Forecasting Leadership in Higher Education: Distributed Leadership, Motivation, and Evidence-based Leadership

Elvis C. Foster, PhD
Associate Professor of Computer Science
Department of Computer Science,
Keene State College, Keene, NH 03435

Abstract

Leadership in higher education has been a focus and discussion for a long time and will no doubt continue to be. One possible reason for this is that as society changes in its expectations, demands, and constraints, institutional leadership comes under more pressure to adjust to these changes and demands. Failure to make appropriate adjustments in leadership could potentially result in negative repercussions in related institutions. This paper examines leadership in higher education from three specific perspectives — distributed leadership, motivation, and evidence-based leadership. This inductive study aims to identify common themes and challenges in these specific areas. This is done through examination and analysis of the existing related literature in order to formulate a frame of reference and accurate perspective. This information is then used to propose a dynamic institutional leadership framework, covering distributed leadership, evidence-based motivation, and evidence-based leadership, which can then be applied to any institution of higher learning.

The paper advances through four sections. Section 1 provides an introduction to related topics of distributed leadership, evidence-based motivational strategies, and evidence-based leadership. The section then provides an overview of a proposed dynamic institutional leadership framework that connects these three components. Section 2 provides a more detailed literature review of the three related areas of distributed leadership, motivation, and evidence-based leadership. Section 3 describes the proposed dynamic institutional leadership framework that consists of three components — a distributed leadership component, an evidence-based motivation component, and an evidence-based leadership component. Finally, section 4 includes a summary and a brief discussion of possible future related empirical studies.

Keywords: Leadership; Higher Education; Evidence-based Leadership; Distributed Leadership; Motivation

Elvis C. Foster is Associate Professor of Computer Science at Keene State College, New Hampshire. He holds a Bachelor of Science (BSc) in Computer Science & Electronics, as well as a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Computer Science from the University of the West Indies, Mona Jamaica. He also has research interests in related areas of Business Administration & Management.

1. Introduction

Leadership in higher education in the 21th century has become much more demanding and dynamic than in the past. The spectrum of challenges includes enrollment management, human resource management, financial management, fundraising, development, academic administration, technology, safety, to name the main broad areas. Additionally, societal expectations have changed in the face of increasing costs and heightened competition. Due to these demands, higher education leadership faces significant challenges to be more proactive in the approach taken to institutional problems. In order to confront some of these challenges, it is necessary for institutions of higher learning to more fully embrace and implement emerging theories such as distributed leadership, evidence-based (i.e. result-oriented) motivational strategies, and evidence-based leadership. This paper advances such a strategy via its proposal of a dynamic institutional leadership framework that connects these three components.

1.1 Background on Distributed Leadership

Leadership in higher education is an extremely dynamic and challenging field of work. Getting academics to agree on diverse issues is not always easy. For this and other reasons, the principle of *distributed leadership* (also called *shared leadership* and *team leadership*) has been proposed as a means of improving the leadership effectiveness and the achievement of shared objectives. Thanks to the contribution of many scholars in the past, the theory of distributed leadership has developed gradually over a period of decades. One of the earliest triggers came from the work of Mary Parker Follet's (1924) introduction of law *of the situation* — which argues that in a group, the person most qualified to lead an initiative is the person who is most knowledgeable on that particular matter, and not necessarily the overall group leader. The Vroom and Yetton (1973) theory of participative decision making, and the Manz and Sims (1980) concept of self-leadership, also played important milestones in the journey. More significantly, between the 1970s and the 1990s a groundswell in research led to the emergence of the concept and theory of shared leadership. In this regard, the work of Estela Bensimon and Anna Neumann (1993) deserves mention. This book makes a strong argument for a paradigm shift from the more traditional individualistic leadership to a more team-oriented leadership, citing among others, the promise of increased accountability and more creative problem-solving, as potential benefits.

In more recent times, scholars such as James Spillane, Richard Halverson, and John Diamond (2003) have been instrumental in promoting the agenda of distributed leadership. According to this introductory paper on the topic, distributed leadership involves harnessing the contributions of other leaders in the organization. The paper introduces the theory of distributed leadership as a way of more effectively leading the operations of a school. Using the school as a frame of reference, the paper places emphasis on the principal in creating an environment for the success of students. In support of this proposition, the authors cite several sources including Rosenholtz (1989), as well as Hallenger and Beck (1996). The paper proposes a distributed leadership model based on four central themes — "*leadership tasks and functions*, *task-enactment*, *social distribution of task-enactment*, and *situational distribution of task-enactment*" (Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2003, p. 5). Additionally, the paper places responsibility on the leader implementing an organizational structure that has shared responsibilities built in. The paper describes the concept of a leadership function being a broad area of operation that typically includes various tasks. Task enactment is described as the various planned activities for the realization of each functional responsibility. Social distribution of task-enactment relates to incorporating and obtaining buy-in and participation from members of the team. Situational distribution of task-enactment simply involves the application of contingency theory (Fiedler, 1973) to the social distribution of tasks as well as the timing, complexity, and context for institutional activities (Scott, 1995). Finally, the paper argues that while classical leadership theories focus on what leaders do while ignoring why and how they do carry out their functions, their proposed distributed leadership theory avoids that gap by focusing on why and how school principals carry out their functions. Spillane, who is regarded as one of the main proponents of distributed leadership theory, elaborates more fully on this topic in two subsequent books (Spillane,2006; Spillane & Diamond, 2007). However, of more pertinence to the current paper is his incorporation of contingency theory into distributed leadership theory; this recognition of contingency theory serves as a useful clue in the quest for a dynamic leadership framework.

Distributed leadership theory continues to develop, and has therefore attracted several other researchers including Kezar (2012); Kezer, Carducci, and Contreras-McGavin (2006); Eckman and Kelber (2009); Pearce and Conger (2003); and Boldon, Petrov, and Gosling (2008). Section 2 revisits these contributions in more detail.

Reflection on principles of distributed leadership as described, leads one logically to contemplate the following question: Given the scope, range, and magnitude of problems faced by institutions of higher learning, might it be a good idea for these institutions to develop and implement more distributed leadership models for their respective environments? This paper argues in favor of this strategy, and proposes a framework to encourage discussion and transition toward this objective. However, in order for this to become reality, institutional motivation will be of crucial and paramount importance.

1.2 Background on Motivation Theory

The theory of motivation is not new to the academic literature. The contemporary motivation models build on the work of 20th century scholars such as Abraham Mazlow (1943, 1954, 1971), Burrhus Skinner (1953), Douglas McGregor (1960), Victor Vroom (1964, 1965), and Fredrick Herzberg (see Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959, 1993). Sandra Graham and Bernard Weiner (n. d.) provide an excellent summary of the history and various theories of motivation.

Of more importance to the current research is the applicability of motivation theories to institutional leadership at the tertiary level. Surprisingly, it appears that not much work has been done in this area. In the area of student performance, Brewer (2010) submits that resilience is an important motivational factor in determining student success in higher education. Taking a slightly wider perspective, McCollum and Kajs (2009) report that based on the findings of their studies, there is a strong correlation between *self-efficacy* and *goal orientation*, when these motivational theories are evaluated among school administrators as well as students. Siddique, Aslam, Khan, and Fatima (2011) take an even wider, more generic perspective in proposing a connection among the composite variables of leadership, motivation, and institutional effectiveness. Since these studies factor into the shaping of a leadership framework for the future, they are further explored in section 2.

1.3 Background on Theory of Evidence-based Leadership

The theory of *evidence-based management* (EBM) owes its current attention in part to the work of Denise Rousseau (2006). This introductory paper presents evidence-based management as an alternative to the traditional approach to management, which relies mainly on experience. Evidence-based management (EBM) is defined as the act of "translating principles based on best evidence into organizational practices" and decisions (p.256, 258). In a subsequent paper by the same primary author (Rousseau & McCarthy, 2007, p. 84), she clarifies that "EBM means managerial decisions and organizational practices informed by the best available scientific evidence." The paper cites success stories in evidence-based policing (see Sherman, 2002) as well as evidence-based medicine (see Sackett, Straus, Richardson, Rosenberg, & Haynes, 2000). However, it falls short of recognizing successful application of EBM in other professional disciplines such as marketing and computer science. Finally, the paper tracks the origin of the concept of EBM back to Chester Barnard (1938), traces the development of the literature on the topic to the current time, and makes a compelling argument for more commitment to its practice both in the corporate environment as well as in institutions of higher learning. Rousseau is regarded as a leading voice for EBM. Her work has been cited by many other scholarly works including (Reay, Berta, & Kohn, 2009), which calls for more empirical research to provide stronger supporting evidence for EBM.

Since its introduction, interest in EBM continues to increase. For instance, the article by Reay, Berta, and Kohn (2009) provides a scathing critique of EBM; Briner, Denyer, and Rousseau (2009) combine forces to produce a strong rejoinder to Reay, et. al., and a stout defense of EBM; Rowley (2012) embraces EBM, and encourages increased application in the field of marketing; Tort-Martorell, Grima, and Marco (2011) call for a wider acceptance or internal data as part of the evidence that drives EBM. These contributions are further scrutinized in section 2.

Within the context of a tertiary institution, might it be a good idea for institutions of higher learning to develop and implement evidence-based leadership, not just in their curricula, but as a mode of operation? This current paper asserts that it is, and proposes a framework toward the achievement of this objective.

1.4 Challenge and Opportunity

What appears to be absent from the existing literature on leadership in higher education is a coherent resource that connects emerging theories of leadership with motivation, in a forward-looking manner that provides direction for the future. This void is concerning; at best, it leaves a wide scope for uncertainty and confusion in institutional leadership; at worst, it can lead to ineffective leadership and consequential failure. This current paper meets this challenge by proposing a dynamic institutional leadership framework that connects distributed leadership, evidence-based motivation, and evidence-based leadership in a coherent whole. The framework clearly outlines the following: a distributed leadership model for higher education institutions; an evidence-based motivation model identifying salient motivation strategies to be pursued and factors to be monitored; an evidence-based leadership model for higher education institutions. This proposed framework is informed by an extensive review of the related literature (in the upcoming section). From this literature review, the paper identifies common themes, and then proposes the dynamic leadership framework, followed by some concluding remarks.

2. Review of the Related Literature

In order to build a theoretical framework for leadership in higher education (covering distributed leadership, evidence-based motivation, and evidence-based leadership), it is necessary to examine the existing related literature, with a view to gleaning essential details that will then be applied to the model. This begins with a more focused look on distributed leadership, and then moves to the other areas of motivation and evidence-based leadership.

2.1 Distributed Leadership

Kezar (2012) supports the theory of distributed leadership as espoused by James Spillane (2006) and several other contributors (for example, see Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2003). Kezar embraces Spillane's definition of distributed leadership as harnessing the contributions of other leaders in the organization. She then goes on to introduce the concept of *convergence* as "the joining of efforts between grassroots leaders and those in positions of authority" (Kezar, 2012, p. 726). The idea is to encourage grass-root initiatives that enlist support from the formal leadership of the educational institution; on the flip side, institutional leadership is encouraged to create the environment that embraces collaboration and participation from its stakeholders. Kezar strengthens her argument for convergence by pointing out that studies conducted provide evidence that top-down initiatives alone are not always effective due to lack of cognitive complexity in developing solutions, lack of buy-in, and risk of putting all authority in a small number of people — an observation corroborated by Pearce and Conger (2003). The paper does not identify any specific critics or criticism of the concept of convergence. However in a proactive way, it addresses possible conflicts by discussing concepts of "tempered radicals" as grass-root leaders working upwards to meet institutional leadership, and "distributed leadership" working downwards to meet the needs of team members (Kezar, 2012, p. 727 – 732). Finally, it appears that more empirical evidence is needed to strengthen the case for convergence from both directions. Despite this limitation, Kezar's paper represents a significant contribution to the conversation about distributed leadership in institutions of higher learning.

As a special case of distributed leadership, the theory of *co-leadership* has become topical among secondary school principal across the United States (Eckman & Kelber, 2009). Co-leadership is really an implementation case of the broader theory of distributed leadership and is therefore completely reconcilable with it (see Gronn & Hamilton, 2004). Given the challenges faced in higher education, perhaps it may be time to also consider applying this to that domain as well. The job of principal entails being "legal expert, health and social services coordinator, fundraiser, public relations consultant, parental involvement expert, and security officer, who is technologically savvy, diplomatic, with top-notch managerial skills, whose most important duty is the implementation of instructional programs, curricula, pedagogical practice, and assessment models" (National Association of Secondary School Principals, 2001, p.1). Moreover, research done by Pierce (2000) and Lashway (2006) suggest that it is virtually impossible for a typical human being to master all the requirements of the job, and that it is perhaps time to consider redefining the job of a principal. While the object of the co-leadership study was high schools, it can be argued that leadership in higher education is even more demanding. It would therefore seem appropriate to assume that whatever the merits that stem from distributed leadership and/or co-leadership in a high school are, they would also apply (not necessarily in similar proportions) in the scenario of an institution of higher learning.

In an earlier work, Kezar and her colleagues note that there is an observed trending away from individualistic leadership of the past to a more collaborative higher education leadership in the 21st century (Kezar, Carducci, & Contreras-McGavin, 2006, p. 101 – 136). They state:

> In more recent years, effective leaders are seen as individuals who work for the shared good of their organizations by collaborating with others and sharing power, balancing their orientation to people and tasks, and working to interpret and make meaning in the organization. (p.102)

They forward the observation that institutional presidents who are perceived as successful are the ones who exemplify the institution's socially constructed profile. They also submit that while institutional structures favor a more transactional approach to leadership, the more successful leaders are the ones who also dare to be transformational. They hasten to point out, however, that the transformational leadership approach is not always applicable. Finally, the authors make the following noteworthy statement: "Leaders are more successful if they develop networks (key individuals with expertise or resources) to guide the leadership process. Networks become increasingly important as organizations change." (p.114). This observation suggests that an important feature of distributed leadership is the promotion and maintenance of healthy relationships with peers and team members so that they can be called upon when needed.

The work by Craig Pearce and Jay Conger (2003) corroborates with the observation that distributed leadership involves building healthy relationships with peers and team members. Entitled "*Shared Leadership*," the book presents the foundation for the theory of shared leadership:

> We define shared leadership as a dynamic, interactive influence process among individuals in a group for which the objective is to lead one another to the achievement of group or organizational goals or both. The influence process involves peer, or lateral, . . . upward or downward hierarchical influence. (p.1)

The book traces the gradual development of shared leadership theory, starting with Mary Parker Follet's (1924) introduction of law of the situation, through the Vroom and Yetton (1973) theory of participative decision making, and the Manz and Sims (1980) concept of self-leadership, to the current era. According to the authors, shared leadership has three important characteristic features — the involvement of people at all levels of the organization, social interaction among team members, and learning among team members. They present a shared leadership model that involves the integration of the following: vertical as well as lateral leadership; leadership styles including directive, transactional, transformational, and empowering leadership; team characteristics; task characteristics (as a moderating factor); team responsiveness and effectiveness (the dependent variable). The book then methodically presents theoretical frameworks and/or discussions for various aspects of shared leadership, such as shared cognition, self-leadership, and teamwork. Four factors are identified as being critical to the success of shared leadership — where shared leadership originates, different roles played by team members, selection of leadership teams, and working together. It ends with a critique of the theory, followed by a discussion of future research opportunities. This book clearly qualifies as a seminal work on the topic. One area of possible criticism related to the proposed leadership framework. The selection of four leadership styles as part of the shared leadership framework appears to be rather arbitrary. Indeed, it appears that shared leadership is a call for pragmatism. As such, one would expect the inclusion of contingency leadership (Fiedler, 1973; Hersey, 1985) as part of the framework.

In a more recent research, Richard Bolden, Georgy Petrov, and Jonathan Gosling (2008) also propose a framework for higher education leadership. Their article proposes a multi-layered leadership framework for higher education institutions, covering five areas of perspective — personal, social, structural, contextual, and developmental. This model was constructed based on the findings of a qualitative survey involving 152 interviews over 12 universities in the United Kingdom (UK). The salient points of the findings are as follows: (a) Structural: There is a tendency towards distributed leadership. (b) Structural: Budget holders wield disproportionate power within the institution. (c) Structure: People embrace the structural constraints. (d) Personal: In times of transition, inspirational leadership is most desirable. (e) Social: Team members like to build social networks. (f) Social: Informal leaders sometimes hold significant influence in the institution. (g) Developmental: Despite initial resistance to academic leadership, many enjoy the opportunity for increased influence. (h) Developmental: There is a close interdependence between individual development and corporate development. (i) Context: Context is important in influencing behavior.

The literature suggests that in higher education institutions across the globe, people are latching onto the concept of distributed leadership. While there remains a paucity of empirical studies (such as Timperley, 2005) to support the theory, there is an abundance of qualitative evidence in its favor.

2.2 Motivation and Goal Achievement

Since leadership by definition, is the act of influencing others to work towards the achievement of desirable ends (Spillane & Diamond, 2007; Pearce & Conger, 2003), it is virtually pointless to engage in a discourse on the topic without including a discussion on motivation. Out of recognition of the importance of the role that motivation plays in institutional leadership, McCollum and Kajs (2009) conducted a study of the impact of two contemporary motivation theories on the success of school leaders. According to the resultant paper, ability is not enough for the achievement of goals; motivation is needed. Two motivation theories — *self-efficacy* and *goal orientation* — are instrumental in explaining the achievement of school administrators. Self-efficacy is defined as one's belief in his/her "capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required" (Bandura, 1986, p. 396). Goal orientation relates to a set of beliefs about one's defined goals (Woolfolk Hoy & Hoy, 2006). McCollum and Kajs (2009) developed an instrument called the School Administrator Efficacy Scale (SAES) to measure the self-efficacy of school administrators. The SALES defines the following eight dimensions of efficacy for: (1) Instructional Leadership and Staff Development; (2) School Climate Development; (3) Community Collaboration; (4) Data-based Decision Making Aligned with Legal and Ethical Principles; (5) Resource and Facility Management; (6) Use of Community Resources; (7) Communication in a Diverse Environment; (8) Development of a School Vision. Moreover, an information gathering instrument was developed and has been used for measuring the efficacy of school administrators. Additionally, four goal orientations are defined — mastery-approach, performance-approach, mastery avoidance, and performance avoidance. Empirical evidences suggest that the more efficacious an educational leadership student or school leader is, the more likely he/she will be successful in his/her pursued activities (McCollum, Kajs, & Minier, 2006a, 2006b; McCollum & Kajs, 2007a). The evidence also suggests that one's goal orientation tends to influence his/her engagement in chosen activities (Meece, Blumenfeld, & Hoyle, 1988). Also, McCollum and Kajs (2009) submit that based on the empirical evidence, there is a positive correlation between several self-efficacy factors and the goal orientation factors of the mastery-approach and the performance-approach. These findings seem to coincide with the conventional wisdom that preparation and positive outlook often act as precursors to success.

Of equal if not more importance to the current research is the connection between motivation and leadership, as articulated in the paper by Siddique, Aslam, Khan, and Fatima (2011). This paper proposes a conceptual framework that connects the composite variables of leadership, motivation, and institutional effectiveness; the authors argue that based on their extensive literature review, heretofore, the three variables had not been linked in the academic literature. The model suggests that leadership influences motivation, which in turn affects institutional effectiveness. Organizational effectiveness parameters defined by the paper were drawn from the work of Cameron (1978, 1986) to include "students' development, effective management and leadership of academic organization, faculty satisfaction, quality of teaching, university culture, environmental impact, parental involvement, acquisition of recourses and their efficient usage" (Siddique, Aslam, Khan, & Fatima 2011, p. 732). Motivation criteria as defined by the paper, include intrinsic factors (such as job tasks, career advancement or promotion, increased responsibilities, recognition by peers, and autonomy), and extrinsic factors (such as salary, working conditions, relationships at work, and training). Next, the paper draws on House (2004, p. 15) to define leadership as "art to instigate and motivate followers so they can strive hard toward attainment of specific objectives" (Siddique, Aslam, Khan, & Fatima, 2011, p. 733). Important institutional leadership criteria identified are administrative leadership, addressing stakeholder needs, educational leadership, research leadership, motivational leadership. The authors argue that their proposed framework is necessary since heretofore, there had been no articulated theory that unified the three above mentioned composite variables. A cursory review of the literature on leadership reveals one article connecting motivation to organizational effectiveness (Manzoor, 2012). This observation corroborates with Karagoz and Oz (2008) to highlight the paucity of research on the effectiveness of leadership in higher education. This, Siddique and colleagues paper point out, is due to the difficulty of defining organizational effectiveness, a problem eventually solved by (Cameron, 1978, 1986). Finally, the paper states that more research may be required to refine the model in the future. Moreover, it appears that the constituent criteria for the various components of the framework are likely to vary from one institution to another. The paper represents a significant starting point toward developing an institutional leadership effectiveness model for higher education. However, the credibility of the framework could be significantly strengthened by some empirical evidence of it veracity.

It must also be noted that there are well-known motivational strategies that have been used over the past few decades, some to great effect and others to mixed results. Among these strategies are the following: management by objectives (MBO); employee recognition programs; employee involvement programs (including participative management, representative participation, quality circles, and employee stock ownership plans (ESOPs)); job redesign and scheduling programs (including job rotation, job enlargement, job enrichment, flextime, job sharing, and telecommuting); variable pay programs; skill-based pay plans; flexible benefits (Capella University, 2005, chap. 6). Which of these programs are applicable to higher education, and which ones are not? For the most part, this remains an open question that is subject to speculation.

What becomes evident from contemplation of the existing literature is that the time is perhaps opportune for institutions of higher learning to start pursuing the development and implementation of strategies that recognize and exploit the nexus between leadership and motivation. Moreover, given the scope, range, and magnitude of problems faced by institutions of higher learning, it seems a good idea for institutions of higher learning to develop and implement their own evidence-based motivation model. The proposed framework should serve as a starting point for discussion and movement in this direction.

2.3 Evidence-based Leadership

Institutional leadership often involves making informed decisions based on available information. Consequently, the emerging theory of evidence-based management (EBM) becomes germane. Following on from her work done in Rousseau (2006), Denise Rousseau joins with Sharon McCarthy to make an even stronger argument for EBM in one of her subsequent expositions on the theory (Rousseau & McCarthy, 2007). Referring to EBM, they state:

> It can reduce the use of ineffective management practices while making effective approaches more widespread. Using evidence makes it possible for well-informed managers to develop substantive expertise throughout their careers as opposed to the faddish and unsystematic beliefs today's managers espouse. (p.84)

This clarification underscores that the purpose of EBM is to replace guesswork in management practices with more informed decision making. The paper further argues that since most business issues are generic, they can be documented so managers can be more informed on best practices for treating these issues — a view that is consistent with that of seminal management scholar Peter Drucker (1966). Finally, the paper proposes that teaching should be done from an evidence-based perspective, and outlines the following six fundamental principles to be followed: (a) focusing on principles where the science is clear; (b) developing decision awareness in professional practice; (c) diagnosing underlying factors related to decisions; (d) contextualizing knowledge related to evidence being used; (e) developing evidence-based decision supports; (f) being prepared to access new evidence. In reading the paper, one may be tempted to come away thinking that all contemporary managers are misguided and in need of enlightenment on EBM. What is unmistakable however, is that Rousseau has done extensive work on this topic, and is passionate about it.

The apparent promotion of EBM by its proponents has received mixed reactions from the academic and management communities. There has been some positive reaction as well as some blowback. After a very comprehensive research and analysis of existing literature on EBM, Trish Reay, Whitney Berta, and Melanie Kazman Kohn (2009) have made three significant observations on the topic: Firstly, they note that the concept of EBM dates back to the work of Conant (1948) and Drucker (1955, 1966). They argue that the concept of EBM is being practiced in a number of areas of management not recognized by Rousseau and her colleagues. This, they observe, has caused some negative reactions to the revised promotion of EBM. Secondly, there is substantial literature on EBM but most of it is advocacy without empirical evidence of its effectiveness. Most of the articles espouse opinions that are not substantiated by evidence. This view is also supported by Arndt and Bigelow (2007). Finally, the existing literature on EBM provides no evidence that its practice is efficacious. These arguments suggest that more empirical research needs to be done on the effectiveness and efficacy of EBM.

In a rejoinder to Reay, Berta, and Kohn (2009), Rob Briner, David Denyer, and Denise Rousseau (2009) provide a more refined definition of EBM:

> Evidence-based management is about making decisions through the conscientious, explicit, and judicious use of four sources of information: practitioner expertise and judgment, evidence from the local context, a critical evaluation of the best available research evidence, and the perspectives of those people who might be affected by the decision. (p.19)

This revised definition identifies the four essential elements of EBM as emphasized in the article — practitioner experience and judgment, preference/values of stakeholders, external evidence, and organizational context. The best decisions are made at the point where these four elements intersect. The article also provides the following clarifications about EBM: (a) EBM fundamentally is something performed by practitioners, not scholars. (b) EBM is a family of practices, not a single rigid formulaic method of making organizational decisions. (c) Scholars, educators, and consultants can all play a part in building the essential supports for the practice of EBM. (d) Systematic reviews (SRs) are a cornerstone of EBM (p.19 – 20). The authors cite several examples of EBM being successfully implemented, particularly in the health services industry (Kovner, Elton, & Billings, 2005; Lemieux-Charles & Champagne, 2004), where critical decisions about health care necessarily rely of supporting empirical evidence. Finally, they skillfully make the argument that EBM is about logic and common-sense, stating powerfully that the paucity of certain kinds of evidence (such as one will find in traditional empirical research articles) for the application of EBM, "does not mean that incorporating relevant and reliable evidence will not enhance decision making" (Briner, Denyer, & Rousseau, 2009, p.23). In a subsequent article, they also show that EBM has been and is being applied to the discipline of industrial-organizational (I-O) psychology in developing motivational strategies and responding to employee needs (Briner, Denyer, & Rousseau, 2011).

The argument that EBM is about logic and common sense; it is a powerful one that should make the concept increase in popularity and acceptance in the business arena and academic community alike. Apparently, the emerging theory has caught the attention of Jennifer Rowley (2012); she attempts to encourage its adoption in the field of marketing. Her paper starts by recognizing the definition of EBM as given by Collins, Denyer, and Turnbull (2008): "EBM can be construed as making better decisions by integrating managerial expertise with the conscientious, explicit and judicious use of best evidence in making decisions whilst taking into account the perspectives of those people who might be affected by them" (Collins, Denyer, & Turnbull, 2008, p. 2). This definition, Rowley observes, should help bridge the gap between research and practice, thereby quelling the longstanding concern about the limited impact that management research appears to have on practice, as expressed in (Denyer & Tranfield 2006). This definition also corroborates with the earlier-stated definition from

Briner, Denyer, and Rousseau (2009, p. 19). Rowley goes on to note that the discipline of marketing is perfect for the application of EBM: "There is well-established recognition of the importance of marketing research as a process and a collection of techniques through which managers and marketers gather intelligence about their customers, competitors and marketplaces" (Rowley, 2012, p.523). She then proceeds to outline and discuss 10 strategies for advancing EBM in marketing. The strategies are: (1) Embrace professional and collaborative programs. (2) Understand the role of the practitioner-scholar. (3) Create and promote evidence-based culture. (4) Promote collaboration and co-production of marketing knowledge. (5) Understand the use of knowledge and evidence in marketing actions. (6) Emphasize research design and method selection. (7) Emphasize selection of research topics. (8) Emphasize systematic reviews. (9) Promote professional bodies and practitioner resources. (10) Make use of academic journals.

The concept of EBM is emerging to be a new management theory that has generated much dialogue both embracing it as well as being skeptical of it. As stated in Briner, Denyer, & Rousseau (2009), there abounds some misconception among the skeptics as to what EBM espouses. This is evident from the work of Tort-Martorell, Grima, and Marco (2011), which gives the impression that EBM focuses primarily on information that is external to an organization in order to promote decision making within the organization; to a significantly lesser extent, the work of Reay, Berta, and Kohn (2009) also conveys this impression. To the contrary, as clarified by the leading architects of the emerging theory (Rousseau & McCarthy, 2007; Briner, Denyer, & Rousseau, 2009), and corroborated in Rowley (2012), EBM encompasses four important information components into the decision making process, namely, external evidence, internal evidence (in the form of organizational context), stakeholder preference, and sound judgment based on experience. One obvious implication here is that much more education and research about EBM are needed before the theory becomes fully accepted as a mainstream management theory. Institutions of higher learning should be at the forefront of this research and education, hence this research.

3. Observed Themes and Proposed Dynamic Leadership Framework

The literature on higher education leadership suggests that distributed leadership, motivation, and evidence-based management are related issues that will likely continue to enjoy widespread popularity in the academic community. Consequently, this paper proposes a dynamic institutional leadership framework that consists of three components — a distributed leadership component, an evidence-based motivation component, and an evidence-based leadership component.

3.1 The Distributed Leadership Component

The distributed leadership component is based on six fundamental principles — convergence, pragmatism, social engagement, human capital investment, comprehensive scope, and relevance. The first principle of the distributed leadership component is convergence. This means a bidirectional flow of collaboration: Institutional leaders should enlist the engagement of team members, and non-leaders should seek to harness leadership support for their creative initiatives. In other words, the principles of top-down and bottom-up convergence should abound (Kezar, 2012; Pearce & Conger, 2003; Spillane, 2006). Next is the principle of pragmatism. The literature confirms that no single leadership approach is adequate for all scenarios. Among the strategies recommended are directive leadership, transactional leadership, transformational leadership, and empowering leadership (Pearce and conger, 2003; Kezar, Carducci, and Contreras-McGavin, 2006). The model therefore recommends adoption of the theory of contingency (also called situational) leadership as espoused by Fiedler (1973) and Hersey (1985). Contingency theory prescribes that the leader will apply the strategy that is best suited for the situation at hand. The third principle is social engagement. As Kezar, Carducci, and Contreras-McGavin (2006) point out, a significant determinant in the success of the institutional leader is the ability to build and maintain a healthy social network. Distributed leadership is contingent on social engagement. The leader is attempting to influence people to act in a way that is congruent with the achievement of shared objectives. Taking appropriate actions to build this social network is therefore essential to his/her success. Next is the principle of human capital investment. Human beings form the greatest asset that an institution possesses. Investing in the human resources of the institution is therefore widely regarded as prudent (Bolden, Petrov, & Gosling, 2008). Fifthly, the distributed leadership component embodies a comprehensive scope. Drawing from (but not confining to) the work of Pearce and Conger (2003) as well as Bolden, Petrov, and Gosling (2008), the recommended areas of heightened focus are as follows: academic administration; student services; development and public relations; financial management; infrastructure and resource management; human resource management; and information services. Finally, the principle of relevance ensures that the plans, strategies, and activities of the institutional leaders are in the best interest of the institution, and aligned with its corporate mission. In this regard, every plan, strategy, and action must pass the acid test which is the fundamental question, is this making sense? Figure 1 summarizes the salient features of distributed leadership component.

Principle 1: Convergence — top-down and bottom-up

Principle 2: Pragmatism — application of contingency leadership

Principle 3: Social Engagement — build social network(s)

Principle 4: Human Capital Investment — encourage faculty and staff development

Principle 5: Comprehensive Scope — academic administration, student services, development and public relations, financial management, infrastructure and resource management, human resource management, information services

Principle 6: Relevance — is this making corporate sense?

Figure 1: *Summary of the Distributed Leadership Component*

3.2 Evidence-based Motivation Component

The evidence-based motivation component draws from several of the resources discussed earlier to construct a model that provides the flexibility of choosing the most suitable motivational strategies for the situation (McCollum & Kajs, 2009; Siddique, Aslam, Khan, &Fatima, 2011; Capella University, 2005; Graham & Weiner, n. d.; Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1993; Mazlow, 1971; Vroom, 1965); this concept is summarized in figure 2. The model also shows the connection among composite variables of leadership, motivation, and institutional effectiveness (Siddique, Aslam, Khan, &Fatima, 2011). The model also provides an array of motivational models to choose from — self-efficacy model; goal-orientation model; Mazlow's hierarchy; Herzberg's model; Vroom's expectation model; management by objectives (MBO); employee recognition programs; employee involvement programs (including participative management, representative participation, quality circles, and employee stock ownership plans (ESOPs)); job redesign and scheduling programs (including job rotation, job enlargement, job enrichment, flextime, job sharing, and telecommuting); variable pay programs; skill-based pay plans; flexible benefits. Next, the model includes a comprehensive scope of leadership areas of focus — academic administration; student services; development and public relations; financial management; infrastructure and resource management; human resource management; information services; stakeholder needs; research management; motivational policies and strategies. Finally, the model includes key areas of leadership effectiveness to allow for quality evaluation and control — student development; academic leadership; faculty satisfaction; student satisfaction; teaching quality; institutional culture; working environment; parental involvement and/or feedback; acquisition and usage of resources.

A noteworthy feature of the proposed evidence-based motivation component is its flexibility. The higher education institution has the capacity to choose the motivation model(s) that its leaders think are best suited for the institution. The institution also has the liberty to choose and/or define the motivational factors to be monitored. Additionally, the institution decides what aspects of its scope of operation will be monitored, the timing of this engagement, and the institutional effectiveness criteria to be evaluated. The anticipation is that over time, the institution will be in a position to make informed decisions about what strategies are best suited for its operation. Finally, the model retains the important assumption that institutional leadership affects institutional motivation, which in turn affects institutional effectiveness (Siddique, Aslam, Khan, &Fatima, 2011).

Institutional Leadership Scope of Interest
Academic Administration; Student Services; Development and Public Relations; Financial Management
Infrastructure and Resource Management; Human Resource Management; Information Services
Stakeholder Needs; Research Management; Motivational Policies and Strategies

Institutional Motivation

Candidate Motivational Models	**Variables and/or Perspectives of Interest**
Self-Efficacy Model	Instructional Leadership; Staff Development; Institutional Climate; Community Collaboration; Evidence-based Decision Making; Resource and Facility Management; Use of Community Resources; Communication; Institutional Vision.
Goal-Orientation Model	Mastery Approach; Performance Approach; Mastery Avoidance; Performance Avoidance.
Mazlow's Hierarchy	Basic Needs; Psychological Needs; Self-Actualization Needs
Herzberg's Model	Hygiene Factors; Motivation Factors
Vroom's Expectation Model	Effort Assessment Factors; Performance Evaluation Factors; Reward Assessment Factors
Management by Objectives (MBO)	Intrinsic Motivation Factors(job tasks, career advancement, increased responsibilities, peer recognition, autonomy); Extrinsic Motivation Factors (salary, working conditions, training, etc.); Other Internally Defined Institutional Factors
Employee Recognition Programs	
Employee Involvement Programs	
Job Redesign and Scheduling programs	
Variable Pay Programs	
Skill-based Pay Plans	
Flexible Benefits Plans	

Institutional Effectiveness Criteria of Interest
Student Development; Academic Leadership; Faculty Satisfaction; Student Satisfaction; Teaching Quality; Institutional Culture; Working Environment; Parental Involvement and/or Feedback; Acquisition and Usage of Resources

Figure 2: *Summary of the Evidence-based Motivation Component*

3.3 Evidence-based Leadership Component

As mentioned earlier, evidence-based management (EBM) involves using available information to make the best management decisions within the organization (Rousseau, 2006). Moreover, in terms of both principle and practice, EBM is ideal for institutions of higher learning (Rousseau & McCarthy, 2007). In this environmental context, the term evidence-based leadership (EBL) aligns more favorably with standard institutional jargon, hence the proposed EBL component of the institutional leadership framework. The EBL component embraces the earlier mentioned specification of the four essential components of EBM — internal evidence, external evidence, stakeholder preference, and sound judgment (Briner, Denyer, & Rousseau, 2009). Finally, the EBL component recommends evidence-based decision making to all the salient (and previously mentioned) aspects of institutional leadership and operation; they are repeated here for ease of reference: academic administration; student services; development and public relations; financial management; infrastructure and resource management; human resource management; and information services. Figure 3 summarizes these points.

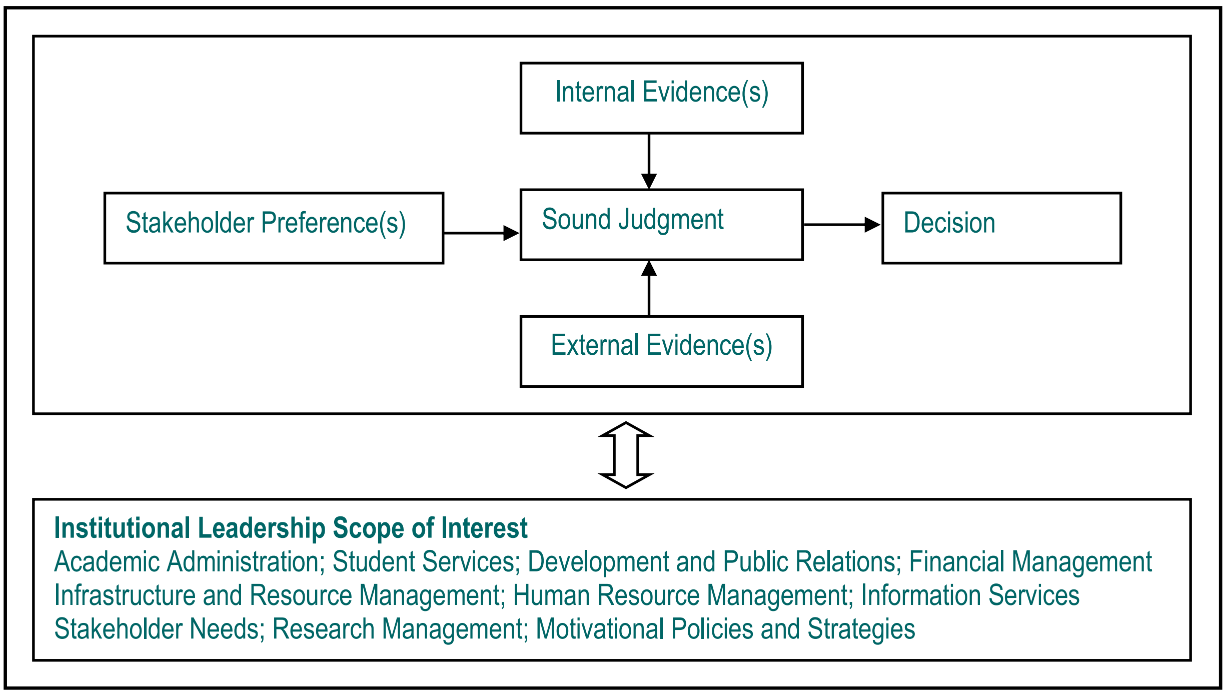

Figure 3: *Summary of the Evidence-based Leadership Component*

4. Summary and Implications

This paper has proposed a dynamic institutional leadership framework, covering distributed leadership, evidence-based motivation, and evidence-based leadership, which may be applied to any institution of higher learning. This has been done within the context of an extensive review of the related literature. The framework consists of three components — a distributed leadership component, an evidence-based motivation component, and an evidence-based leadership component.

The distributed leadership component proposes a distributed leadership model based on the following six principles: convergence — top-down and bottom-up collaboration ; pragmatism — the application of contingency leadership; social engagement — construction and maintenance of a supportive social network(s); human capital investment — encouragement of faculty and staff development; comprehensive scope — spanning the major areas of operation of the institution; relevance — ensuring that each plan, strategy, or activity is aligned with the corporate mission of the institution.

The evidence-based motivation component proposes a set of candidate motivation models from which institutional leaders may choose and shape a motivational strategy for the institution. Motivational parameters may be selected from a working list, and/or new parameters may be defined to meet institutional requirements. The model also specifies a working set of criteria that may be employed in assessing the institution's effectiveness.

The evidence-based leadership component recommends the application of EBL to all relevant areas of operation of the institution. It is predicated on four required elements, namely, internal evidence, external evidence, stakeholder preference, and sound judgment.

The assumptions of the study are threefold. Firstly, the study holds that there are real merits to the distributed leadership theory (Spillane, 2006; Kezar, 2012; Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2003; Kezar, Carducci, & Contreras-McGavin, 2006; Boldon, Petrov, & Gosling, 2008; Pearce & Conger, 2003). Secondly, the study embraces the concept that leadership, motivation, and institutional effectiveness are composite variables that are interconnected such that leadership affects motivation, which in turn affects institutional effectiveness (Siddique, Aslam, Khan, & Fatima, 2011). Finally, the study assumes that there are merits to the recently proposed theory of evidence-based management (Rousseau, 2006; Rousseau & McCarthy, 2007; Briner, Denyer, & Rousseau, 2009).

This work is not without limitations. The proposed dynamic leadership framework has been advanced based primarily on the extensive literature review that was conducted. While the proposed framework draws from the contributions of various seminal and/or scholarly works, no empirical study has been conducted in its defense. Going forward, it will be necessary to conduct such studies. One such study could be an investigation into what motivational models are best suited for institutions of higher learning. This would be a very useful spinoff from the evidence-based motivation component as summarized in figure 2. The findings from such a study would be useful in guiding institutions into the implementation of motivational strategies that are really evidence-based. Another empirical study that could emanate from this work is an inquiry into what is the relative importance of the four evidence-based leadership (EBL) components on the effectiveness of the decision making (review figure 3). The findings from such a research would contribute to making EBL even more evidence-based. Finally, a mixed or empirical study could be conducted to determine the relative importance of the six proposed principles of institutional distributed leadership as summarized in figure 1. These three studies would help higher education institutions to more confidently implement the dynamic institutional leadership framework as proposed.

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