Integrative educational leadership: Foundations, core concepts and principles for practice

Integrative Educational Leadership: Foundations, Core Concepts, and Principles for Practice.

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Integrative educational leadership:
What it is, the ideas that underpin it, and the key principles for practice

Abstract

This article explores the notion of Integrative Educational Leadership, explains the ideas that underpin it and sets out the key principles for practice. Integrative Educational Leadership seeks out, understands, engages with, and holds together the full range of individual and organisational characteristics, capabilities and motivations so that the institution can bring its full authority to the institutional primary task. Integrative Educational Leaders should: work to bring about integration in themselves; aim to develop integration in their teaching colleagues; extend their Integrative Educational Leadership practice to those in the other systems – the students, the administrative staff, parents and other systems in the institution's wider environment; interact with those around them in a way that enables integration; endeavour to create and sustain an inclusive culture where different standpoints/perspectives are valued and included; seek to minimise all social defences; have a clear sense of the institutional primary task; seek to develop a 'holding environment' which works at the personal, inter-personal and the organisational levels; understand the complexity of their leadership environment. (168 words)

Key words

Integrative Educational Leadership, Integration, Individuation, Self-actualisation

Introduction

Schools are very complex institutions due to the high level of interaction between the individuals within them (Hawkins and James, 2017; Gilbride, James, and Carr, 2020; 2023). Those interactions can – and usually do – change those interacting. The organisation is thus in a continual state of flow and movement. We consider that holding together the various and varied players in this continually changing context, so the full strength of the institution can be realised, is important. It requires a particular leadership approach, which in this article we are calling Integrative Educational Leadership. We use the term 'educational' to describe the context for such leadership and also, importantly, because, as we discuss below, Integrative Educational Leadership seeks to educate others in the institution.

In this article, we explore the notion of Integrative Educational Leadership, explain what underpins it and set out the key principles for practice, and give some examples of Integrative Educational Leadership that relate to the principles. As we explain below, the terms integrative and integrated leadership have, perhaps unsurprisingly, been used before in the leadership literature generally. However, the way we are using the term is very different from the way it has been used previously – it has a different theoretical underpinning, and very different intentions. And, importantly, Integrative Educational Leadership is not yet another example of an 'adjectival leadership theory' where a new kind of leadership is built around a particular adjective. It has a much more secure grounding and rationale.

In this article, we intend to: define and explain Integrative Educational Leadership; set out the principles that underpin Integrative Educational Leadership: and provide some examples of Integrative Educational Leadership practice.

Following this introduction, we first briefly review the field of educational leadership, for it is to that field to which we are seeking to contribute. We then go on to review how the term 'integrative leadership' has been used, mostly in the 'non-educational' field. We then define Integrative Educational Leadership, explain what it is, and explore the concepts that underpin it. In the section that follows, we set out and give the rationale for the principles for integrative educational leadership in practice. We then provide some examples of Integrative Educational Leadership practice. A discussion section follows where we consider matters that arise from what we are proposing and issues that need further consideration and analysis. The article ends with some concluding comments.

A brief review of the field of educational leadership

The term 'educational leadership', for Connolly, James and Fertig (2019), is used in two ways. First, it describes those in senior positions in the organisational hierarchy of an educational institution. In England, and elsewhere, this form of use has become widespread. Second, the term is used to describe the practice of leading in an educational institution. This view necessitates interactions with others that motivate them in some way. Connolly James and Fertig (2019) contrast this perspective on educational leadership with educational management which *"entails carrying the responsibility for the proper functioning of a system in an educational institution in which others participate"* (p.504). Carrying this kind of responsibility *"is a state of mind and does not necessitate actions, though it typically and frequently does"*. As soon as those carrying this responsibility act, they influence and are therefore leading. Thus Connolly, James and Fertig (2019) state that "*educational leadership is the act of influencing others in educational settings to achieve goals and thus necessitates actions"*. (p. 515).

We are very aware that the theories and models of leadership in organisations generally are very numerous and diverse (Ladkin, 2010). A wide variety of these models have been applied to educational settings (Bush and Glover, 2014; Leithwood et al., 1999). Connolly, James and Fertig (2019) categorise them as follows.

Leadership theories and the purpose of the influence. These theories include for example, learning-centred leadership (Hallinger, 2009; Southworth, 2003).

Leadership theories that describe the resources for leadership. Leadership theories that describe the resources for leadership include trait theories, see for example Lazaridou (2007).

Leadership theories and the process of leading. Numerous theories address the process of leadership in educational settings (Bush and Glover, 2014), such as ethical leadership (Brown and Trevin˜o, 2006) and sustainable leadership (Hargreaves, 2007). In educational settings, transformational leadership (Bass, 1990) has also been widely advocated as has distributed leadership (Spillane et al., 2001;Marowetz, 2008).

The context for leadership. Over 50 years ago, Fiedler (1964) argued that leadership effectiveness depends on the environment for leadership, the context. As a consequence, a variety of leadership models may be adopted, and the notion of contingency theory emerges in models of leadership, see for example, Tsolka (2020).

Leadership theories and the outcome of the leadership process. An outcome of all the different kinds of leadership process is the way in which people are motivated to think/feel/act in some way. Perspectives on motivation vary but two forms can be distinguished: intrinsic motivation, and extrinsic motivation (Be´nabou and Tirole, 2003; Ryan and Deci, 2000).

We return to this categorisation later in the article in our consideration of Integrative Educational Leadership in the Discussion section.

What is integrative educational leadership?

The use of the term 'integrative leadership'

This sub-section briefly reviews how the term 'integrative' has been used previously in relation to leadership.

'Integrative leadership' as a perspective on leadership practice and a leadership model are not new. Hatala and Hatala (2006) set out their view of integrative leadership seeking to develop the model taking a self-awareness approach focusing on the importance of developing self-awareness to enhance leadership capability. Hatala and Hatala (2006) take a very broad view of integration and set out a wide range of benefits grounding them in existing leadership theories. The theoretical rationale for their perspective on integrative leadership is not made explicit.

The notion of integrative leadership has been used by other authors, for example, Silvia and McGuire (2010), who researched the notion in public sector settings. They contrasted it with leadership in broad networked settings and more hierarchical organisational settings. They stress the importance of integrative leadership for enhancing collaboration. Other authors, such as O'Leary and Vij (2012) and Morse (2010) adopt a similar focus. Very interestingly, Woods (2019) in a discussion of power in schools as organisations explores the role of love as an integrating power, and therefore a means of leadership influence.

Several theorists, for example, Orazi, Turrini and Valotti (2013), seek to draw attention to the difference between integrated leadership, which brings together a range of leadership practices and in that regard resonates with contingency perspectives on leadership (Feidler, 1978), and integrative leadership, which again they consider to be important for collaboration and working with networks. Warwick (2016) similarly develops an integrated leadership model of leadership in higher education settings in the UK.

Importantly, the model of integrative leadership we are presenting here has a different theoretical underpinning and purpose as we explain in the next section and is therefore a very different educational leadership model.

Integrative Educational Leadership

The definition of Integrative Educational Leadership

Integrative Educational Leadership seeks out, understands, engages with, and holds together the full range of individual and organisational characteristics, capabilities and motivations so that the institution can bring its full authority to the institutional primary task.

The foundations of Integrative Educational Leadership

Integrative Educational Leadership is a scaling up of Jung's view on psychic integration where all the aspects of an individual's inner world are brought together and integrated (Stevens, 1994). The outcomes of this process are individuation and self-actualisation, where the individual becomes the best person they can be given where they started and what they have experienced (Stevens, 1994).

Integrative Educational Leadership in practice is thus founded on the nature of the individual leader's inner world (their psyche) and their sense-making capability both of which can change during adulthood (Stevens, 1994; Loevinger, 1976). Central to the development of an individual's self is the integration of apparently incommensurable opposites including: opposite perspectives/desires/orientations - the 'shadow self' in Jungian terms; conscious experience and the unconscious – both personal and collective; the individual's relationship with groups; and motivations to both compete and collaborate.

Integrative Educational Leadership and other perspectives on educational leadership

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the notion of Integrative Educational Leadership resonates with other perspectives on educational leadership. Perhaps the one that has the closest 'connection' is distributed leadership (Spillane et al., 2001; Mayrowetz, 2008). The issue here is the role of integration, which is a fundamental aspect of Integrative Educational Leadership, and the individuation and self-actualisation that results from integration. The distribution of leadership authority may not on its own bring about such integration at individual and organisational levels.

The ideas underpinning culturally-responsive school leadership (Gooden, et al. (2023) are also relevant here. The characteristics underpinning this leadership model are: having an understanding of oppression in a historical sense and the way it informs efforts to achieve equity in the current era; approaches to achieving equity today; making sure schools are inclusive places where all feel welcomed; supporting teachers in providing culturally relevant and responsive teaching; and engaging with the wider community to clarify the meaning of educational justice for its students. Khalifa (2023) make a broadly similar case. Our point here is that Integrative Educational Leadership will help to ensure that schools are inclusive institutions but that it seeks integration which is for us a step further. Also, Integrative Educational Leadership deliberately seeks to integrate those with different perspectives that are not typically embraced by the notion of culture which underpins culturally-responsive school leadership (Gooden, et al., 2023; Khalifa, 2023)

Integration, individuation and self-actualisation

The integration process brings about individuation, a term that Jung used "*to denote the process by which a person becomes a psychological 'individual, that is a separate indivisible unity or 'whole'"* (Jung Collected Works, 9i paragraph, 490, cited in Stevens, 1994). He considered that individuation meant an individual becoming a single homogenous being and embracing their *"incomparable uniqueness"* and becoming *"one's own self"* (Jung Collected Works, 7 paragraph, 266, cited in Stevens, 1994). It is a process of "coming to selfhood or self-realization' (Jung, 1956) It results in self-actualisation. Jung argues that: *"Individuation does not shut one out from the world but gathers the world to oneself"* (Jung Collected Works, 8 paragraph, 432, cited in Stevens, 1994).

For Jung, this process of integration means overcoming the divisions imposed by the parental and cultural/social world. It also entails divesting oneself of *"The false wrappings of the persona"* (Jung Collected Works 7 para. 26, cited in Stevens, 1994), which is the mask we use to present ourselves to others in a way we hope will be acceptable. Integration also requires an abandoning of social defences. Important here is discarding the social defence of splitting and projection (Dunning, James and Jones, 2005) where unacceptable 'opposites' – one's shadow - are projected onto others, who then may become scapegoats. Instead, individuation requires a striving to know one's shadow self and acknowledging it as part of one's inner life including coming to terms with contra-gender personality living within the personal psyche.

We argue that Integrative Educational Leadership can enhance individuals' authority - their legitimate power. It can also enhance the authority of the institution - its legitimate power. Further, it is a significant underpinning of responsible actions by educational leaders and professionals because an integrated inner world brings wisdom, a thoughtful and balanced approach and an inclusive perspective. A central task for the Integrative Educational Leader is to help members of the institution and those closely connected to it such as parents to themselves achieve integration. The process of integration brings about individuation and self-actualisation for the institution and the individuals within it. The school becomes an indivisible unity or 'whole', embracing its 'incomparable uniqueness' and becoming its 'own self'.

Integration and the individual Integrative Educational Leader

Integrative Educational Leadership in practice requires an individuated and integrated inner world and integration between the Integrative Educational Leaders and their environment. Those qualities underpin an authentic desire to bring about integration and individuation in the institution and in individual institution members. It may involve treating all individuals with empathy and understanding, seeking out contrary views and ensuring those perspectives are acknowledged. In that regard, Integrative Educational Leadership reflects the notion of unconditional positive regard (Rogers, 1957), which is a term first used by humanist psychologist Carl Rogers to describe a technique he used in non-directive, client-centred therapy. According to Rogers, it involves showing support and acceptance of a person no matter what that person says or does and enabling others to 'live with' ambiguity and contradiction. The purpose of the educator or therapist working through a person-centred lens is to, over time, help the client to uncover their own solutions (Rogers, Lyon and Tausch, 2013).

An important aspect of Integrative Educational Leadership is its focus on the educational leaders' inner world and the way educational leaders make sense of the world. We are of course aware that many researchers have made a case for the development of school leaders' self-awareness and sense making as a means to their personal and professional growth. For example, Nurul et al. (2017) have explored the role of emotional intelligence, self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management (Nurul et al 2017). Gilbride, James and Carr (2020; 2023) have explored the way school leaders at different stages of sense making endeavour to lead their schools. Importantly, here we are talking about changes in the inner world of the school leader as they themselves and seek to integrate all the aspects of their inner world, support others in that process and create an institution that is fully integrated, individuated and self-actualised. We see this process as conceptually different from matters, such as emotional intelligence, important though they are.

The changing role of the ego in individuation

The changing role of the ego is important in individuation and has significant implications for sense-making, the way individuals make sense of and understand the world. The ego is central in sense-making, consciousness and interaction (Stevens, 1994). In early adulthood, the ego dominates the psyche, understandably so given the tasks typical of that period. In later adult life, the ego takes a lesser role resulting in the attainment of personality integration and higher consciousness (Stevens, 1994).

During adult life, the ego's sense-making capability can change progressing through stages, a process known as adult ego development (AED). The AED stages depict a progression from *'simple to complex, from static to dynamic, and from egocentric to socio-centric to world-centric'* ways of sense-making (Cook-Greuter, 2004, p. 277). The development trajectory moves from 'independence' to 'dependence' to 'inter-independence' (McCauley et

al., 2006). Development through the stages develop increasing awareness of the self in relation to their environment – in relation to their own self-awareness, self-management and capacity to demonstrate compassion and understanding of others (Hy and Loevinger, 1996).

AED brings about a fundamental shift in worldview and enhanced authority but may not occur in everyone. In the earlier stages, the individual's worldview may not capture organisational complexity The individual's own values or external rules tend to dominate. Being able to tolerate incongruence between the inner and outer worlds, and appreciate organisational complexity (Gilbride, James and 2020; Gilbride, James and Carr, 2023) are key features of the later AED stages. The way school principals individually make sense of the complexity of context for their work has significant implications for their practice (James, James and Potter, 2017; Carr, Gilbride and James, 2017).

The importance of the institutional primary task

The institutional primary task features in the definition of Integrative Educational Leadership. We consider it to be an important notion. The institutional primary task is what an organisation must work on if it is to achieve legitimacy and confirm its status as an institution (Bunnell, Fertig and James, 2017). The notion of the primary task has a long history. It was first developed by Rice (1963) who considered it to be *"the task an organization must perform to survive"* (Rice 1963, 17). Work on the institutional primary task is thus an essential activity. For Meyer and Rowan (1977), institutions only survive if those in their environments consider them to be legitimate. It is therefore essential that the task, which is the focus of the purposeful actions of institutional work (Lawrence, Suddaby, and Leca 2006), is viewed as legitimate. Bunnell, Ferig and James (2017) develop and use the term 'institutional primary task' which is in essence what the institution is there to do. The task of integration is to enable the school to be the best it can be in relation to the institutional primary task given all the resources it has.

The importance of providing a containing environment

Integrative Educational Leadership also entails providing a containing environment. Such an environment is particularly important during times of stress, such radical organisational change (Dale and James, 2015). Arguably, it is important for Integrative Educational Leadership as it enables feelings to be expressed and re-owned – and integrated -by those expressing them. For the Integrative Educational Leader providing containment requires that feelings are experienced and understood but importantly are not 'taken in' and, through a process of projective identification, used as a basis for action (Dale and James, 2015). It also entails understanding and working productively with the complexity of the institutional environment and the consequences (Hawkins and James, 2017; Gilbride, James, and Carr, 2020; 2023). In addition it required an understanding of the way that carrying management and professional responsibility conditions an individual's inner world (Connolly, James and Fertig, 2017).

The importance of the way Integrative Educational Leaders interact with others

How school leaders seek to interact with those around them is an important aspect of Integrative Educational Leadership. Their interactions should aim to enhance their own integration and that of those with whom they are interacting. In all interactions, Integrative Educational Leaders should: convey their own sense of integration in a reflective way; show valuing, understanding of those with whom they are interacting, seek to enhance integration of the inner worlds with whom they are interacting. Engaging in dialogue on contentious issues, where the intention is to explore an issue and come to a shared understanding, rather than debating, where the desired outcome is to prove oneself right, is important.

Asking expansive and open questions and indeed realising that there are multiple questions that might be asked is important.

The complexity of schools as institutions

The complexity of schools as institutions results from the high level of interaction between the individuals within them (Hawkins and James, 2017; Gilbride, James, and Carr, 2020; 2023). Those interacting are typically changed by those interactions. The organisation is thus in a continual state of change. Those who teach in schools and colleges are typically very diverse in a number of ways and usually have a strength of personality, which is arguably a feature of their professional status and a necessity given the nature of their roles and responsibilities. Further, those who are part of the wider systems that comprise a 'school as an institution', for example Ofsted, the school inspection service in England (Ofsted, 2024); the local education authority; central government; and of course the parents/carers of the students, will also hold strong and possible differing views on matters relating to the work of a school/college. In short, schools are embedded in complex networks of organizations (see for example Ball and Junemann, 2012).

The key principles underpinning Integrative Educational Leadership

In this section, we set out the key principles that underpin Integrative Educational Leadership practice. We state each principle, say why it is important in Integrative Educational Leadership and give some examples of Integrative Educational Leadership practice. The principles are derived from our analysis in the previous sections.

1. **Integrative Educational Leaders should work to bring about integration in themselves.** Integrative Educational Leaders should embody the notion of integration - for themselves and for their interactions with everyone in the school/college - even in private with their most trusted and closest colleagues. These processes will enable them to become the best leaders they can become in relation to where they started, to bring about their own self-actualisation as people and as educational leaders. Integration and individuation are important in Integrative Educational Leaders because they would be unable to bring about integration in their own organisations without having that personal and world view themselves.

Such integration may not be easy to achieve given what integration seeks to achieve and the demands on the individual Integrative Educational Leader. Being a headteacher can be – and typically usually is – a very demanding occupation and those demands can make it difficult to achieve the kinds of change required by integration. It requires a well-developed sense of awareness and reflection. We would argue that integration requires support of some kind, such as counselling, to facilitate the desired changes. There is a good case for arguing that some kind of supervisory relationship would be beneficial – to help bring about integration and to support all headteachers given the responsibilities they carry.

2. **Integrative Educational Leaders should aim to develop integration in their teaching colleagues.** These processes will seek to integrate not just their leadership and teaching capabilities but other capacities and perspectives. The process of enabling institutional integration necessitates bringing about that process in the individuals that comprise that institution. This principle ensures that the educational/developmental aspect of this mode of leadership is fulfilled.

Integrative Educational Leaders in practice seek out contrary views and ensuring those perspectives are acknowledged. This process may involve treating all individuals with

empathy and understanding. Integrative Educational Leaders recognise, acknowledge and understand what those individuals are experiencing. So at a staff meeting where a difficult issues and plan of action are being discussed, the Integrative Educational Leader may ask, 'Has anyone got any views on the issue and the plan they'd like to share?' Showing acceptance of a person who raises an issue is important: 'That's helpful we'll have a think about that'. Integrative Educational Leadership involves enabling others to 'live with' ambiguity and contradiction. In discussing a complex matter with colleagues, an Integrative Educational Leader may well say, 'Yes alas there is no right or wrong answer here we've just got to do the best we can . . . .'

3. **Integrative Educational Leaders should extend their Integrative Educational Leadership practice to those in the other systems – the students, the administrative staff, parents and other systems in the institution's wider environment.** This principle follows Jung's notion that the process of individuation does not exclude the wider world but gathers it into oneself. Without it the institution created becomes simply concerned with itself.

The Integrative Educational Leader welcomes and indeed seeks out contact with outside organisations/individuals and groups. For example, the headteacher or a member of the school leadership should be ready and available to talk with parents waiting at the school gate before and after school. An open question such are 'How are things?' may start a productive conversation. Integrative Educational Leaders also welcome and facilitate connections between departments and faculties as appropriate. Department/Faculty members are invited to share their experiences in meetings.

4. **Integrative Educational Leaders should interact with those around them in a way that enables integration.** The nature of the Integrative Educational Leader's interactions will reflect their own integration will help those they are working with to develop their own sense of integration. This process in turn will impact integration across the institution.

An Integrative Educational Leader's interactions should convey a sense of empathy and understanding. Importantly, no individual or organisation should be the subject of derision. Such derision is a barrier to integration. Individuals who advocate very different and perhaps unacceptable views are considered to be just that. Similarly, organisations in the school's/college's wider environment that have a challenging task are viewed in a similar way, for example, "Yes I guess being inspected by Ofsted is a bit of a pain, but it's part of our world and we need to accept and work with that". Similarly, the headteacher of a successful school, on hearing that a neighbouring school is struggling in some way integrates any negative feelings, for example of smugness and triumphalism, to reach out to genuinely enquire how they can be of help. In addition, Integrative Educational Leaders use humour cautiously and not to belittle and undermine others and their point of view but to sustain and enhance connection. Integrative Educational Leaders seek to engage in dialogue on contentious issues, endeavouring to come to a shared understanding, rather than debating, where the desired outcome is to prove oneself right. This can be an important aspect of Integrative Educational Leadership. The desired approach is to keep the issue central rather that to win the argument.

5. **Integrative Educational Leaders should endeavour to create and sustain an inclusive culture where different standpoints/perspectives are valued and included.** This principle is important in bringing about integration which leads to the individuation of the institution.

Again the nature of interactions is crucial here. Interactions at all levels should empathic, valuing, kind and considerate.

6. **Integrative Educational Leaders should seek to minimise all social defences.** Such defences are a barrier to integrative practices. The emergence and experience of social defences should be identified, held in check and seen as signals for integrative work.

For example, Integrative Educational Leaders should proactively manage splitting and projection where unacceptable 'opposites' – one's shadow - are projected onto others, who then take them in and may become scapegoats. So they are on the lookout for phrases such as 'We'd be alright if it wasn't for some of those parents, those in my class are a nightmare . . . . (splitting and projection) or 'Its Ofsted fault not ours . . . .' (denial).

7. **Integrative Educational Leaders should have a clear sense of the institutional primary task.** Different educational institutions and systems may have their own definitions of the institutional primary task. Arguably, 'the provision of high-quality education' should feature in any definition of the institutional primary task. The institutional primary task is an important notion because it makes clear 'what the institution is there to do' and thus should condition all the activities in the school, including the process of integration.

   Integrative Educational Leaders should seek to ensure that the institutional primary task frames their interactions with members of staff – in casual conversations and in more formal settings. They should develop their own way of putting it such as 'It's what we're here to do'. Interactions are not centred on competing with others or simply following what the school leaders say, it enable task-based work. For example, an Integrative Educational Leader might choose to end a conversation about an internal organisational matter by saying, 'That's helpful, I'll give it some thought. Meanwhile let's not forget what we're here to do'.

8. **Integrative Educational Leaders should seek to develop a 'holding environment' which works at the personal, inter-personal and the organisational levels.** Such an environment allows feelings to be expressed securely and re-owned (Dale and James 2015). Such a holding environment provides a sense of containment, which enables individuals to experience and share difficult feelings and it provides a secure environment for integration.

Providing a holding environment is particularly important during times of stress, such radical organisational change (Dale and James, 2015). Integrative Educational Leaders need to be especially present and available at these times. They need to be in the staff-room during breaks and lunch-times and to engage with staff. The also need to convey a 'sense of availability' – they are always happy to talk with staff.

9. **Integrative Educational Leaders should understand the complexity of their leadership environment.** That complex context is in a continual state of flow and change, because of the high level of interaction between the individuals in the various systems that comprise the institution. Those individuals will be continually changing which means that the Integrative Educational Leader's work bringing about institutional integration will be a continuous process. Similarly, their own sense of the complexity of their inner world and their personal sense integration will be continually shifting and changing as a consequence of their experience.

School leaders in practice need to know and understand that the context for their leadership work is continually changing. Similarly, their own sense of the complexity of their inner world and their personal sense integration will be continually shifting and changing as a

consequence of their experience. They need to understand that and work with it. One important aspect of organisational complexity is the prevalence of wicked issues. These are issues/problems for which there is no simple solution. They themselves are complex in nature, perhaps with multiple different parties involved, have not arisen in the school/or in anyone's experience before, and for which there is no simple plan for their resolution. When faced with having to solve wicked issues, Integrative Educational Leaders will seek the views of a wide range of members of the institution. They will not try to simplify the issue, only consult with members of the management hierarchy, or rely on their own rules/principles (Gilbride, James and Car, 2023).

Discussion

The various leadership categories identified by Connolly James and Fertig (2017) provide a useful framework for considering the nature of Integrative Educational Leadership.

Leadership theories and the purpose of the influence. The purpose of Integrative Educational Leadership arises straightforwardly from the definition of Integrative Educational Leadership given above. It is to enable the institution to bring its full authority to the institutional primary task'. The reference to the institutional primary task ensures that integration focuses on the institutional primary task, an example of which we have set out above is the provision of high-quality education. The full legitimate power of the institution is brought to bear on its primary task.

Leadership theories that describe the resources for leadership. The key resource for Integrative Educational Leadership is the leader's own sense of integration. It is difficult to see how a leader who does not have the sense of individuation and self-actualisation in the way Jung views it can fully enable the institution to become a fully integrated entity. Integration can arise during the leader's lifetime as they make meaning in a more complex way and as they themselves seek to become individuated and move towards self-actualisation and through the process of adult ego development. Furthermore, development through the stages of adult ego development, through the advancement of self-awareness, strategies for self management and increasingly nuanced understanding of others, that will help them to integrate their own self system with that of others. In that regard, Integrative Educational Leadership is not a trait theory as such but a capability that can develop over time. Educational leaders whose inner world is not fully integrated may resort to denying aspects of themselves they do not like rather than recognising those aspects and bringing them to the fore to be integrated with other aspects of their inner world. They may also create 'bad objects' in the school system, such as particular members of staff, parents or members of the governing board.

Leadership theories and the process of leading. Again, the definition of Integrative Educational Leadership we are discussing provides an insight into the process: Integrative educational leadership seeks out, understands, engages with, and holds together the full range of individual and organisational characteristics, capabilities and motivations. Those practices of 'seeking out, understanding, engaging with, and holding together' are the process of Integrative Educational Leadership. For example, Integrative Educational Leaders would discuss important issues with as many members of staff as possible to ensure that their opinions/views are heard. They would then seek to build those views into any kind of strategy.

The context for leadership. Clearly, the context for the leadership practices of the Integrative Educational Leader will vary considerably and a range of influencing strategies including questioning will be required. As we have discussed, the kinds of conversation Integrative Educational Leaders have with colleagues and those in the school's wider system

and the questions they ask are important in working with a range of contexts. We consider engaging in dialogue to be particularly important. In this dialogic process, the views of others can be heard without such discussions becoming *ad hominen* in nature.

Leadership theories and the outcome of the leadership process. The main outcomes of Integrative Educational Leadership again arise from the definition we have provided above: Integrative Educational Leadership enables the institution to bring its full authority to the institutional primary task. Without integration the work on the institutional primary task is weakened and institution's authority is undermined.

The way Integrative Educational Leadership motivates is a matter for consideration. For the Integrative Educational Leader there is the continual sense that they themselves are developing and becoming more self-actualised generally and in their role through their practice and through their continual reflection on their own inner integration. For those in the institution in its widest sense, their motivation is enhanced by gaining a sense that they are a valued and well-regarded part of something larger than themselves. Further, through Integrative Educational Leadership interactions they gain a sense of their growing individuation and self-actualisation. They are individuals with a strong relationship to others in the system and their perspective on 'educational matters' really does matter. For most teachers that will be highly motivating. Without this sense, teachers and others in the school's wider system such a parents will feel that their views do not matter, are of no consequence and play no part in how the school works. They could begin to feel alienated. This will undermine a school's legitimacy – the school would not be considered to be proper in the way works.

The relationship between integrative leadership and collaboration is an interesting issue worthy of discussion. James et al. (2007) model collaboration in schools, arguing that 'collaborative practice' as they call it requires reflection on the part of those working together to optimise joint working and a clear focus on the primary task – what the institution is there to do. Clearly, integrative leadership should have a central role in collaborative practice, seeking to bring together different perspectives to enhance the capability of the 'collaborating unit'. It will also have a role in ensuring the 'unit' is fully integrated with others in the institution and is not focussed only on its own work.

The question of the limits to integrative leadership is interesting: 'Is it always possible to achieve full integration of all those that comprise the institution?' There clearly must be limits. The teacher who insists on being a contrarian and an outlier to the detriment of the institution or who clearly is not a competent teacher are but two examples. With such individuals other approaches will be needed when all the ways of seeking to integrate them appropriately have not succeeded.

One question that has been raised in the process of producing this article has been 'what could the damage be'. The damage could be within the lethal mutations (Brown and Campione, 1996) that could occur within its implementation. Implementation is a challenge in all school environments, in part due to the complexity inherent within schools (Education Endowment Foundation, 2025). Part of implementation is the professional learning of Integrative Educational Leadership and a clear developmental trajectory which marks out how one develops this capacity within individuals and teams. Whilst such conversation is outside the scope of this article, we invite reflection and further consideration within the academic community around this critical question.

Reviewing the principles for practice we have outlined above, brings to the fore the taxing nature of Integrative Educational Leadership. It is not easy; indeed, it is very demanding in what it asks of the Integrative Educational Leader in terms of their own development and what it asks them to bring about in their institutions. Nonetheless, we are clear that the

benefits are considerable making Integrative Educational Leadership a very worthwhile endeavour. As we have set our earlier, these benefits are likely to include a strengthened sense of individual legitimacy, which is a significant underpinning of responsible actions by educational leaders and professionals. The process of integration can also bring about individuation and self-actualisation for the institution and the individuals within it. The institution becomes an indivisible 'whole'. In so doing it embraces its 'incomparable uniqueness' and becoming its 'own self'. Arguably, principals who are 'experts' in Integrative Educational Leadership will display this enhanced sense of authority – legitimate power - in their role when compared to those who are new to the role. This enhanced authority may reflect the distinctions between novice and expert leaders, which some researchers, for example, Leithwood and Steinbach (1995) and Brenninkmeyer and Spillane (2008) have drawn attention to.

Finally, reflecting on the nature of Integrative Educational Leadership, we are taken back to two notions: that of 'unconditional positive regard' (Rogers, 1957) and Woods' (2019) idea of love as an integrating power. Whether unconditional positive regard is possible in relationships with teaching colleagues and those in the school's/college's wider systems but arguably, it is a notion to be worked with. As regards the notion of love as an integrative power in schools as organisations discussed by Woods (2019), there are clear resonances between the principles and the purpose of Integrative Educational Leadership and the nature of love, especially as an integrative force.

Concluding Comments

In this article, we have defined and discussed the nature of Integrative Educational Leadership, the ideas that underpin it and the principles for practice. We have also discussed Integrative Educational Leadership as a form of leadership and its relationship with other ideas. We invite fellow scholars to explore and critique the idea of Integrative Educational Leadership and invite them to undertake reflections based on their specialisms within this domain – what does this means for professional development, for how we conceptualise outcome generation and as a way of understanding problem solving within complexity. We look forward to their contributions.

Finally, we wish to pay tribute to the lead author, Professor Chris James, who passed away in the final stages of completing this article. It has been honour to complete this work, which was so close to Chris's heart. His insightful contributions, unwavering dedication to pushing the boundaries of educational leadership and the generous, supportive way he looked after others has had a profound impact on so many. He is deeply missed, and his legacy lives on in both the ideas and people he has shaped for the better.

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