

Insights from Field Testing of School Leadership Framework

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REFORM IMPLEMENTATION

Education reform

Curriculum reform in general education; focus on development of 21st century skills

Implementation at school level

Focus and alignment of input-process-output factors on achieving reform goals

The role of school leadership

The key role of school leadership in reform implementation

BUILDING A MODEL I

The rationale of the model

- to develop **evidence-based approach to reform implementation** in general education by collecting and analysing data **on various factors affecting student achievement**, and making data-driven **recommendations for improvement solutions.**

POINT OF DEPARTURE

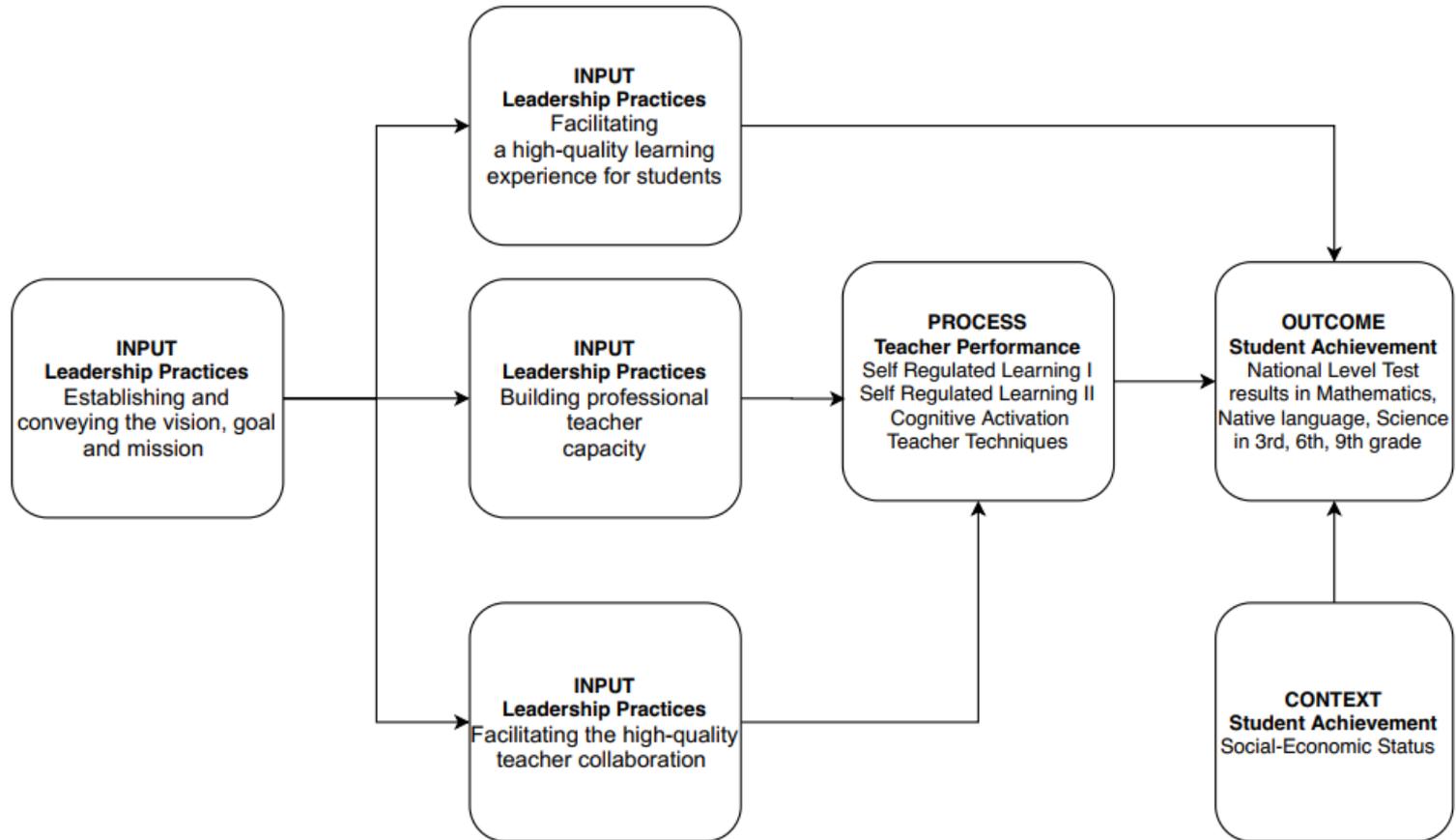
Having a systemic view on educational effectiveness:

- Scheerens (2011),
 - model of schooling: context – input – process – output.
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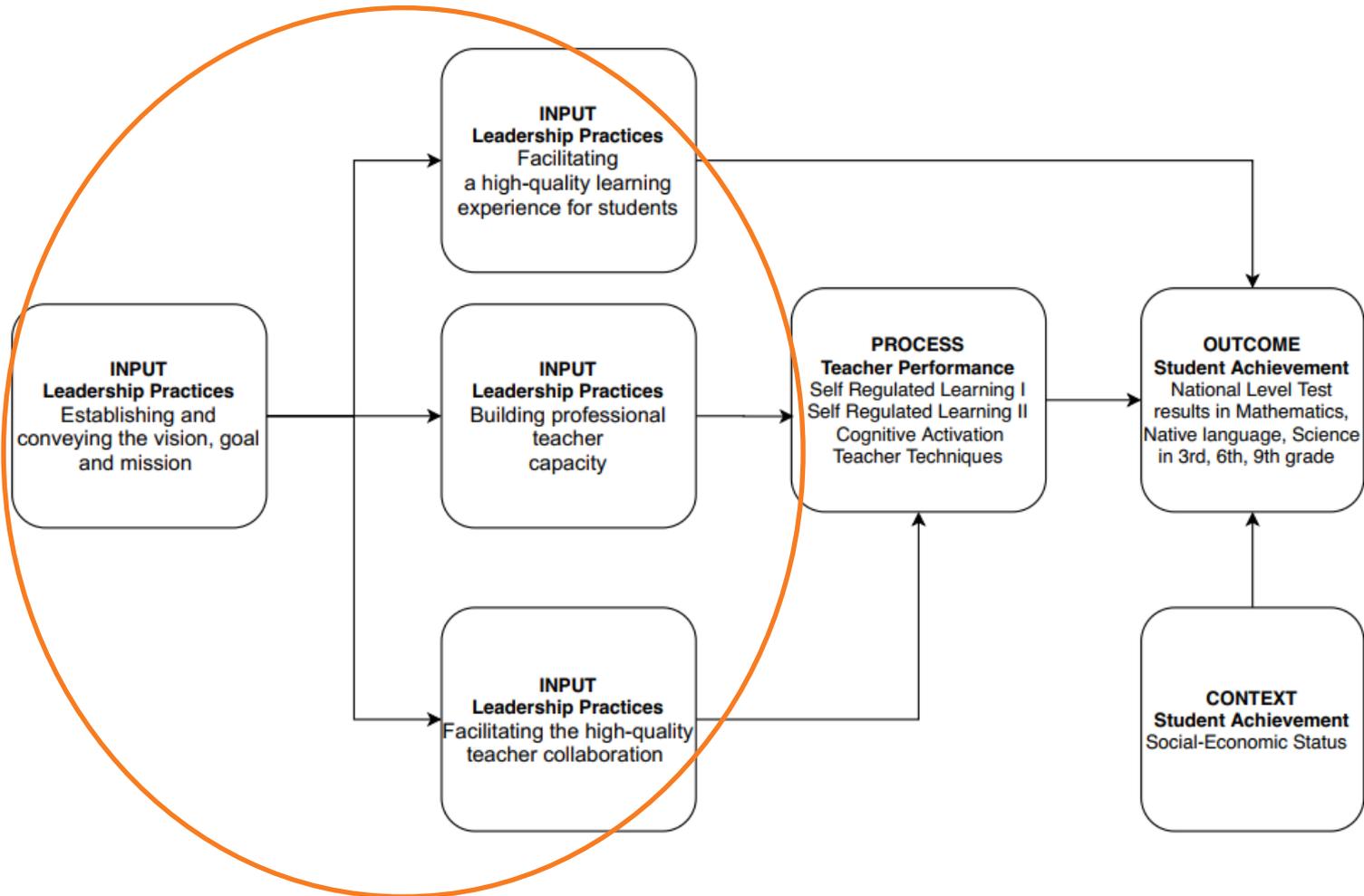
Understanding school leadership practices:

- Hitt and Tucker (2016), Hallinger (2011), Leithwood (2008),
- key leadership practices influencing student achievement.

BUILDING A MODEL II



BUILDING A MODEL III



School Leadership Framework

AIM OF THE RESEARCH

- to gain **empirical (and context-sensitive) insights** into specifics of **school leadership domain** of the model **by field-testing the** developed prototype of school improvement **model.**

METHODOLOGY

- the application of **the design based research methodology**;
- **field-testing school leadership framework** as part of the developed model prototype in all schools (n=11) of one municipality; the model was developed from 2019 to 2020;
- **continuous cycles of analysis, design, development, implementation, and redesign** (DBRC, 2003; Wang and Hannafin, 2005);
- studies of existing scientific literature, analysis of secondary data, primary data collection on school leadership practices through semi-structured interviews, surveys and field observations, iterative data analysis, regular discussions with school leadership and municipality representatives on the collected data and the framework, and expert discussions on further development of the framework;
- **an active collaboration** between a team of 9 researchers and practitioners representing 11 schools in the selected municipality - school leadership, teachers, and municipality representatives.

RESULTS I

Understanding the importance of a complex and integrative approach, and corroborating evidence:

school leadership performance data (assessment accomplished by a rubric) **should be analysed in the context with data from other domains** – teacher performance data, student achievement data and context data (e.g. SES);

without data insights from other domains **it is not possible to ascertain whether practices described by school leadership are really effective;** and thus, make an adequate assessment of their performance and develop recommendations for the school improvement.

RESULTS II

Identifying touch-points between different domains of the model:

to have an in-depth and data-driven understanding of school leadership performance, **further and more specific links between assessment of performance in different domains** (leadership-teachers-student achievement) **should be identified**;

through analysis of 11 school cases, researchers have identified a list of touch-points and **categorized them in three groups**:

(1) school leadership-students, for example, “school leadership practices” + “negative/positive trend in student achievement in Math over a period of three consecutive years”;

(2) school leadership-teachers, for example, “school leadership practices” + “majority of teachers have low score in criteria assessing skills for student cognitive activation”;

(3) school leadership-students-teachers, for example, “school leadership practices” + “huge disparity in student achievement between cohorts of 3rd grade students” + “scores in certain criteria in teacher performance assessment”.

CONCLUSIONS

- Existing school leadership frameworks in the literature can serve as a departure point for general understanding;
- To operationalize analysis of school leadership performance with an aim to develop recommendations for school improvement in the context of education reform, further adaptations and field-testing of existing theoretical school leadership frameworks should be accomplished;
- Such frameworks should be designed and used in a way that there is diverse data to corroborate the existing assumptions and conclusions; school leadership performance cannot be viewed in isolation from other domains;
- Specific and contextually sensitive touch-points between school leadership, teachers, students, and context should be established to arrive at a functioning framework that is applicable in the real-world setting and that can contribute to school improvement process.

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Thank you!

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