

A Project entitled

*Investigating the Impact of Principal Leadership on Middle Leaders in Resource*

*Allocation in a Secondary School in Hong Kong*

Submitted by

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submitted to The Education University of Hong Kong

for the degree of *Bachelor of Science (Honours) Executive Management*

in *4-2025*

## Declaration

I, **Zheng Weibo, Vincent** declares that this research report / project report represents my own work under the supervision of **Kwok Lai Yin, Percy**, and that it has not been submitted previously for examination to any tertiary institution.

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**25-4-2025**

## Abstract

This study investigates the role of middle leadership in resource allocation within Hong Kong secondary schools, focusing on the influence of principal leadership styles, particularly transactional and transformational leadership. Through the results, a new leadership style emerged: Data-Driven Transformational Leadership (DDTL), which combines elements of transformational leadership with a strong emphasis on data-driven decision-making. Unlike traditional transformational leadership, which primarily focuses on empowerment, collaboration, and vision-building, the current principal's leadership style integrates real-time data, such as student performance metrics and teacher feedback, to inform resource allocation decisions. This data-driven approach enhances the flexibility, adaptability, and responsiveness of decision-making processes, ensuring alignment with both immediate departmental needs and long-term school goals. The findings suggest that DDTL fosters a more inclusive and transparent resource management system, empowering middle leaders to participate actively in decisions and improving the overall school environment. The study highlights the importance of developing a standardized resource allocation framework that incorporates both immediate needs and strategic planning, with middle leaders playing an integral role in the decision-making

process. These findings offer valuable insights for educational leaders and policymakers, providing actionable recommendations to optimize resource management and enhance educational outcomes in schools.

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## 1. Introduction

### *1.1 Background of the Study*

The significance of middle leadership in allocating and managing resources in secondary schools of Hong Kong is essential, particularly when contextualized within School-Based Management (SBM). Department heads, curriculum coordinators, and middle leaders function as a bridge between senior leadership and the teaching staff, allocating resources on behalf of senior leadership to enhance the teaching and learning process while supporting educational goals to the best of their ability for improved enhanced student learning (Cheng & Mok, 2007). While middle leaders play a critical role in managing resources, most studies still concentrate overwhelmingly on senior leadership, with the impact of middle leaders largely escaping research (Louis et al., 2010). Principal leadership styles are likely to influence the extent that middle leaders would engage in the resource allocation process. Principals who traditionally engage in transactional leadership styles rely on control, rewards, and expectations while keeping middle leader's agency constrained and using a more dictatorial approach to allocate resources (Bass, 1985). On the other hand, transformational leadership focuses on empowerment, collaboration, and new ideas, facilitating shared responsibility for resource decisions that lead to improved student outcomes overall (Leithwood,

et al., 2006). The styles of leadership exhibited by middle leaders, whether directive or collaborative, will also influence how the middle leadership manages resources. This study will also examine how the leadership styles of principals influence the practices of middle leadership, and the extent of resource allocation and provision of resources to develop secondary school students in the Schools in Hong Kong.

### *1.2 Purpose of the Study*

This research examines how transactional and transformational leadership styles used by principals' impact middle leadership roles in resource distribution and usage selection within Hong Kong secondary schools. The study investigates different leadership techniques' consequences on middle leaders' decision-making duties regarding their departmental need's detection capacity and resource advocacy as well as resource utilization monitoring abilities. The study investigates middle leadership style transformations from directing to collaborating to determine their impact on school resource management effectiveness. This research examines how senior leadership approach combined with middle leadership contribution generates resource outcomes to improve learning outcomes thus establishing educational effectiveness. The study

establishes a foundation of actionable recommendations that help school leaders best manage their resources by meeting current educational objectives together with maintaining long-term institutional objectives.

### *1.3 Significance of Study*

This research has valuable implications for understanding how principal leadership styles affect how middle leaders develop their roles related to resource allocation, into secondary schools. While the educational administration literature has begun to elaborate how transformational and transactional leadership styles influence the role of middle leaders in decision making, this research adds to existing literature regarding SBM as it relates to middle leadership, as the middle leadership aspect has been under researched related to senior leadership (Louis et al., 2010). This study can provide important implications for educational leaders, as well as educational policy makers, by presenting ways to enable middle leaders to engage in a more active role in resource distribution, while improving the efficiency and effectiveness of meeting school objectives. The leadership study can also inform leadership development programs to cultivate the development of more collaborative leadership and improve resource management efforts within schools.

### *1.4 Research Question*

This study aims to investigate the role of middle leadership in resource allocation and utilization within secondary schools in Hong Kong, focusing particularly on the influence of principal leadership styles and the varying roles of middle leaders.

Specifically, the following research questions are posed:

Research Question 1: How did the role of middle leaders in resource allocation decision-making change under different principals' leadership styles in a secondary school in Hong Kong?

Research Question 2: How did different middle leadership roles influence resource allocation and utilization in a secondary school in Hong Kong?

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1 The Role of Middle Leadership in Educational Management*

In the context of secondary schools operating under school-based management (SBM) systems, middle leadership is a crucial element of school governance.

Middle leaders are typically referred to as department chairs or curriculum leaders

and serve as a link between senior leaders and teachers. Their role is to ensure resources are used purposefully and instructional outcomes are achieved (Cheng & Mok, 2007). Despite the significance of the middle leadership role in school governance, middle leadership has been under-researched, and the majority of research looks at senior leadership (Louis et al., 2010). The broadening responsibilities of middle leaders includes the management of human, financial, and material resources, while assessing decisions against the broader school goals.

## *2.2 Resource Allocation in Secondary Schools*

Resource allocation in secondary schools is a key determinant of educational success. Efficient use of resources—financial, human, physical, and technological—ensures that schools can meet their educational goals and respond to the needs of both students and staff. Studies have shown that effective resource allocation correlates with better student outcomes (Thelma et al., 2024). Middle leaders are often at the heart of this process, as they make decisions regarding the distribution of resources within their departments or areas of responsibility. However, the degree to which middle leaders are involved in resource allocation varies, depending on the leadership style and school culture (Hallinger, 2011)

### *2.3 Leadership Styles and Their Impact Resource Management*

Leadership styles possess substantial influence over resource management in schools. Leadership theories such as transactional leadership, Data-Driven Leadership and transformational leadership provided useful premises to understand how principals and middle leaders manage allocating resources.

#### *2.31 Transactional Leadership*

This style of leadership tends to focus on structure, rules, and control. Transactional leaders are often focused on ensuring order and achieving predetermined objectives through rewards and punishments (Bass, 1985). Within resource management, this style can lead to a top-down approach, as decisions are made by a senior leader with minimal voice from middle leaders.

#### *2.32 Transformational Leadership*

This style of leadership prioritizes organization, rules, and control. Transactional leadership is grounded in the idea that leaders maintain order and achieve goals through either reward or punishment (Bass, 1985). In resource management, transactional leadership may also lead to a top-down style of management, where senior leadership makes decisions with little input from middle leaders.

### *3.33 Data- Driven Leadership*

Data-Driven Leadership, a more recent construct, puts an emphasis on evidence-based decision making as a component of effective leadership practice. Data-Driven Leadership attempts to utilize factual data (such as student academic performance, teacher performance, and departmental feedback) to guide decision making (Sergis & Sampson, 2015). Data-driven leadership is especially relevant to schools in the context of allocating resources, as data-driven leadership relies on real-time data and current needs rather than assumptions or anecdotal evidence. In a data-driven leadership practice, principals are using data to guide school-wide decisions and middle leaders using the data to justify their requests for resources (Gaftandzhieva et al., 2023). Incorporating transformational leadership principles with data-driven practice to support resource allocation brings an additional layer of transparency, accountability, and flexibility, as data and feedback allow for continuous updating of any decisions made.

### *2.34 Directive Leadership*

Directive leadership is described as a top-down approach where leaders make decisions and expect followers to conform to these decisions. In the case of middle leadership, a directive leader would be responsible for making decisions about the allocation of resources and would seek limited input from team members. Directive leadership is typically aligned with transactional leadership

since middle leaders are expected to follow certain protocols outlined by the principal (Northouse, 2018). This style of leadership could lead to a lack of flexibility in resource allocation, and the middle leader may be unable to provide the appropriate responses to the needs of their departments.

### *2.35 Collaborative Leadership*

Conversely, collaborative leadership focuses on shared decision-making, with leaders and followers mutually engaged in the pursuit of agreed-upon goals (Robinson et al., 2009). In relation to resource management, collaborative leadership allows middle leaders to play a more explicit role in determining how resources will be allocated. This approach encourages communication and cooperation between all participants, creating a sense of collective ownership and accountability regarding resource allocation. Specifically, research indicates that principals adopting a collaborative leadership style are likely to engage their middle leaders in proactive resource management that is consistent with the strategic goals of the school (Leithwood et al., 2006).

### *2.4 Research Gap*

Although a considerable amount of research has examined the relationship of leadership styles and resource distribution, little research has explored how principal leadership styles influence middle leadership resource distribution. In

general, much of the research has focused on senior leadership, leaving the influence of middle leaders on resource distribution unknown (Louis et al., 2010). Furthermore, even though principal leadership styles such as transactional and transformational leadership are documented in the literature, the influence of principal leadership styles on middle leaders, as they distribute resources to the staff in schools, has not been discussed in the literature. Additionally, little research has explored middle leadership styles or how directive and collaborative middle leadership styles influence resource distribution in secondary schools (Robinson et al., 2009). This study will seek to identify the above theoretical gaps and disentangle how principal leadership styles influence the development of middle leadership, and how different styles of middle leadership influence the distribution of resources in Hong Kong secondary schools.

### **3. Research Methodology**

#### *3.1 Research Design*

This research utilizes a qualitative research design to examine how middle leaders make decisions regarding resource allocation in secondary schools in Hong Kong. Qualitative research designs are appropriate for understanding the experiences, perceptions, and practices of middle leaders, regarding their involvement in

resource management. Creswell and Poth (2018) explain qualitative research produces rich, contextual understandings of phenomena that cannot be quantified, thus it is suited to investigate the complexity of human interactions, for example, the decision-making process for educational leaders. Consistent with the research aim, the design emphasizes exploratory and descriptive approaches for understanding the impact of principal leadership styles on middle leadership practices regarding resource allocation. The research aims to generate answers to two key questions.

### *3.2 Data Collection Methods*

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the subject, this study employs three primary data collection methods: interviews, document analysis, and observations. These methods are complementary and enable triangulation, which enhances the credibility and validity of the findings (Denzin, 2017).

#### *3.2.1 Interviews*

Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with a purposive sample of key participants, including: 1 Principal, 1 Assistant Principal, 5 Middle Leaders (heads of departments or coordinators), 1 Teacher (Background of the interviewees (Appendix 1)).

Each interview is expected to last for 30 minutes. The interviews are designed to obtain rich individual meaning around the role of middle leaders and their experiences of the resource allocation process. The researcher will also investigate how the interaction between the middle leaders and principals are informed and shaped by different styles of leadership (transformational versus transactional). Creswell and Poth (2018) note that semi-structured interviews are flexible, enabling the researcher to go with the flow while maintaining direction of the study with relevant and key themes. Semi-structured interviews provide an optimal approach of data gathering to obtain an understanding of collaborative relationships and decision-making in schools.

### *3.22 Document Analysis*

To complement the interview data, document analysis will be performed on relevant school records ( Appendix 3). These include School reports (2023-2024 and 2024-2025), Resource allocation plans, Subsidy utilization plans, Activity schedules. Nonetheless, the researcher will be restricted from accessing some documents because of confidentiality issues. Thus, the researcher will only be able to examine publicly available documents and records, which can shed light on the official policies and procedures governing resource allocation within the school. Document analysis is an important method for exploring the

correspondence between written policies and the policy in practice (Bowen, 2009); such an analysis may provide insight into how schools structure and implement resource allocation decisions.

### 3.23 Observations

To observe how some middle leaders behave when seeking resources from principals, the researcher will use nonparticipant observations. These observations will focus on how middle leaders make their resource needs present to the principal, and how they attend to the approach they make to the principal in the process of decision making through, for example, collective processes. However, the observations will not focus on direct content of meetings but rather on method and approach taken by middle leaders to articulate their resource demands, and on unfolding collaborative interactions in the meetings. Merriam (2009) also stated that nonparticipant observations provide information about real time behaviours and interactions by the participants. Thus, with confidentiality almost impossible in a meeting of talks concerning resource needs, this case will illustrate how middle leaders negotiate resource needs, how principals respond to their requests, and how collaboration proceeds in such contexts.

### 3.3 *Sampling Strategy*

The study would utilize purposive sampling of participants with best experiences

in resource allocation decisions, that is, one principal, one assistant principal, five middle leaders from various departments and one teacher. This provides a range of perspectives from various levels of school leadership to provide a comprehensive view of the resource management (Patton, 2015). Research will be conducted in a secondary school within the Direct Subsidies Scheme (DSS), which allows schools within the scheme to have greater financial and resource autonomy. The study offers an opportunity to assess the impact of leadership style on resource allocation and middle leadership roles during a transition in leadership context that includes a new principal starting in the 2024–2025 academic year. Key leadership positions exist on the school’s organizational chart, and middle leaders are instrumental in the management of educational and operational functions, thus making it a reasonable context for this study.

Appendix 4 will provide a bar chart of the organizational structure of the school so that understand how its leadership runs the school.

### *3.4 Data Analysis Procedures*

The researcher will use thematic analysis to analyze the data gathered; thematic analysis is a process that enables the researcher to detect themes in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The thematic analysis process includes a process of coding the

data, then organizing similar responses and synthesizing these into major themes associated with middle leaders' role in allocating resources and working with principal(s). Data triangulation from interviews, documents, and observation will be used to further substantiate the analysis and provide a comprehensive understanding of the research problem.

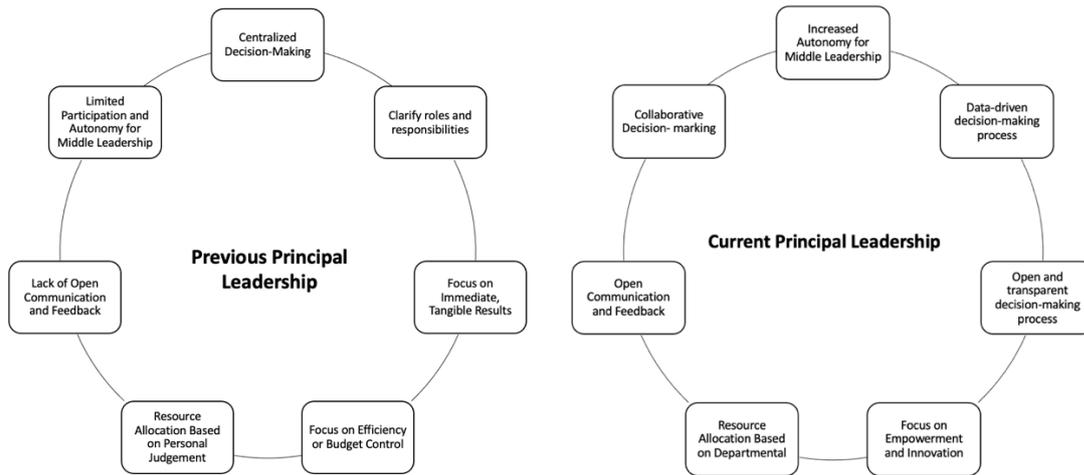
### *3.5 Validity and Reliability of the Study*

To ensure the credibility and reliability of the study, the researcher will employ triangulation, drawing from multiple data sources and perspectives (Denzin, 2017). Additionally, the study will adhere to the principles of ethical research by ensuring informed consent, confidentiality, and respect for the participants' rights throughout the research process (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

## 4. Results

### *4.1 Leadership styles of the two principals (Triangulation Analysis)*

Figure 1 and 2: Principal Leadership Overview



Previous Principal Leadership Table 2. (Use literature and interviews to analyze)

Number	Leadership Component	Evidence	Leadership Style Implication
1	Centralized Decision-Making	Middle Leader A: Most decisions regarding resource allocation were made by the principal, with little input from middle leadership. Middle leadership was informed of decisions after they were made.	Reflects a top-down, directive approach with minimal involvement from middle leadership in decision-making.
2	Limited Participation and Autonomy for Middle Leadership	Middle Leader B: Middle leadership had minimal autonomy in making decisions. They were not consulted on departmental needs or resources.	Middle leadership is seen as a managerial layer with limited influence over key decisions, leading to disengagement and dissatisfaction.
3	Lack of Open Communication and Feedback	Middle Leader C: Communication was mostly one-way, with middle leadership providing feedback or requests that were often ignored or disregarded.	Communication is closed, leading to limited feedback loops and a lack of collaborative decision-making.
4	Resource Allocation Based on Personal Judgement	Middle Leader D : Resource requests from middle leadership were often reduced or rejected based on the principal' s judgment, not on the department' s actual	The principal made decisions based on their judgment, prioritizing their perspective over input from middle leadership or evidence-based needs.

Current Principal Leadership Table 2. (Use literature and interviews to analyze)

Number	Leadership Component	Evidence	Leadership Style Implication
1	Collaborative Decision-making	Middle Leader A: The current principal's leadership style is more open and collaborative. We are actively invited to participate in resource allocation discussions, and our input is seriously considered.	Reflects transformational leadership where decision-making is shared, fostering engagement and ownership. (Bass, 1985).
2	Increased Autonomy for Middle leadership	Middle Leader B: Under the current principal, we have more autonomy. We can now decide how to allocate resources in our department based on actual needs.	Reflects transformational leadership by empowering middle leadership with more responsibility and autonomy, which enhances motivation and accountability (Bass, 1985).
3	Open Communication and Feedback	Middle Leader C: The current principal encourages open communication. We regularly discuss our department's needs and concerns.	Aligns with transformational leadership by encouraging open communication (Northouse, 2018).
4	Resource Allocation Based on Departmental Needs	Middle Leader D: When we requested additional resources for curriculum development, the principal not only approved our proposal but also encouraged us to collaborate with other departments to maximize the impact.	Supports transformational leadership by allocating resources based on actual departmental needs and encouraging collaboration between departments for greater impact (Bass, 1985).

The former principal exhibited traits associated with Transactional Leadership, as demonstrated through several distinctive traits. The decisions made by the principal, often made alone, exhibited centralised decision-making, a feature of transactional leadership (Bass, 1985). Middle leaders had limited means of engaging in decision making, while limited means of autonomy exhibited a directive nature of transactional leadership that expected compliance rather than initiative (Northouse, 2018). Equally, a lack of open communication and primarily one-way communication further exemplified the top-down structure often prevalent within transactional leadership, where no feedback loop exists. Resource allocation was based on the personal discretion of the principal and not based on the real needs of departments underpinning their control over the resources (Bass, 1985). That is, resource allocation was based on the principal's oversight for efficiency and control of the budget further supporting transactional leadership nature, which is consistent with operating on stability and operational success. For all these reasons, the principal's leadership exhibited the transactional leadership nature.

The current principal is aligned with Transformational Leadership, through collaborative decision making, increased autonomy, and because of an increase

of open communication. In contrast, this leader's transformational style operates as a decentralized approach which is consistent with classrooms respecting and engaging student voice, and involving student interest (Bass,1985). When the Middle Leaders are afforded the opportunity autonomy and take ownership of their department, they develop a culture of collaboration and innovation (Avolio & Bass, 1991). The allocation is also potentially influenced based upon the needs of each department, therefore the resources are plugged into the departments. The opened communication and transparent structure builds trust and engagement also informs agency in the middle leaders to be more considerate of their involvement and commitment to the movement of development (Bass & Avolio, 1994).

#### *4.2 New characteristics of transformational leadership*

Using the data gathered during interviews, observations, and document analysis, a new element of transformational leadership emerged in the current principal's style of leadership: the use of data as a key aspect of decision-making in schools. This contrasts with the previous principal's transactional leadership, characterized by a centralized and controlling leader who simply told teachers what to do at arm's length (Bass, 1985). The current principal seemed to embrace a

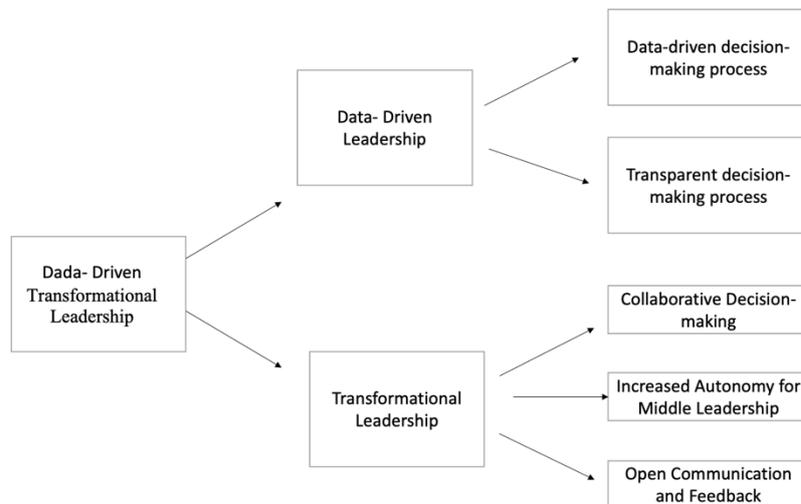
participatory manner of decision-making consistent with transformational leadership (Avolio & Bass, 1991; Bass & Avolio, 1994). For example, middle leaders described the opportunity to make decisions with autonomy about key aspects of their jobs. This exemplified how data formed a central focus of the principal's leadership using a data-driven transformational leadership style, emphasizing that schools are still led by people.

The multiple data sources in this study pointed to an emphasis on data. For example, even during the interviews, staff would regularly report how the principal turned to student academic performance and feedback from teachers to support decision-making that affect the entire school. One middle leader stated: "I look at student assessment scores and reports from teachers before I talk to the principal about the resource distribution in the next term." Observations supported this iterative practice. For instance, at the resource planning meetings, middle leaders designed presentations with data for planning and decision-making in school contexts. The principal also used internal documents (the contents were not needed in this research for confidentiality) during the meetings to support their governance planning, while other files had breakdowns of the total expenditures from specific departments. Again, these triangulated multiple

data sources confirmed there was data in their decision-making. The principal's approach to the administration of finances was also flexible: following the appropriate procedures, departments had independence about their budgets based on shifting needs. For example, one leader described funds were altered to purchase devices for students to trial digital tools based on student engagement – a form of intellectual stimulation at work.

The principal also tried to be transparent about decisions. One respondent described: “We show the data we are using for the resource distribution decisions they mean we are using attendance trends or what we call performance gaps so teachers understand and can help.” This context was not only said to foster a culture of trust, but to create shared ownership of the school (Gaftandzhieva et al., 2023; Sergis & Sampson, 2015). Based on the triangulation analysis, this principal's leadership style can be construed as a hybrid of data-driven transformational leadership model that combined relational empowerment with a data-driven rigor providing a responsive and inclusive school leadership model.

Figure 3. Characteristics of Data-Driven Transformational Leadership



### *4.3 The changing role of the Middle Leader*

#### *4.3.1 Middle Leader's Role Under Previous Principal*

The previous principal's transactional leadership style resulted in an almost passive stance for middle leaders in the allocation of resources. The principal maintained a centralized stance, making most or all key decisions with little consideration for middle leaders' input. Middle leaders mainly acted as requesters, executors, and minimal influencers.

As requesters, middle leaders were limited to requesting resources for their department. Frequently, these requests were granted without much depth of conversation. The ultimate decision was made by the principal with little to no discussion with middle leaders. For example, one middle leader discussed a

resource request regarding teaching resources to improve student outcomes, but the principal decided to cut the budget with little discussion around the specific needs of the department. The actual allocation of resources arose from one-sided decision-making and lacking real dialogue.

As executors of the principal's decisions, middle leaders were expected to execute the principal's decisions. Middle leaders were expected to use the resources provided and use them as allocated. They did not have authority to redistribute resources based on the department's emerging needs. One middle leader noted that under the previous principal, they were given a set budget and had no capacity to amend the way the resources were applied, even in cases where the usage of resources was sporadic.

As minimal influencers, middle leaders had minimal influence on the decision regarding resource allocation. Even when presenting data after the allocation process had begun to develop, or even a request for additional resources based on field data regarding needed resources for example, more staffing middle leaders were generally ignored. The principal made the final decisions independently or arbitrarily with minimal middle leader influence.

#### *4.32 Middle Leader's Role Under Current Principal*

On the contrary, the leader adopted by the current Principal is a transformational leader style that has altered the role of the middle leaders a great deal; allowing them to take a more active, collaborative and influential role in distribution of resources. With this leadership style, decisions are shared, autonomy is raised, and openness pursued, the way resources are managed has been completely getting a change.

Middle leaders have co-decision demeanor under the transformational leadership model. They are in discussions and in decisions regarding how resource is allocated which is true for departmental needs as part of it. Yet another middle leader recounted how when suggesting the need for more digital learning tools, the principal listened to the proposal and collaborated with that middle leader in adjusting the budget so that the co-decision-making process occurred.

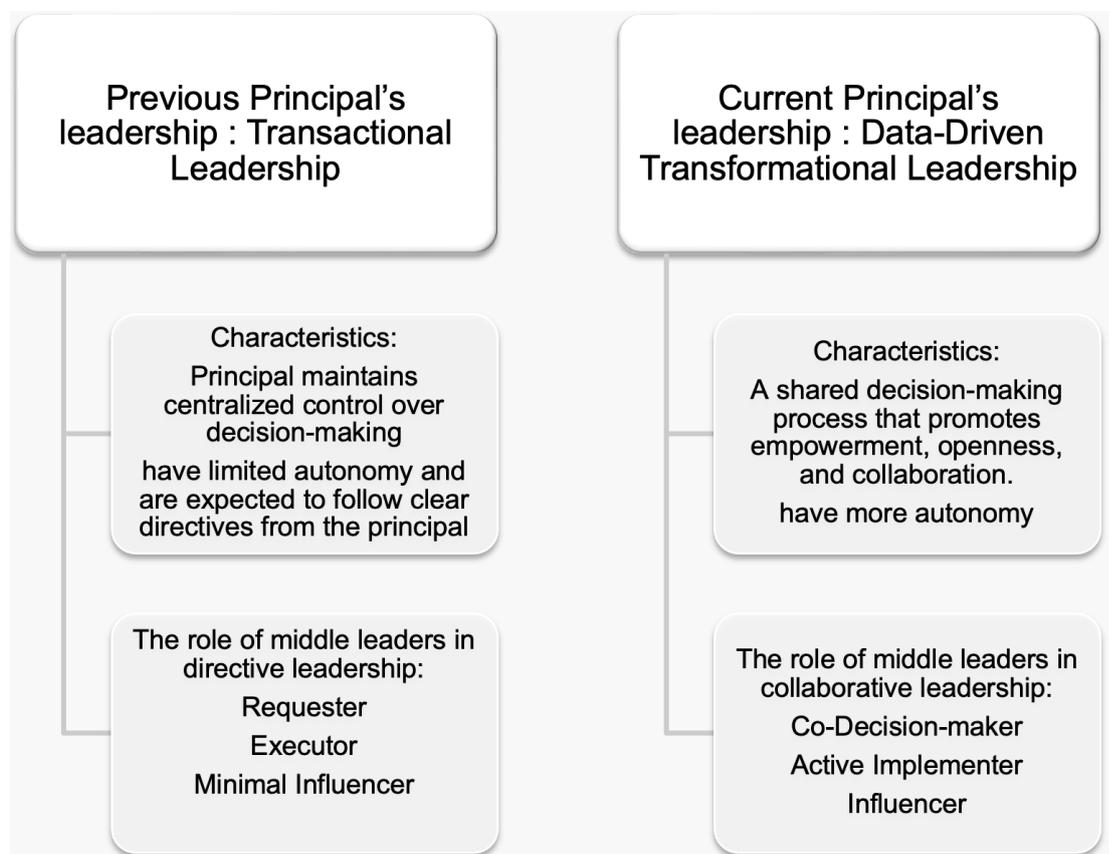
Middle leaders have also become active implementer, with some autonomy to adjust and reallocate resources based on real time need. For instance, a middle

leader highlighted how, rather than having a limited budget, leaders can distribute resources according to student feedback — giving extra help for popular extracurricular activities, for example.

In addition to that, middle leaders are now influential people. The principal encourages them to make adjustments to allocations of the resource and actually considers seriously the proposals made by them. The case involved a proposal by a middle leader to increase resources for non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students using student performance data. The request was granted by the principal who approved the reallocation, highlighting the latter's influential role.

Under the transformational style, there has been a shift from the directive leadership to the collaborative leadership that has empowered middle leaders to interact closely with the teachers, the staff and the principal. Such an inclusive, dynamic approach to the resource management has made indeed more responsive and efficient resource allocation, putting it in consistent relation to the ongoing school and departmental requirements. Sharing in decision-making has empowered middle leaders to take control and improve the efficiency and utilization of resources thereby improving the whole of school environment.

Figure 4. The role of the middle leader in the principal style of 2 middle schools



#### 4.4 Key Factors in the Role Transition of Middle leaders (Interview)

Several key drivers influenced the shift of middle leaders from a less active, operational role in the context of transactional leadership to a more active, collaborative, and impactful role within data-informed transformational leadership: the leadership style, autonomy afforded to middle leaders, collaboration opportunities, and flexibility in resource allocation. Based on interviews carried out with the middle leaders, the listed factors enabled their shift

to the following roles.

#### *4.41 Shift from Centralized to Decentralized Decision-Making*

Under the previous principal's transactional leadership, decision-making was highly centralized. The principal made most of the decisions on resource allocation, and middle leaders had little input, merely implementing decisions made without any influence on the process. The current principal's leadership style focuses on decentralizing the decision-making process. Middle leaders now actively participate in the resource allocation process, and data is an important influence on their decision-making. As one middle leader stated they no longer were simply told what to allocate, but they were invited to the planning early on and were able to make suggestions based on the needs of their departments. This has enabled middle leaders to take ownership of resource distribution.

#### *4.42 Increased Autonomy and Responsibility*

In the past, middle leaders had restricted autonomy, focused strictly on carrying out plans that were determined for them with little room for changes based on the needs of their department. Under the new principal, middle leaders have had more autonomy and responsibility in managing resources. In one case, a middle leader

explained that they now have the power to decide how to spend their department's budget, including choosing whether to prioritize professional learning or teaching resources, based on data and the needs of the department. This development has allowed them to develop and make more strategic and responsive decisions.

#### *4.43 Encouragement of Collaboration and Open Communication*

Transactional Leadership was marked by limited collaboration and a top-down communication style. Middle leaders had few opportunities to discuss and influence decision-making. In contrast, the current principal embraces open communication and collaboration. Middle leaders are invited to participate in inter-department meetings where leaders listen to what each department needs and contribute to planning resources. This open dialogue has allowed for more inclusivity and transparency in the decision-making process using data-informed decisions with the principal and departments.

#### *4.44 Data-Driven Decision-Making and Flexibility in Resource*

##### *Allocation*

Under the old leadership, resource allocation was predominantly based on predetermined budgets and set strategies, with minimal variations allowed for administering resources based on emerging data or departmental needs. The current principal incorporates data-driven decision-making to resource allocation. Middle leaders can now present student performance data to substantiate a request for resources. One middle leader mentioned their usage of student performance data to advocate for more resources for students who did not speak Chinese. This indicates that flexible resource allocation aligns with the school's broader agendas and departmental needs, all supported by data.

#### *4.5 The School's Approach to Ensuring Effective Use of Resource*

##### *4.51 Under the Data Drive Transformational Leadership*

*(Interview, literature Analysis)*

The appropriate and effective use of resources in educational settings is vital in supporting educational improvement and student achievement. A data-informed decision-making process is essential to facilitate such a process. When utilizing genuine data sources, such as student performance, teacher feedback, and departmental outcomes, school leaders can readily identify where resources

should be allocated. This practice has been outlined by Day (2000), who argues that data-informed resource allocation provides equity in use of school resources and connects to school improvement objectives. During the interviews, the principal indicated that using objective data, such as test scores and attendance records, is of great importance to inform responses to the real needs of the school.

Regular feedback and evaluation practice is also an essential component to ensure the appropriate use of school resources on an ongoing basis. According to Pont et al. (2008), periodic feedback on the intended purpose of the resource, from the whole school community, provides key insights about whether school resources are achieving their intended purpose. The assistant principal noted that ongoing evaluation is fundamental to assess the resources and adjust them according to the needs of the classroom.

Another point noted was that transparency about the needs for resource allocation is a significant contributor to building trust and fairness, as noted by Harris (2004), for accountability across the school. The assistant principal mentioned that communicating explicitly ensured there would be minimal misunderstandings, and that encouraged collegial engagement at the school. By prioritizing the most

pressing needs of the school, the school is making responsible decisions to allocate scarce resources, as Elmore (2000) discussed. Finally, adapting the resource allocation with flexibility is also critical to manage change, as highlighted in the work of Teece, Pisano, & Shuen (1997), so that the engagement with the context will evolve as well.

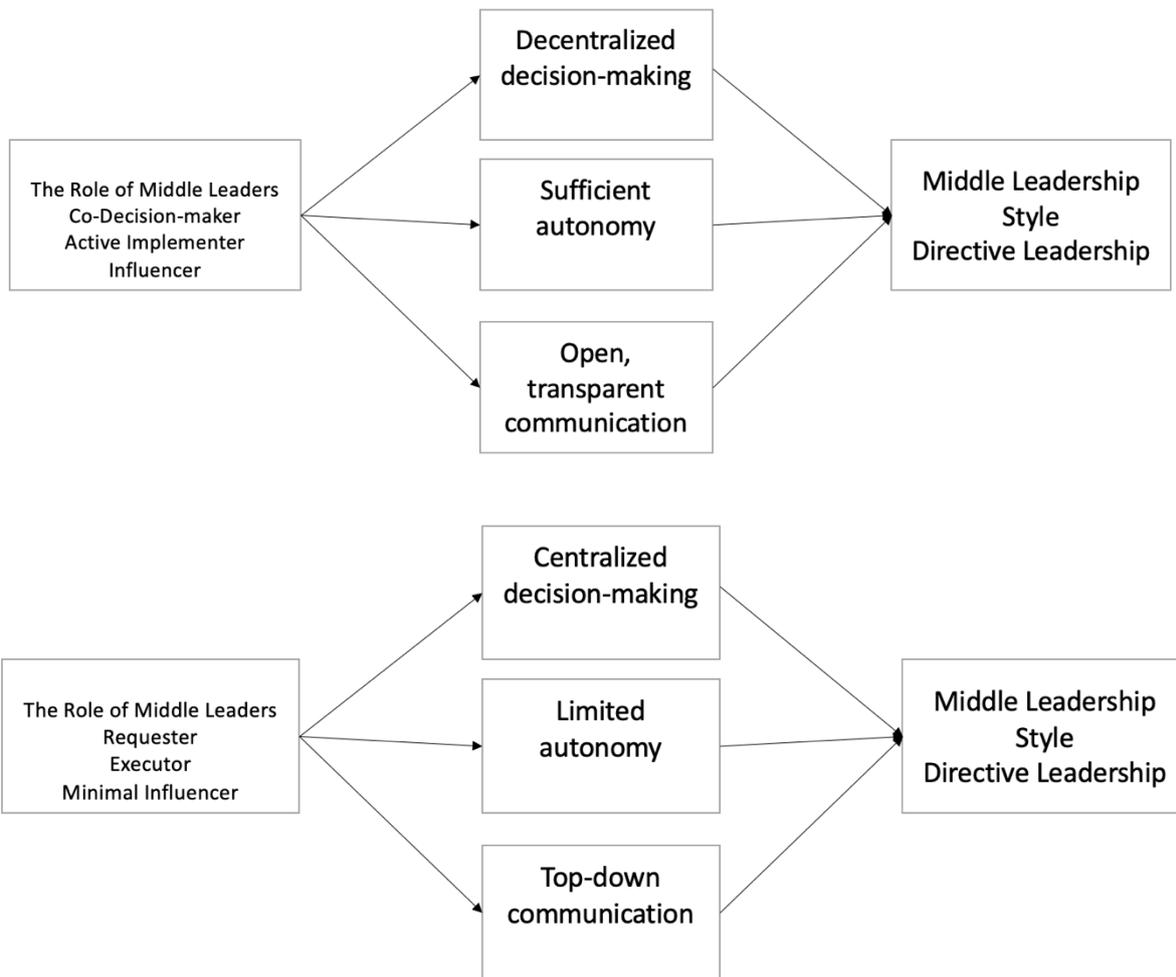
#### *4.52 Under the Transactional Leadership*

In the context of transactional leadership, resource distribution is predominantly characterized by central authority and decision making, with the principal having considerable control over the usage of resources. Middle leaders, who might be involved in resource allocation, typically operate in a passive capacity, acting on decisions delegated from the principal without much voice, accountability, or progressive autonomy. During transactional leadership resource allocation decisions usually occurs from the top down. Decisions to allocate resources are largely determined by the principal's individual judgment, a clearly designated budget, a relative determined plan of action, and an overarching concern for efficiency.

As such, resource distribution is less likely to be flexible and adaptable according to the emerging needs of the department or school. Because a transactional leadership approach focuses on control of the allocation of finite resources and budget management, there is diminished capacity for middle leaders to request resource redistribution that is more flexible or accommodating to situations. In some instances, a reliance on non-evidence-based data for decision-making about resources also limits resource effectiveness because decisions are informed by judgement based on an individual principal's judgement instead of exact evidence such as student performance or departmental feedback.

Thus, while transactional leadership may provide a level of predictability and stability, it may not effectively distinguish how to allocate resources in a strategic and dynamic manner that supports student and teacher progress.

Figure 5,6: Middle Leadership (Directive Leadership and Collaborative Leadership)



## 5. Discussion

### 5.1 Responses to Research Question 1 and 2

#### 5.11 Response to RQ1

The responsibilities of middle leaders in contributing to resource allocation

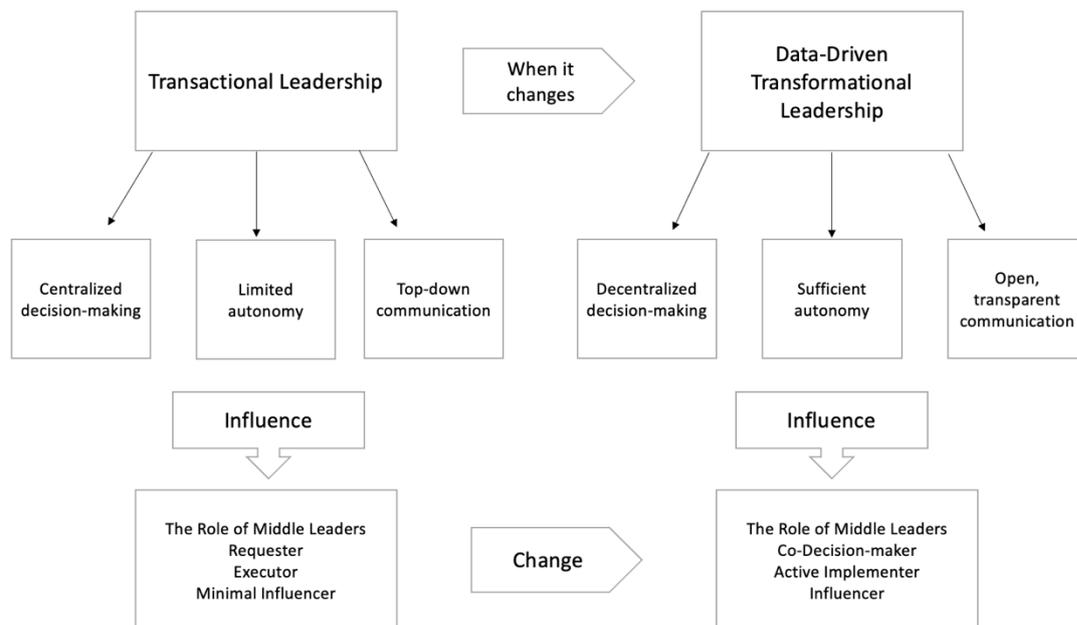
decision-making have evolved through preceding leadership structures. Under a transactional leadership structure, decision-making was centralized, and middle leaders were positioned in a passive role while decisions were being made. Their autonomy was limited, as they only administered decisions made by the principal when allocated a budget and without providing their input. For example, one middle leader explained they were allocated a fixed amount of money and had no ability to utilize any flexible budget line items to address the needs of their department. In effect, the centralized decision-making structure reinforced the directive approach to transactional leadership, which placed compliance as a priority over initiative (Bass, 1985). Communication was one-way, with little input or feedback associated with top-down communication, which corresponds with transactional leadership, as a common critique, of being inflexible and unresponsive to change (Northouse, 2018).

In contrast, data-driven transformational leadership represents a shift to a more active, collaborative role for middle leaders engaged in resource allocation. Middle leaders are considered co-decision-makers and members of collaborative team planning and resource allocation, resulting in a sense of larger autonomous responsibilities. One middle leader was speaking during their interview about how they are asked to be involved in more 'up-front' planning where they can use

student performance data to advocate for change in their departments. Indeed, the shift from centralized to decentralized decision-making is important to transformational leadership in that it reflects empowerment and shared responsibilities (Avolio & Bass, 1991). On another note, the principal's use of data to inform strategic decision-making makes resource allocation and purchasing teams more informed and responsive to departments' needs, which is also well documented in the literature on data-driven decision-making in education (Gaftandzhieva et al., 2023).

This change in structure has afforded middle leaders the opportunity collaborates with the leadership team, while allowing for collective responsibility, collaboration, and effective resource allocation for the departments. This change coincides with the literature establishing some consensus in support of leadership that encourages collaboration and use of data-informed practices can be instrumental to improved educational outcomes (Harris, 2004).

Figure 7. Diagram of response to the RQ1



## 5.12 Response to RQ2

The function that middle leaders assume with regard to infrastructure and other resources will differ greatly depending on the type of leadership in place. When a principal leads through a transactional leadership approach, they will exercise centralized control over resourcing, and middle leaders will take a largely passive role during the process. Their role will be almost entirely in an executive capacity, lacking the opportunity to influence decisions through independent agency or autonomy. Naturally, this means that principals make decisions about resourcing allocation based largely on their professional judgment, utilizing budgets that have been predetermined and almost entirely efficacious. Generally, middle

leaders are tasked with executing decision-making without sufficient autonomy to rethink resourcing based on realities evolving in the department or from captured feedback from staff and students. It is quite possible that resource allocation is less adaptable in this instance, as it is not informed by its needed adaptability to the dynamic nature of the organization of school. For example, if a middle leader received funding for a unit of work in their department, they may not have the discretionary power to move the funding to another department due to emergent need from student inquiry or new curriculum. The rigidities create the potential for underutilization of resources because resources cannot be modified based on real-time data (Bass, 1985) or feedback loops (Bass, 1985).

However, with data driven transformational leadership, there is potential for middle leaders to become more engaged in co-deciding to collaboratively make decisions that are adaptive to the allocation of resources. Consider the example of using data driven decision making as part of the assumptions about middle leaders' engagement. Allowing for evidence-based justification of resource needs allows middle leaders to engage in negotiations about the need for more resources that are informed by data through student performance metrics or needs assessments for their own department. They can be discretionary and alter the

resources dynamically per situational need, and data legitimizes the need for the resourcing decisions in a way that is less reliant on past practices or assumptions around resource needs. If a department identified a gap in student performance, or if student feedback indicated a need for additional funding, an empowered middle leader can advocate for reallocating their funding or securing additional funds to improve access to additional resources through arguing from evidence informed position. This aligns with research that suggest data informed decision making is more effective and efficient in decision making around resource allocation (Harris, 2004). Moreover, a data informed approach relies on flexibility, or adaptability on the part of decision-makers to move resources around, maximizing their use to meet the needs of various departments that are experiencing different challenges, or maximizing the use of funds for activities that are relevant to student inquiry.

Again, research points to collaborative leadership, which includes data to inform decisions leads to more effective resource management because it aligns to better linkage between resources and educational strategic goal (Day, 2000). With that said, collaboratively determining the allocation of resources through shared leadership transparently increases trust and the sense of ownership of resources

by stakeholders when using resources within the most impact way for that school, such as between departments (Pont et al., 2008).

Figure 8,9. Diagram of response to the RQ2

Figure 8. Diagram of directive leadership affects resource allocation.

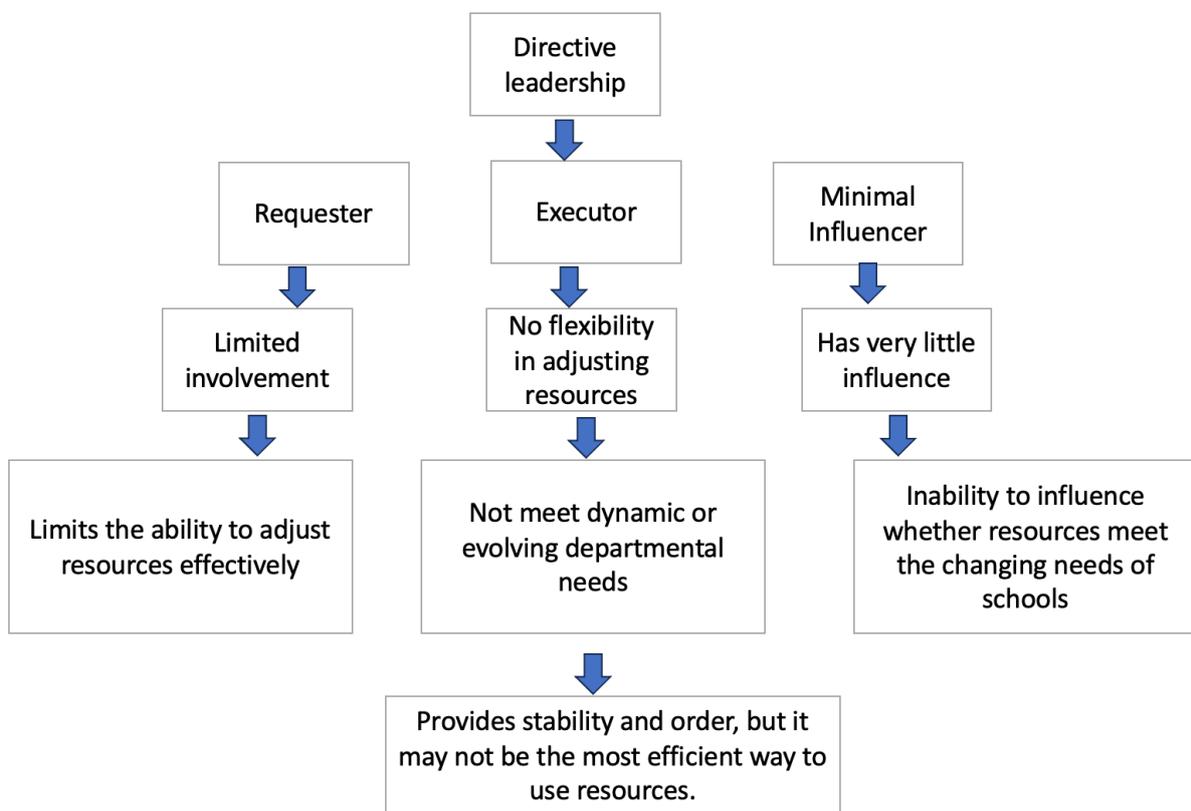
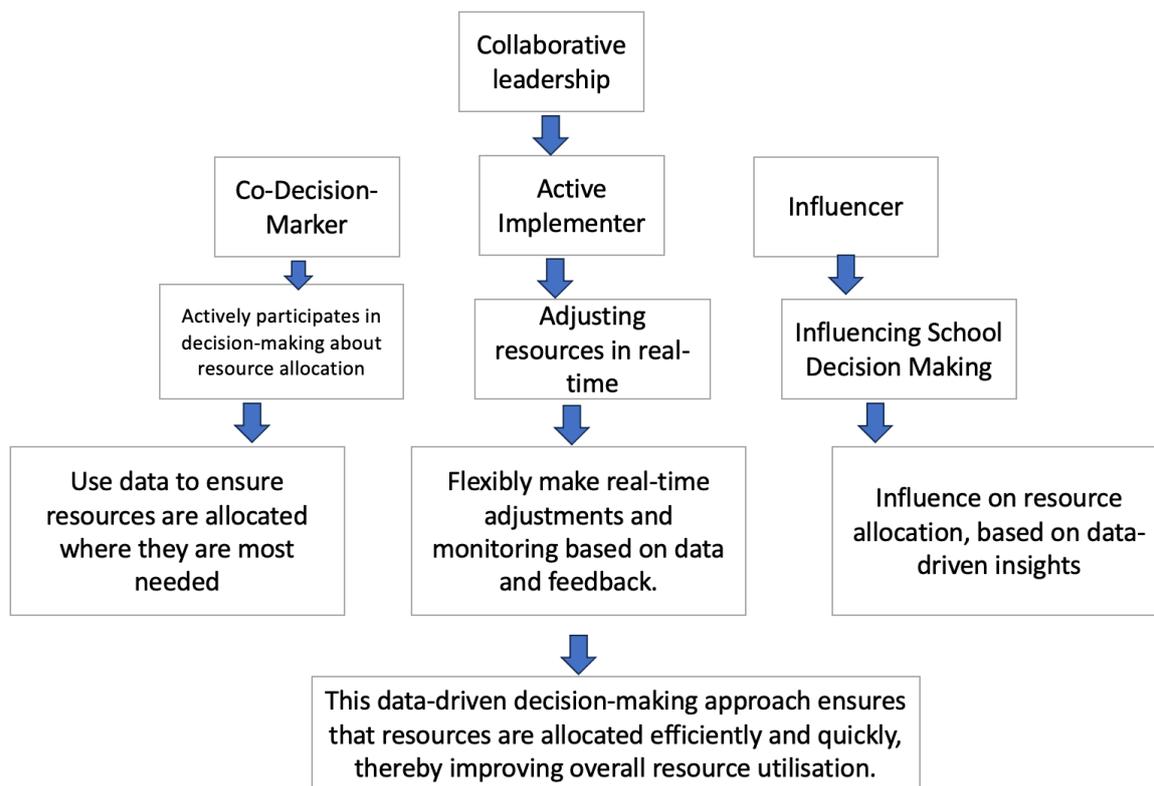


Figure 9. Diagram of Collaborative affects resource allocation.



*5.2 Leadership styles that best suit Hong Kong's school-based management model.*

Data-Driven Transformational Leadership (DDTL) is inherently preferable to Transactional Leadership in the context of Hong Kong's School-Based Management (SBM) model, due to its emphasis on concepts such as empowerment, transparency, and flexibility. DDTL provides middle leaders with space for empowerment, which reinforces the principles of decentralization and autonomy that characterize SBM. Within the current leadership of the principal mentioned above, middle leaders have become involved in decision-making

processes, particularly regarding resource allocation, with various data (such as student performance and teacher feedback) informing those decisions. DDTL can be seen to promote the changing role of middle leaders in taking up additional responsibilities, and making data-informed decisions that can drive participatory leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Avolio & Bass, 1991).

Furthermore, DDTL supports collaboration and transparency as a characteristic of SBM leadership models, which is also important in the case of collective decision-making as part of educational reform in Hong Kong. DDTL promotes transparency in the resource allocation process; individual stakeholders have ownership in the transparency of informing how resources are allocated, which builds trust and confidence in the school in general. Additionally, transparency over decision-making and resource allocation creates a sense of ownership for both students and departments regarding their resources, and creates a responsive school (Ming, 2024).

Transactional Leadership, on the other hand, characteristically limits middle leaders' autonomy due to centralized decision-making, and control over the

decision-making process. The previous principal led the school in a transactional participatory style where participation and collaboration were limited, and decisions made by the principal were either based on their own opinion rather than data or departmental needs. Therefore, Transactional Leadership often does not foster engaged staff members, related to the reality that transactional models are not conducive to innovation resulting in higher turnover of staff (Febrian et al., 2023). Moreover, Transactional leadership offers no flexibility to engage in continual improvements or changes within the rapidly changing educational landscape, compared to DDTL that allows for adjustment based on continuously generated data (Surana et al., 2019).

### *5.3 Improving Middle Leadership in Resource Allocation*

The interviews conducted with the principal, assistant principal, and teachers unveiled several strategies that could improve middle leadership's role in the allocation of resources. The most prominent strategy that teachers reported was clear and open communication and collaboration with teachers, to have the voice and expertise of teachers valued in conjunction with making decisions to effectively allocate resources to teachers' needs. Teachers reported that open

communication would allow middle leaders to understand real-time needs to better allocate resources. Thus, the middle leaders were aligning with Harris (2004), who stated that collaborating through transparency and inclusiveness would ultimately support collaboration that bolstered the overall school outcomes.

The next major strategy was to improve data-driven decision-making with evidence. The assistant principal offered both qualitative and quantitative data to justify any requests for resources. The use of student data about performance and feedback from teachers would show evidence of students' needs and allow for resource allocation in relation to the needs of departments and students - which are both supported through the school priorities (Robinson, 2007).

Enhancing monitoring and flexible use of resources was highlighted as well. Middle leaders should be empowered to adjust allocated resources based on ongoing performance data and feedback, not a static once a year process of budgeting (Teece et al., 1997).

Lastly, teachers and the assistant principal emphasized the role of professional development for middle leaders to successfully allocate resources. Skill

development on managing a budget, analyzing data, and strategic planning would better prepare middle leaders to advocate for resources and engage with school management (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). Another method of allocating resources to the departments was to foster a culture of shared accountability for resources so that departments work to evaluate their needs from IEPs and support equitable allocation and use of resources in relation to the school's strategic plan.

## **6. Limitations**

This study offers valuable insights into the role of middle leadership in resource allocation within a secondary school, exploring the effects of two distinct leadership styles employed by the principal. However, several limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings.

### *6.1 Limited Scope and Sample Size*

The context of this research is one secondary school in Hong Kong, which restricts the generalizability of the findings. The context, culture, and resources could be unique to that school and the leadership in that school context could not be applied to context in other schools and regions, and (leading in different organization context). The principal leadership style examined as part the study

at this secondary school may not apply to schools with different principal leadership priorities or organizational contexts. Future research should expand and involve a larger sample of schools from different geographic regions and educational contexts (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). For example, future studies could explore principal leadership effects on middle leadership and the allocation of resources across educational systems to investigate how principal leadership style might be relevant.

### *6.2 Subjectivity of Interview Data*

The research offered important qualitative data via interviews with middle leaders, the principal, assistant principal and teachers, however, participants' personal perspectives and experiences, and biases, may have affected the data. Even though the study studied middle leaders and principal leadership, the fact that each role has potentially different perceptions and expectations of the principal role may likely have influenced the responses. Despite this limitation, future research may combine qualitative data with quantitative in a mixed-methods approach that will provide for a more comprehensive approach when basing conclusions or validating the qualitative data to illustrate how leadership styles do or do not impact middle leadership or the allocation of campus-level resources

(Bass, 1985).

### *6.3 Short -Term Study Period*

The research was undertaken in a relatively short timeframe, which limits the opportunity to assess the longer-term impact of SBM and different principal leadership styles on middle leadership and resource allocation. This research has shown immediate consequences but does not allow for a deeper assessment of how these would change over time. A longitudinal study could provide a greater overview of the sustainability and longer-term impact of SBM on middle leadership responsibilities, particularly around the changing needs of departments and changing dynamics of leadership (Avolio & Bass, 1991).

## **7. Implications**

This study on the role of middle leaders in resource allocation under transformational and transactional leadership styles has several implications for educational leadership and SBM.

### *7.1 Empowering Middle Leaders*

Transitioning from a directive form of leadership to one focused on collaboration has important consequences for empowering middle leaders. Principals who include middle leaders as co-decision-makers create a more comprehensive environment, allowing middle leaders to take ownership of resources and their allocation. This empowerment increases middle leaders' autonomy as well as their accountability and responsibility for meeting goals for their respective school departments. Empowering middle leaders shifts school resource allocation and use closer to topics that matter to school departments, leading to potentially better resource use and alignment to departments that are school specific.

### *7.2 Leadership Training and Development*

The findings emphasize the potentiality of the establishment of leadership training programs that prepare middle leaders to competently engage in the management of resources. As middle leaders transition from passive doers to active decision-makers, it is imperative to develop professional development opportunities that focus on collaborative leadership, strategic planning and data-

management decision making. Training that also develops self-efficacy confidence within middle leaders will enable them to accept greater responsibility in the decision-making process.

### *7.3 Implications for School Policy*

The research suggests that adjustments to the school policy may be necessary to support the more distributed model of decision-making. For example, policies that promote shared leadership and collaborative planning support middle leaders and their role in the allocation of resources. This could take the form of formalizing the role of middle leaders in budget considerations, incorporating their perspectives in strategic planning, and connecting budgetary and resource allocation considerations with a long-term vision and goals for the school.

## **8. Recommendations**

### *8.1 Enhancing Professional Development and Human Resource Management*

As indicated by the principal's perception, tailored professional development

courses should be more available for middle leaders to develop their leadership. Professional development initiatives should be identified and designed to help middle leaders in human resource management, planning and decision-making based on evidence. With this training middle leaders will be able to make a more informed decision on how to use a variety of resources and be an advocate for their department. If school systems are going to use professional development for middle leaders, they must also maintain it as ongoing. Ongoing professional development will maintain your middle leaders' interest and motivation to fulfill their roles and responsibilities to meet short- and long-term goals (Avolio & Bass, 1991). This is consistent with Bass's (1985) idea that empowering middle leaders through professional development, increases the role of middle leaders with respect to how they will allocate resources.

### *8.2 Developing a Resource Allocation Framework:*

It is suggested that standardized frameworks or guidelines to allocate resources are developed by policy makers that take into account both immediate needs and future considerations. These frameworks should represent a clear protocol to involve middle leaders and teachers in the devising of resource allocation

processes. In this research, it was demonstrated that the engagement of middle leaders and teachers, as the key stakeholders of the resource allocation process, in some form, will be more responsive to the needs of departments and identify resource allocation goals aligned to the overall strategic vision of the school. Middle leaders can sometimes be advocates of resources, therefore, part of the responsibility is to involve middle leaders alongside the principal and the other departments to ensure the process is fair and equitable in terms of some criteria for the distribution of resources (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). If a standardised framework was developed, schools could develop a method for allocating resources that is transparent, collaborative, and is equally based on immediate needs and future needs.

## **9. Conclusion**

In closing, this research underscores the importance of middle leadership in the allocation of resources in secondary schools in Hong Kong, particularly within the framework of School-Based Management (SBM). The findings indicate that Data-Driven Transformational Leadership (DDTL) offers a conceptually better fit for resource distribution compared to Transactional Leadership, due to its

focus on empowerment, collaboration, and data-driven decision making. Middle leaders' involvement in the resource decision making processes supports a more responsive and transparent and fair distribution of resources across the whole school, in line with both department need and school strategic vision. DDTL also encourages flexibility and adaptability, both critical components of dealing with the dynamic challenges of schools. This study also highlighted the significance of developing a guide for resource allocation decisions that addresses immediate needs within the context of long-term goals for middle leaders and teachers. This research offers practical recommendations for enhancing leadership practice and resource allocation practice within schools and can strengthen educational outcomes through alignment with the principles of School-Based Management that can support sustainable school improvement.

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## 11. Appendices

### Appendices 1

#### Interview Question For Middle Leaders

1. How would you describe the previous principal's leadership style in terms of resource allocation?
2. To what extent did middle leadership participate in resource allocation under the previous principal's leadership?
3. Can you give an example of how the previous principal's leadership style affected resource allocation?
4. Do you think the previous principal's leadership style allowed for open communication and feedback from middle leadership? Why?
5. How did you feel about your role in resource allocation decisions under the previous principal's leadership? Did you feel empowered or restricted?
6. How would you describe the current principal's leadership style in terms of resource allocation?
7. Do you think the current principal has given you more autonomy and decision-making power? Can you explain?
8. How has your role in resource allocation changed under the current principal compared to the previous principal?
9. Can you share an example of how the current principal's leadership style has positively or negatively influenced your department's resource allocation?
10. How do you think the current principal promotes cooperation and communication between middle leadership and other school stakeholders regarding resource needs?
11. How would you describe the current principal's leadership style in resource allocation?
12. Do you think the current principal has given you more autonomy and decision-making power? Can you explain?
13. How has your role in resource allocation changed under the current principal compared to the previous principal?
14. Can you share an example of how the current principal's leadership style has positively or negatively influenced your department's resource allocation?
15. How do you think the current principal promotes cooperation and communication between middle leadership and other school stakeholders regarding resource needs?
16. How do you think the efficiency of resource allocation has changed since the shift from the previous principal's leadership style to the current one?
17. Do you think it is easier or more challenging to cooperate with the current principal on resource allocation compared to the previous principal? Why?
18. Do you think the previous principal's leadership style still affects how resources are allocated at the school now?

## For Teacher

### 1. Regarding Cooperation Between Middle Leadership and the Principal:

1. Can you observe the collaboration between middle leadership and the principal in resource allocation and management? How do you think this collaboration impacts your teaching?
2. When middle leadership reflects departmental needs to the principal, do you feel these needs are valued and reflected in resource allocation? Could you give an example?
3. Do you feel that middle leadership can effectively align the current resource allocation method and decisions with the actual needs of the department? If there are any shortcomings, what do you think they are?

### 2. Middle Leadership's Role in Resource Allocation Decisions:

4. When resources are limited, do you feel that middle leadership effectively advocates for more support from the principal on behalf of teachers? How does this help your teaching?
5. Do you think middle leadership can serve as a bridge in the current resource allocation decisions? Does this role make it easier for teachers' needs to be understood by the principal?
6. When there are issues with resource allocation within the department, have you ever communicated these issues to middle leadership? Did they help resolve the problem through collaboration with the principal?

### 3. Suggestions for Improving Cooperation Between Middle Leadership and the Principal:

7. How do you think middle leadership could cooperate more effectively with the principal to ensure that teachers' needs are fully considered?
8. If you could suggest improvements to the collaboration model between middle leadership and the principal, what aspects would you focus on? For example, communication methods, transparency, or efficiency of collaboration?
9. Do you think middle leadership and the principal should increase the opportunities for feedback from ordinary teachers to ensure resource allocation is more aligned with teaching needs?

### 4. Specific Actions of Middle Leadership:

10. **In your observation, do you think middle leadership can give teachers more voice in the current resource allocation decisions? If you have any successful examples, please share.**
11. **Do you think middle leadership can be fair and comprehensive in understanding the needs of teachers when helping the principal? Why?**
12. **When middle leadership and the principal have disagreements on resource decisions, have you observed how middle leadership balances departmental interests with the overall needs of the school?**

## **For Principal**

## **Principal's Answers:**

### **1. Regarding Collaboration in Resource Allocation Decisions:**

- 1. How do you collaborate with middle leadership in the current resource allocation process? Is there a fixed communication process or collaboration mechanism?**
- 2. When formulating resource allocation plans, how do you solicit the opinions of middle leadership? How much weight do these opinions carry in the decision-making process?**
- 3. When school resources are limited, how do you work with middle leadership to establish priorities and balance the overall needs of the school with departmental needs?**
- 4. Can you share a specific case where middle leadership's suggestions influenced your resource allocation decision and how the decision impacted the outcome?**

### **2. Regarding Middle Leadership's Role and Expectations:**

- 5. What are your expectations for middle leadership in resource allocation and management? Do you think they can fully play their role? Why?**
- 6. In resource management, which specific areas do you think middle leadership should be more involved in?**
- 7. How do you evaluate the efficiency of middle leadership in resource management? Are there specific evaluation standards or indicators?**

### **3. Challenges in the Resource Allocation Process:**

- 8. Have you encountered disagreements or challenges in collaborating with middle leadership? How were these challenges resolved?**
- 9. When resource demands from middle leadership exceed the school's capacity, how do you negotiate solutions with them? Is there a fixed method for handling this?**
- 10. Have you ever faced conflicts between teachers or departments in resource allocation? In these cases, did middle leadership play a role in mediating?**

11. **How do you ensure that collaboration with middle leadership ultimately helps achieve the school's overall teaching goals?**
12. **Do you invite middle leadership to participate in long-term planning for resource allocation decisions? If so, how do these plans fit into the school's overall development strategy?**
13. **Can you share a successful case where collaboration between middle leadership in resource allocation helped improve teaching or student outcomes?**

**i. Improving Collaboration with Middle Leadership:**

14. **In the collaboration between the principal and middle leadership, what areas do you think can be improved? For example, communication frequency, decision-making transparency, or role distribution?**
15. **Do you think middle leadership needs more professional training or support to better assist you in resource management? If so, what areas should be improved?**
16. **If you could design an ideal collaboration model between the principal and middle leadership, what characteristics would this model have?**

## **For Assistant Principal**

**1. Regarding Cooperation Between Middle Leadership and the Principal:**

1. **As the assistant principal, how do you view the cooperation between middle leadership and the principal? Does this cooperation effectively support the school's resource management?**
2. **What key roles do you think middle leadership plays in the current resource allocation decisions? Can they fully fulfill their role?**
3. **In the meetings or discussions you participate in, does middle leadership clearly express the needs of teachers or departments to the principal? If there are any shortcomings, where do you think the issues lie?**

**2. The Assistant Principal's Role in the Collaboration:**

4. **In the collaboration between middle leadership and the principal, do you need to play a bridge role to help them communicate and collaborate more effectively? If so, can you share a**

**. Challenges in Resource Allocation and Cooperation:**

7. **Have you observed middle leadership facing challenges when reflecting resource needs to the principal? What challenges typically arise, such as insufficient communication or unclear expression of needs?**
8. **In cases of limited resources, do you think the cooperation between middle leadership and the principal promotes fair and efficient resource allocation? If there are challenges, how do you help resolve them?**
9. **When the principal's decision does not fully meet the expectations of middle leadership or departments, how do you help both parties find a balance?**

**4. Improving Cooperation with Middle Leadership:**

10. **How do you think middle leadership can improve the efficiency of their cooperation with the principal? For example, clearer expression, more specific data support, or more proactive involvement?**
11. **If you could suggest improvements to the cooperation model between the principal and middle leadership, what aspects would you emphasize? For example, communication frequency, role distribution, or decision-making transparency?**
12. **Do you think the principal should provide more support or guidance to middle leadership to help them better participate in resource allocation and management?**

**5. The Role of Middle Leadership in School Development:**

13. **Do you think middle leadership can more actively assist the principal in achieving the school's long-term development goals? If so, in what areas should they strengthen their cooperation?**
14. **In cases where school resources are limited, have you seen middle leadership and the principal adopt innovative cooperation methods to resolve issues? Were these methods successful?**
15. **Do you think the assistant principal has a more prominent role to play in promoting cooperation between middle leadership and the principal? Why?**
16. **Can you share a specific example where you played a key role in the cooperation between middle leadership and the principal, and how it positively impacted the school's resource management?**

## Appendices 2

### Table of interviewees' backgrounds

Interviewer	Background
Principal	The new school principal has more than 20 years of experience in school administration.
1 Assistant Principal	Worked in schools for more than 20 years, with more than 15 years of management experience
5 Middle Leaders: Co-curricular Activities Director(B), Head of Discipline(A), Head of Counselling(E), Head of Mathematics Department(C), Head of Curriculum(D).	Their average years of service at the school is more than 15 years, and they have served two principals of the school.
1 School Teacher	A mathematics teacher with two years of teaching experience, who has served two school principals

## Appendix 3 School's public documents

<p><b>.:學校報告:.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 2023-2024年度學校報告</li> <li>■ 2022-2023年度學校報告</li> <li>■ 2021-2022年度學校報告</li> <li>■ 2020-2021年度學校報告</li> <li>■ 2019-2020年度學校報告</li> </ul>	<p>學校周年計劃</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 2024-2025年度</li> <li>■ 2023-2024年度</li> <li>■ 2022-2023年度</li> <li>■ 2021-2022年度</li> <li>■ 2020-2021年度</li> </ul> <p>三年校務發展計劃書</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 2023-2026年度</li> <li>■ 2020-2023年度</li> </ul> <p>學校報告</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 2023-2024年度校務報告</li> <li>■ 2022-2023年度校務報告</li> <li>■ 2021-2022年度校務報告</li> <li>■ 2020-2021年度校務報告</li> <li>■ 2019-2020年度校務報告</li> </ul>
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#### 四. 2022-2024 運用情況

項目	活動內容	對象	日期	目的	金額
1	資助公民與社會發展科內地考察團(珠海航空科技探索之旅)一位老師的團費	老師	2023年7月	增加多一位老師的協助,使考察團順利完成	\$495
2	北京中華文化交流團訂金及團費	同學及老師	2024年2及3月	透過是次考察北京的歷史名勝、參觀最新發展項目及欣賞傳統京味表現等,使同學更全面認識北京,培養同學的國民身份認同。	\$199,500
3	資助公民與社會發展科內地考察團(惠州創新科技內地考	老師	2024年7月	增加多一位老師的協助,使考察團順利完成	\$890

## Appendix 4

### School Organizational Bar Chat

