
Autonomous	399	87.7
Semi-Autonomous	43	9.5
Module	13	2.9
School level		
Elementary	359	78.9
Secondary	96	21.1
School Enrollment		
250 or less	174	38.2
251 to 570	231	50.8
571 or more	50	11.0
Principal variables	Frequency	Percent
Experience in the Principalship		
Less than 10 yrs.	238	52.3
11 to 25 yrs.	184	40.4
26 yrs. or more	33	7.3
Mother Tongue		
English	178	39.1
French	259	56.9
Other	18	4.0
Age		
35 or less	15	3.3
36 to 45	171	37.6
46 or more	269	59.1
Gender		
Male	329	72.3
Female	126	27.7

Table 3
Majority group means on the twelve LBDQ subscales
(N = 237, Group 1 - Ontario Majority - n = 108
Group 2 - Québec Majority - n = 129)

LBDQ Subscale	Group	Mean	SD
Representation	1	19.42 *	2.08
	2	20.22 *	2.60
Reconciliation	1	19.69 *	2.07
Tolerance of Uncertainty	1	35.93	4.15
	2	36.06	3.82
Persuasiveness	1	38.88	3.76
	2	39.50	3.73
Initiation of Structure	1	39.60	3.33
	2	39.53	3.85
Tolerance of Freedom	1	40.82 ***	3.68
	2	38.47 ***	3.78
Role Assumption	1	37.80 ***	3.58
	2	41.33 ***	3.83
Consideration	1	41.20	3.50
	2	41.36	3.38
Production Emphasis	1	31.69 ***	4.30
	2	36.25 ***	4.69
Predictive Accuracy	1	19.44	1.60
	2	19.26	1.67
Integration	1	19.93	2.18
	2	20.19	2.58
Superior Orientation	1	37.30	3.50
	2	38.13	3.69

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p = .000$

Table 4
Minority group means on the twelve LBDQ subscales
(N = 218, Group 1 - Ontario Minority - n = 129,
Group 2 - Québec Minority - n = 89)

LBDQ Subscale	Group	Mean	SD
Representation	1	20.14	2.41
	2	19.74	2.04
Reconciliation	1	19.83	2.14
	2	19.19	2.84
Tolerance of Uncertainty	1	36.40 ***	3.54
	2	34.36 ***	4.67
Persuasiveness	1	39.45 *	3.47
	2	38.02 *	4.68
Initiation of Structure	1	39.91	3.92
	2	39.19	3.97
Tolerance of Freedom	1	38.80	3.62
	2	39.48	4.43
Role Assumption	1	41.10 ***	4.64
	2	38.37 ***	4.34
Consideration	1	42.12 ***	3.04
	2	39.67 ***	4.92
Production Emphasis	1	36.85 ***	4.35
	2	33.54 ***	4.51
Predictive Accuracy	1	19.39	1.68
	2	18.02	2.39
Integration	1	20.82	2.34
	2	19.02	2.75
Superior Orientation	1	39.61 ***	3.88
	2	37.07 ***	3.93

* $p < .05$
 ** $p < .01$
 *** $p = .000$

Table 5
Ontario principals linguistic group membership means
on the twelve LBDQ subscales
(N = 224, Group 1 - Ontario English-speaking - n = 101,
Group 2 - Ontario French-speaking - n = 123)

LBDQ Subscale	Group	Mean	SD
Representation	1	19.45 *	2.13
	2	20.15 *	2.33
Reconciliation	1	19.66	2.14
	2	19.88	2.14
Tolerance of Uncertainty	1	35.97	4.22
	2	36.41	3.32
Persuasiveness	1	38.80	3.80
	2	39.55	3.40
Initiation of Structure	1	39.55	3.48
	2	39.91	3.81
Tolerance of Freedom	1	40.81 ***	3.65
	2	38.83 ***	3.74
Role Assumption	1	37.69 ***	3.84
	2	41.33 ***	4.26
Consideration	1	41.34 *	3.32
	2	42.20 *	3.07
Production Emphasis	1	31.60 ***	4.46
	2	36.86 ***	4.21
Predictive Accuracy	1	19.42	1.83
	2	19.45	1.58
Integration	1	19.98 **	2.16
	2	20.89 **	2.34
Superior Orientation	1	37.29 ***	3.79
	2	39.77 ***	3.62

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p = .000$

Table 6
Québec principals linguistic group means on the twelve LBDQ subscales
 (N = 213, Group 1 - Québec English-speaking - n = 77,
 Group 2 - Québec French-speaking - n = 136)

LBDQ Subscale	Group	Mean	SD
Representation	1	19.68	2.05
	2	20.20	2.59
Reconciliation	1	19.16 **	2.75
	2	20.10 **	2.11
Tolerance of Uncertainty	1	34.44 **	4.50
	2	35.90 **	3.85
Persuasiveness	1	37.44 **	4.51
	2	39.59 **	3.73
Initiation of Structure	1	38.83	3.82
	2	39.54	3.87
Tolerance of Freedom	1	39.13	4.44
	2	38.53	3.83
Role Assumption	1	38.37 ***	4.40
	2	41.04 ***	3.93
Consideration	1	39.28 ***	4.83
	2	41.37 ***	3.39
Production Emphasis	1	31.01 ***	4.42
	2	36.29 ***	4.66
Predictive Accuracy	1	18.81	2.40
	2	19.26	1.69
Integration	1	18.91 **	2.67
	2	20.11 **	2.63
Superior Orientation	1	36.91 *	3.68
	2	38.12 *	3.78

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p = .000$

Discussion

Interprovincial comparisons

Majorities. The first analysis demonstrated a significant difference between respondents from Ontario majority English-language schools and Québec majority French-language schools in the ways in which they perceive their leadership role, measured on the twelve subscales of the LBDQ. The registered effect of group membership (24%) remained essentially clustered around three of the twelve subscales, namely, *Tolerance of Freedom*, *Role Assumption*, and *Production Emphasis*. Majority language groups' mean scores on other subscales were remarkably similar. Thus, as Figure 1 shows, the two groups exhibit clearly different views of their leadership role only in leadership areas that affect directly the group's exercise of autonomy. Ontario English-language school principals are inclined to allow their staffs more freedom of action than their Quebec French-speaking colleagues. At the same time, they tend to assume their leadership role in a more subdued manner, leaving the task of maintaining a productive school environment to the entire group. For their part, francophone principals in Quebec tend to see it their full responsibility to take charge, expect a high level of performance from teachers, and allow them less independent freedom of action.

In Ontario, the trend towards a decentralized system where local school districts enjoy a large measure of autonomy, most principals have espoused the effective schools philosophy (Leithwood & Avery, 1987, p. 143). The Ontario majority-language school principal profile unveiled here closely resembles the principal's image described by McCall (1986). The Québec majority-language school principal profile is more reminiscent of Drucker's apt manager (1974). It is the profile of a leader bent on ensuring and maintaining employees' output at a high level while at the same time showing an inclination for purposing, assuming full command, and guiding his or her staff. In Québec, the back-to-the-basics movement of the late seventies has also tended to produce more pressure on principals to meet parents' expectations, thereby resulting in a more directive stance on their part (Mellouki, 1990) until recently. Furthermore, the same effect has resulted from the traditional involvement of the Catholic Church in all affairs related to education in the province of Québec even though it has only very recently begun to recede (Sarra-Bournet, 1991).

Minorities. Ontario minority-language school principals (principals of French-language schools) compared with Québec minority-language school principals (principals of English-language schools) exhibited less stability in their mean scores across LBDQ subscales than their majority colleagues. Significant differences (29%) on perceptions of *Tolerance of Uncertainty*, *Production Emphasis*, *Superior Orientation*, *Role Assumption*, and *Consideration* arise between the two cultural groups. However, these differences

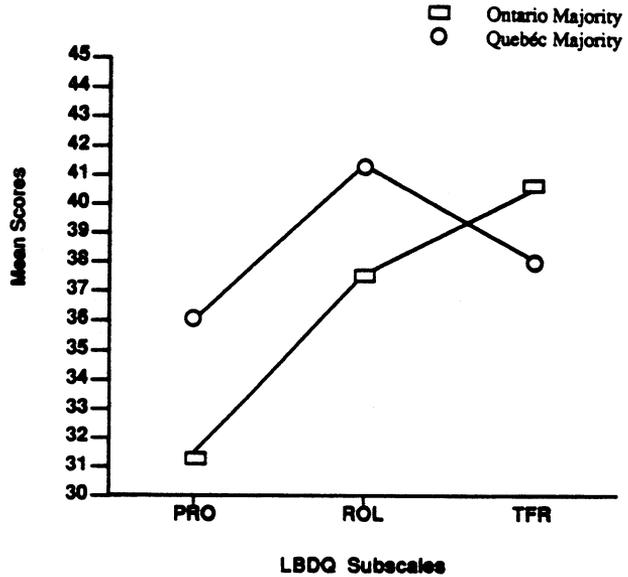


Figure 1
Comparison of Majority Leadership Profiles on Production Emphasis, Role Assumption and Tolerance of Freedom

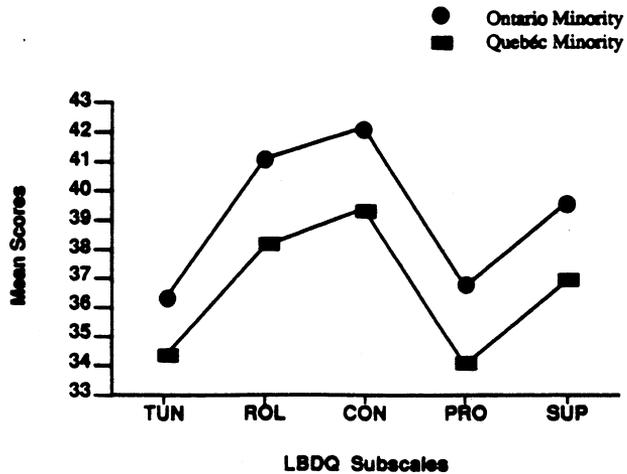


Figure 2
Comparison of Minority Leadership Profiles on Tolerance of Uncertainty, Role Assumption, Consideration, Production Emphasis and Superior Orientation

remain surprisingly stable across those five subscales. Quebec minority-language principals score consistently lower than their Ontario minority counterparts. As a result, a minority-language school principal leadership profile is clearly observable and is offered in Figure 2.

Minority principals rank consideration for their staffs very high. They base their perception of leadership essentially on their concern for others in the school organization. In return, they actively hold on to the reins of power: they are fully in charge. That leaves very little room for staff members to depart from a course set from above. In effect, teachers are expected more to conform than to produce. First and foremost, minority principals look after their staff's needs, then assume full control of the school as they nurture good relations with their superiors. These three elements of their exercise of leadership being dealt with, they show little patience for untimely interruptions or delays and tend to "leave teachers alone." English-speaking minority principals follow exactly the same leadership pattern as their French-speaking colleagues in Ontario, yet they assume it less forcefully.

Intraprovincial comparisons

Ontario. Ontario English-speaking principals (majority) greatly differ (38%) from Ontario French-speaking principals (minority). The strong manager-principal paradigm emerges in the francophone cultural group whereas a more "Theory-Z" style of leadership (George, 1983) is adhered to by anglophone principals. An additional difference is also identified on *Superior Orientation* and strengthens the cultural contrast observed. In this respect, francophone principals in Ontario must often deal with anglophone superiors. It would appear logical that they want to preserve excellent professional relationships with higher-ups in this context if they are to keep their ability to lead their own school as they see fit (Churchill *et al.*, 1984). In the few cases where principals deal with superiors of their own cultural minority group as now happens in those jurisdictions that have recently achieved autonomous francophone governance at the board level, minority principals see it as even more important to align themselves with the upper hierarchy in order to make a success of the new situation.

Quebec. The comparison of principals' leadership profiles within the province of Québec confirms trends noted in interprovincial comparisons. Although the magnitude of the difference between the two cultural groups is somewhat smaller, they still differ (23%) very significantly. Their leadership profiles match each other reasonably well, with French-speaking principals scoring higher than English-speaking principals on *Production Emphasis*, *Role Assumption*, *Persuasiveness*, and *Consideration*. Québec francophone principals seem to combine leadership traits associated in earlier studies (Batsis, 1987) with minority status with other traits more attuned with the management

of their social responsibilities within the school (Kasten *et al.*, 1988). For their part, Québec anglophone principals indicate a willingness to align themselves to some degree with their francophone colleagues as they opt for the same leadership orientations.

On the one hand, they show some affinity with their larger English-speaking cultural group by consistently rating specific leadership domains lower than their francophone colleagues. But on the other hand, they set themselves apart from majority English-language school principals by displaying a clear tendency to align themselves with their majority French-speaking colleagues in their home province. They simply settle for a less forceful leadership style, but move closer to their province's majority in the two areas of teacher productivity and freedom of action. Not only does this observation strongly support the hypothesized contention of a culturally biased perception of school leadership, it also suggests the sociological impact of majority grouping on principal leadership perception that does exist: English language school principals in Québec (the minority group in their province) report leadership aspirations that mirror their larger group's general views; yet, in specific areas, they move in the direction of a closer match with their provincial French-speaking majority.

In contrast, Ontario French-language school principals taking part in this research adhere very closely to their cultural perceptions of academic leadership and thus markedly stand out in their approach to school administration. Their true minority status leads them to a professional exercise of leadership in a school that can only be fundamentally different from schools operated by the cultural majority (Gratton, 1990; Tardif, 1990). In fact, when data from comparisons of both majority and minority principals across Ontario and Québec are graphed into Figure 3, other trends become obvious. While initial differences between the two majority groups dominate, the positioning of the two minority groups' profiles relative to the majority groups' is in itself quite informative. Looking specifically at the areas of concern for employee productivity, assertive leadership, and staff empowerment delineated by the three LBDQ subscales of *Production Emphasis*, *Role Assumption*, and *Tolerance of Freedom*, French-language school principals working in a cultural majority and French-language school principals working in a cultural minority espouse the same view of their exercise of academic leadership.

Implications

In answer to the initial question, this study points to two essential findings.

Firstly, principals in both Ontario and Quebec who exercise their profession in a minority-language situation tend to view their leadership role

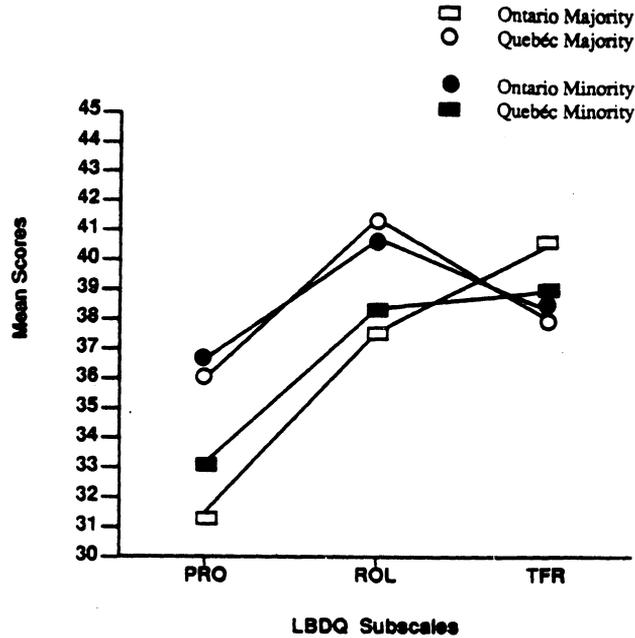


Figure 3
Comparison of Majority and Minority Leadership Profiles on Production Emphasis, Role Assumption and Tolerance of Freedom

in the same manner. For them, leadership is more about an undisturbed, enlightened use of power by the individual in charge, for the common good. This is, in effect, an indication that sociological factors inherent in a minority status do impact on school principals' perception of their leadership role.

Secondly, French-language school principals in both provinces entertain similar views of academic leadership, in spite of the very fact that they function in socio-cultural milieus that are opposite to each other in make-up. Their approach to leadership differs markedly from the one favoured by their English-speaking counterparts. This last group has moved towards the facilitator model. For them, the locus of leadership is in the person of the leader but rather in the actions and energies leaders are able to muster in order to foster leadership from among the group. Cultural factors do influence principals' perception of their leadership role.

Therefore, differences brought to light in this study can be said to revolve around two basic principles. One view of leadership, strongly influenced by sociological factors, attaches leadership to the status enjoyed by individual school principals. This is the provider, benevolent model of vertical

leadership. It characterizes francophones in both Ontario and Quebec, and, to a lesser degree, English-language school principals who are part of a minority. The other view of leadership reflects cultural influences and considers leadership to be a **process** initiated, sustained, and guided by the leader. This is the open model of horizontal leadership. Obviously, these two distinct models, operating side by side in the two most populous provinces will have repercussions on many aspects of education in Ontario and Quebec.

Principals usually function within one realm of cultural endeavour with very little cross-cultural movement. However, the same is not true of teachers who frequently receive their training in one province, move to another area of the country for a few years in order to acquire experience, then return to their home province.

Such is the situation concerning the thousands of French-speaking Québec teachers teaching in French-immersion programs in Ontario where over 105, 000 children attend classes in the other official language (Bernard, 1990). No attention has yet been given to the issue of school administration in those schools involving staffs of the other cultural group.

But of even more concern is the question of development of the French-language school as a viable entity of learning, a real tool supporting the social promotion of an entire section of the Ontario society. "The success of effective school programs depends on a judicious mixture of autonomy for participating faculties and control from central office, a kind of directed autonomy" (Levine, 1991, p. 392). Autonomous governance of French-language schools, a recent development in Ontario offers principals the ways and means to effect change in this direction. Cunningham's recent findings (1991) illustrate this trend. Francophone principals in his study of school organization in Ontario (conducted at the Ontario Ministry of Education's request, also in April 1991) acknowledged their directiveness and dominant role in effecting change in schools. However, at the same time, they indicated they have just begun the implementation of school-based management where staff, parents, and even students share in the decision-making process.

While the strong principal paradigm against which Grady, Wayson, and Zirkel (1989) have already expressed reservations appears to prevail according to the findings of the present study, it has begun to retreat among French-language school principals in Ontario. The French Association of Ontario School Districts (AFCSO) has called for a renewed French school offering "superior quality services in all academic areas, a pedagogy based on interaction where team-work ought to enhance every teacher's role" (Gratton, 1990, p. 21). The historic Rubicon Ontario French-language schools which have crossed toward self-governance present the best hope yet for continued, sustained change in this respect. As Tichy and Devanna (1990) pointed out, "an

organization's culture defines that which people perceive as possible" and the realm of possibilities has now become drastically more open and enticing than it has ever been.

The same question might be asked of the predicament of French-language schools in Québec. However, the very orientation of the whole society in that province toward a distinctly individualist stance drastically different from the one adopted in the rest of the country may paradoxically simplify things. "Empowerment being the collective effect of leadership" (Bennis, 1990, p. 22), the current provincial efforts in support of greatly enhanced autonomy within the Canadian Confederation may offer the Québec academic leadership an excellent opportunity for renewal. It is a fact that education is not the only segment of Québec society that is already thinking in those terms (Sarra-Bournet, 1991). Should such a normal evolution fail to materialize, principals in French-language schools in Québec risk furthering the advances of an elitist system of education not unlike the one that has prevailed in France for centuries. This would not be surprising at all as present school leadership, acting along the parameters identified about participants in this study, would somehow bring about an iatrogenic-like syndrome into their administrative world: elitist leadership breeds elitist leaders.

The base rate obtained in this research should be further refined through similar comparative studies dealing with other bicultural areas of North America and Europe. Leadership profiles that have been examined resulted from self-reporting on the part of participating principals in Ontario and Québec. Other comparative studies should now be conducted, possibly with a smaller sample but involving cross-tabulation with participating principals' staff reports in order that full validation of respondents' answers be taken into account. A study of the level of implementation of effective schools theories and practices should be effected in French-language schools in Ontario and Québec. Educational administration professors there ought to be aware of the impact of cultural group membership on educational leaders. Research should be directed in this field in order to effect a better alignment of proposed leadership training programs.

Conclusions

The present study constitutes another effort in the field of comparative studies in educational administration (Crahay, 1990; Dejnjkova, 1991; Jacquenoud, 1990). As such, data gathered, analyzed, and discussed here offer opportunities for further studies. It is in this light that the following conclusions are formulated.

First of all, Bourdieu and Passeron's (1977) thesis of cultural reproduction has been clearly supported. Principals who took part in this research largely

view their leadership role according to their socio-cultural group membership. Alignment of leadership role perceptions between majority-language school principals and minority language school principals occurs mostly in the province of Québec where group membership permeability is at its lowest, and it is almost nonexistent in the province of Ontario where group membership permeability is at its highest and where the small group of francophone principals does not have any other alternative but to achieve as much intracultural (as opposed to intercultural) alignment as possible in a bid to use it as a defense mechanism against assimilation (Gratton, 1990).

Across provinces, francophone principals in this study have demonstrated a penchant for the strong principal paradigm. According to this view, one who administers a school ought to fully take charge, place high expectations for productivity on teachers, and limit teachers' ability to set their own agendas, while at the same time satisfying their needs for comfort and well-being.

At the other end of the spectrum, anglophone principals in this study offer a concept of principal-facilitator or enabler. They do not systematically monopolize all leadership functions within the school, nor do they impose strict expectations on their teachers or limit their freedom of action. They only want them to meet basic established deadlines. Giving their staff wide latitude for action and decision-making, they tend to hold them responsible for their own actions and minimize uncertainty in this respect by initiating structures at the outset. This is of course a view of educational leadership more congruent with Sergiovanni's (1989) concept of "value-added leadership."

Finally, the different leadership profiles identified in this study directly support Frenette's (1989) review of minority typification in Canada. Even if anglophone principals belong to a *de facto* minority within the confines of the province of Québec, they see themselves as members of the larger English-speaking community in Canada. Their discourse, when in the school principal's leadership role generates an equalizing effect, i.e., we are all part of the same vast society. Contrarily, francophones, especially in the province of Ontario remain akin to a subordinated minority. Their discourse aims at a legitimizing effect. Indeed, Franco-Ontarian principals in this study, more than any other group, displayed a predicament for the trappings of leadership. Becoming a school principal in French-speaking Ontario, and to a lesser extent in Québec, still offers a unique opportunity to exercise power and as such helps bring about more equality between a majority that is in charge in all corners of society and a minority that is striving for recognition.

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