

# **Learning Leadership Matters:**

**Teachers' experiences of innovatively and  
conventionally prepared principals**

Margaret Terry Orr  
Bank Street College, [morr@bnkst.edu](mailto:morr@bnkst.edu)

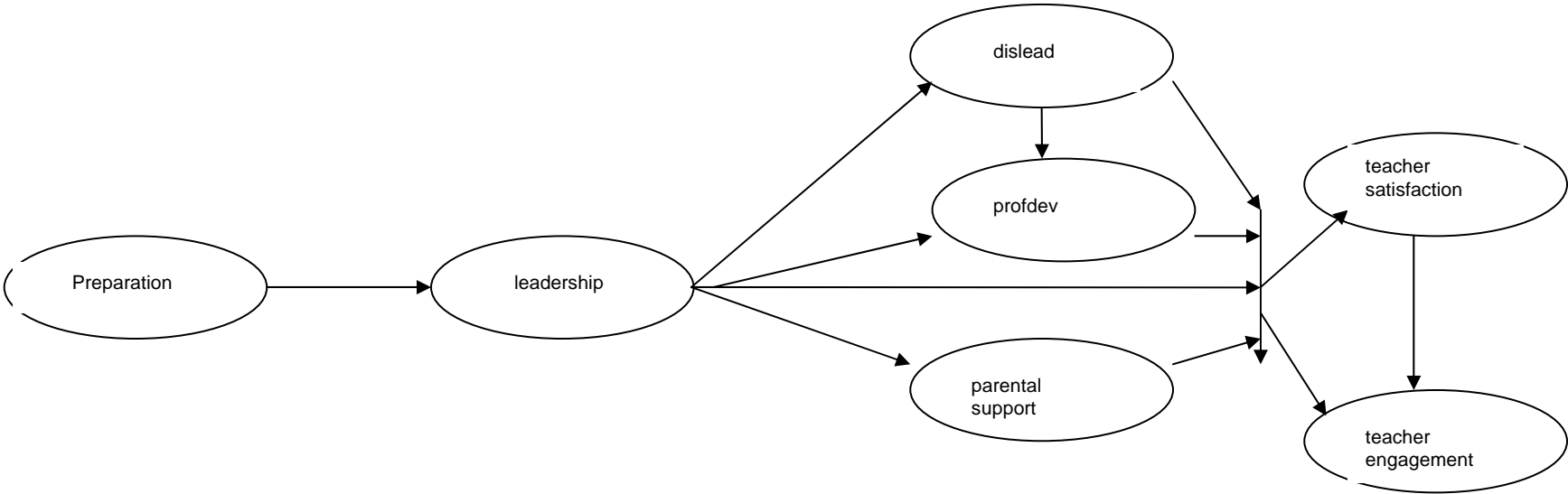
# Purpose

To investigate the relationship between innovative leadership preparation and perceptions of graduates' leadership practices and impact on selected school improvement and teacher satisfaction, collaboration and engagement

# Research background

- Teacher engagement, collaboration and job satisfaction as significant mediating factors in improved student outcomes (Geijsel, et al, 2001; Pearson & Moomaw, 2005)
- Leadership-teacher outcome relationship (Leithwood, et al, 2004; Waters, et al 2005)
- Mediating effects of school improvement strategies (professional development, distributed leadership, parental involvement) (Geijsel, et al, 2001; Sweetland & Hoy, 2000; Sebring, et al, 2006)
- Leadership preparation-leadership practices relationship (Leithwood, et al 1996; Orr & Barber, 2006)

**Figure 1**  
**Initial conceptual model**



# Methodology

- nonexperimental research design
- survey research methods
- two teacher samples
- confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling

# Samples

- Stanford University study sample (2005):
  - Five states (CA, CT, KY, MS, NY)
  - Principals in one of four innovative leadership preparation or one of four innovative in-service programs
  - 16 elementary and middle schools
  - 389 teachers (214 with exemplary prepared prinpls.)
- SASS study sample (1999-2000):
  - Restricted to urban schools and principals with five years or less experience
  - 16 elementary and middle schools
  - 855 teachers

# Sample characteristics

	Stanford (expl, other)	SASS
% female	88, 81%	78%
% nonwhite	65, 66	75
Average age	42, 39	43
Average years teaching	12.4, 13.7	14.5
% Masters &	59%, 63%	48%

# Innovative Preparation Programs

	Preparation	In-service
San Diego, CA	Partnership program, with integrated coursework and fieldwork; emphasis on instructional leadership	Strong coaching, focusing on the strategies of the district's reform initiatives
Hartford CT	University-based; integrates coursework and field work; emphasizes data-based leadership	District-level leadership development based on the Institute for Learning principles
Jefferson Co, KY	NA	Array of leadership development opportunities
Delta region, MS	University-based; instructional leadership focus; Paid sabbatical year; full time internship.	NA
Bronx, NYC	Partnership. Change-focused content; instructional leadership emphasis; Intensive advisory and internship	Layered leadership development; mentoring and seminars for new principals; tight link to regional reforms

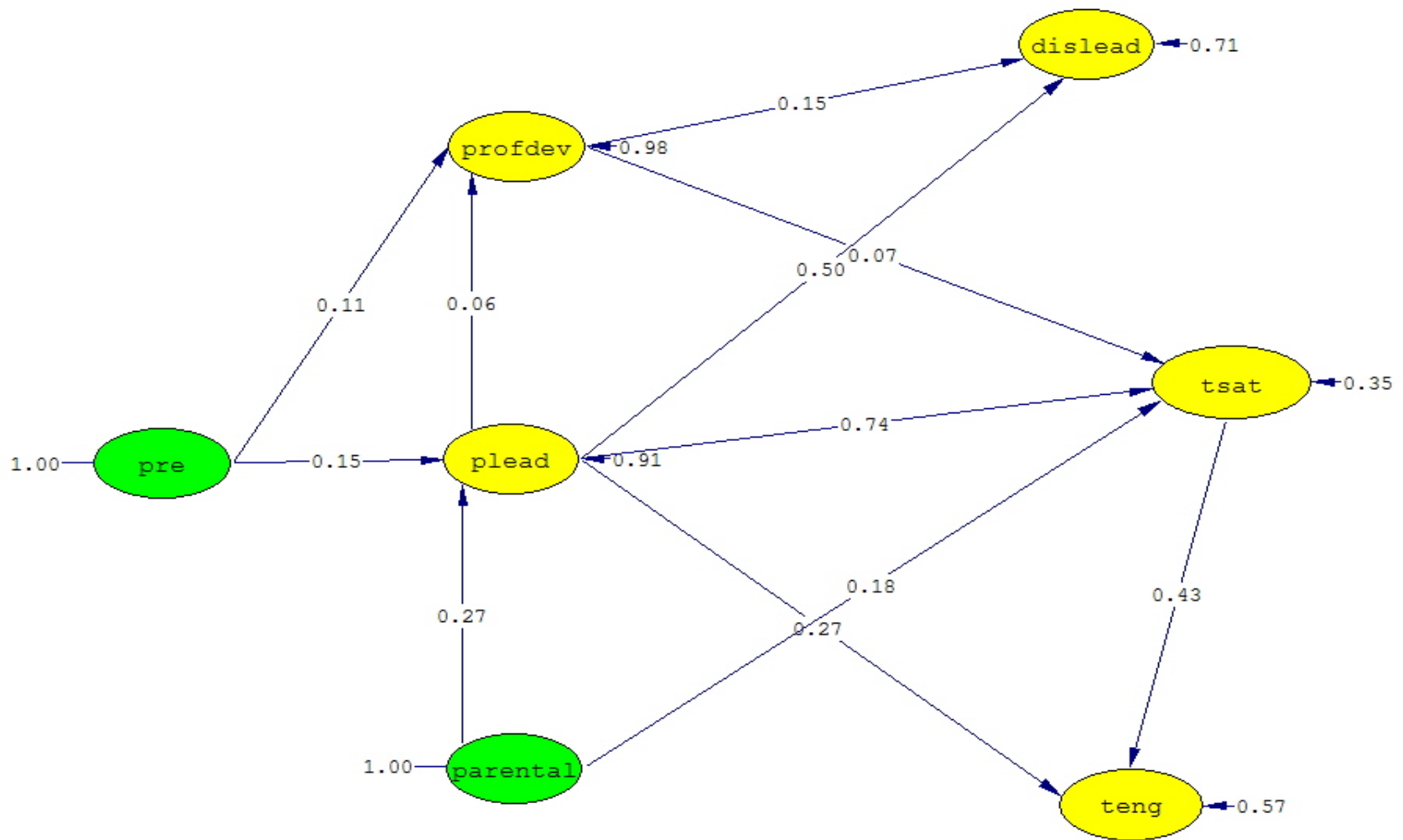
## Teacher perceptions of teacher cooperation and engagement

	N	Me an	Std.d ev	Ran ge
<b>Teacher cooperation and engagement, Total</b>	1234			
Most of my colleagues share my beliefs and values about what the central mission of the school should be	1241	3.87	0.95	1-5
There is a great deal of cooperative effort among the staff members	1240	3.82	1.06	1-5
I make a conscious effort to coordinate the content of my courses with that of other teachers	1237	3.99	0.91	1-5
In this school, staff members are recognized for a job well done	1238	3.58	1.13	1-5
<b>Teacher job satisfaction, Total</b>	<b>1241</b>			
I do not feel like it is waste of my time to teach (reversed coded)	1241	4.18	1.14	1-5
I am generally satisfied with being a teacher at this school	1241	4.07	1.03	1-5

## Principal leadership measure

	N	Mean	St.dev	Rn g
<i>Principal leadership, total</i>	1236	3.93	0.77	1-5
The principal lets staff members know what is expected of them	1242	4.17	0.97	1-5
The school administration's behavior toward the staff is supportive and encouraging	1241	3.87	1.18	1-5
My principal enforces school rules for student conduct and backs me up when I need it	1238	3.98	1.12	1-5
In this school, staff members are recognized for a job well done	1238	3.58	1.13	1-5

Figure 2: revised model



# Assessing the structural equation model (using WLS)

- All reported effects are statistically significant at the 0.05 level of significance.
- Innovative preparation predicts leadership practices.
- Leadership practices predict teacher professional development, distributed leadership and teacher job satisfaction and engagement, both directly and indirectly.
- Teacher job satisfaction predicts engagement and collaboration.

# Other findings

- Perceived parental support has a moderating influence on leadership and teacher job satisfaction, suggesting that it serves as a context measure.
- The moderating influence of leadership preparation on teacher professional development participation may reflect the unaccounted for influence of strategic district emphasis on both leader preparation and teacher professional development.
- Distributed leadership has an indirect influence on teacher outcomes, through professional development participation.

# Conclusions

- Conceptual validation of the influence of leadership preparation on leadership and school outcomes
  - Findings consistent with foundational research
- Methodological direction:
  - Refined measurement, with greater differentiation on leadership preparation
  - Accounting for district support in the model
  - Other school improvement related outcomes

# Contact information

Margaret Terry Orr

Bank Street College

[morr@bnkst.edu](mailto:morr@bnkst.edu); 212-875-4546

Stelios Orphanos

Stanford University

orphanos@stanford.edu