

# Teacher leadership in professionalism and curriculum development



Dora Ho, EdD  
Associate Professor  
Department of Early Childhood Education  
The Hong Kong Institute of Education

# Outlines

- The rise of curriculum leadership
- What is curriculum leadership?
- Alutto and Belasco's theoretical framework
- Hong Kong ECE as an illustrative case
- Marlow & Minehira's theory on promoting teacher leadership for curriculum development

# Curriculum leadership?

- Curriculum + Leadership = curriculum leadership
- A curriculum leader is **a person/a group of persons** who is (are) responsible in **LEADING and MANAGING** the **learning experience** in educational system.

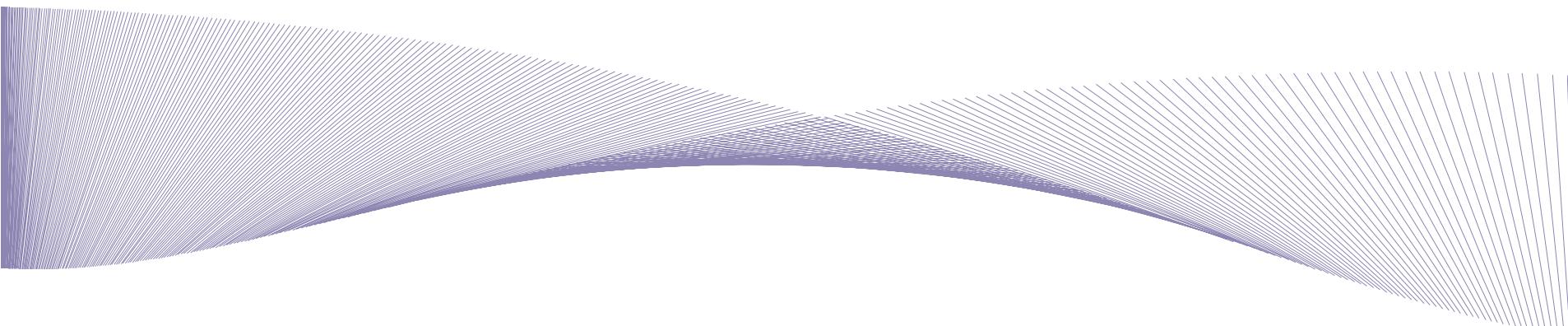


# The rise of curriculum leadership

- Increasing complexity of educational problems
- Non-traditional schooling
- Decentralization of curriculum decision making
- Changing roles of teachers from curriculum users to curriculum developers
- an extended version of teacher professionalism
- Increased size of schools

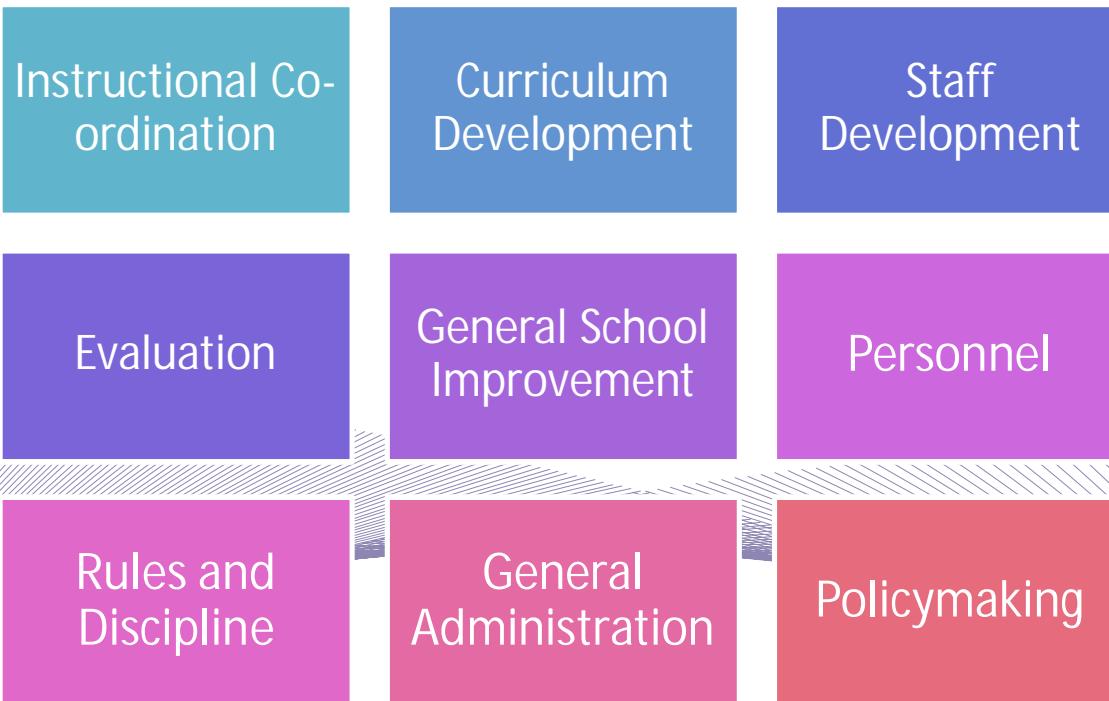
# What is curriculum leadership?

- on which issues?
- at which levels?
- with what sources of power?
- with what level of desire (Alutto and Belasco's theoretical framework)?



# On which issues?

- Teacher participation in school decision-making
- school decisions that extend beyond a particular classroom
- cover nine areas (Duke & Showers, 1998)



# At which levels?

- The roles and functions of curriculum leadership (Glatthorn,1997)
- at the classroom-level:

a. develop yearly planning calendars for operationalizing the curriculum

b. develop units of study

c. enrich the curriculum and remediate learning

d. evaluate the curriculum

- at the school-level:

- a. develop the school's vision of a quality curriculum

- b. develop the school's own program of studies

- c. develop a learning-centered schedule

- d. determine the nature and extent of curriculum integration

- e. monitor and assist in curriculum implementation

# With what sources of power?

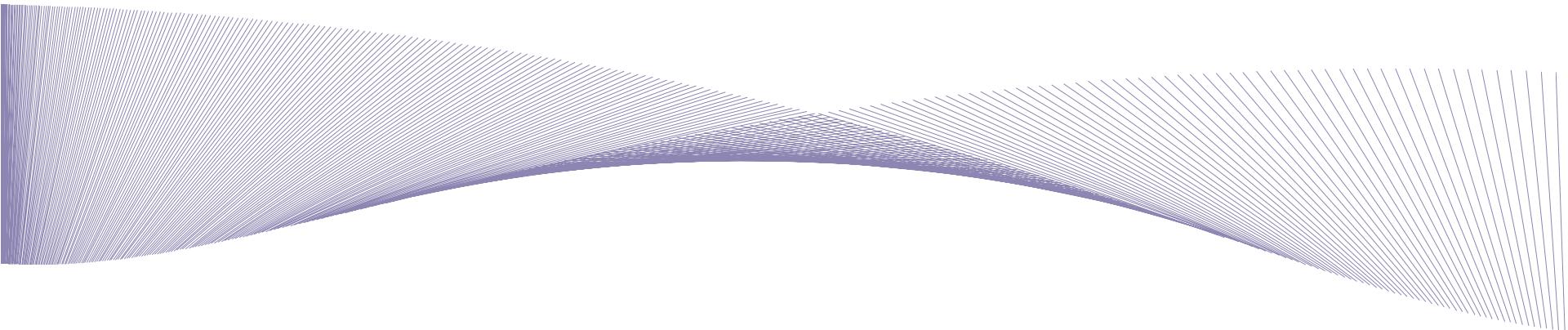
- Leadership

Single headship  Multiple leadership

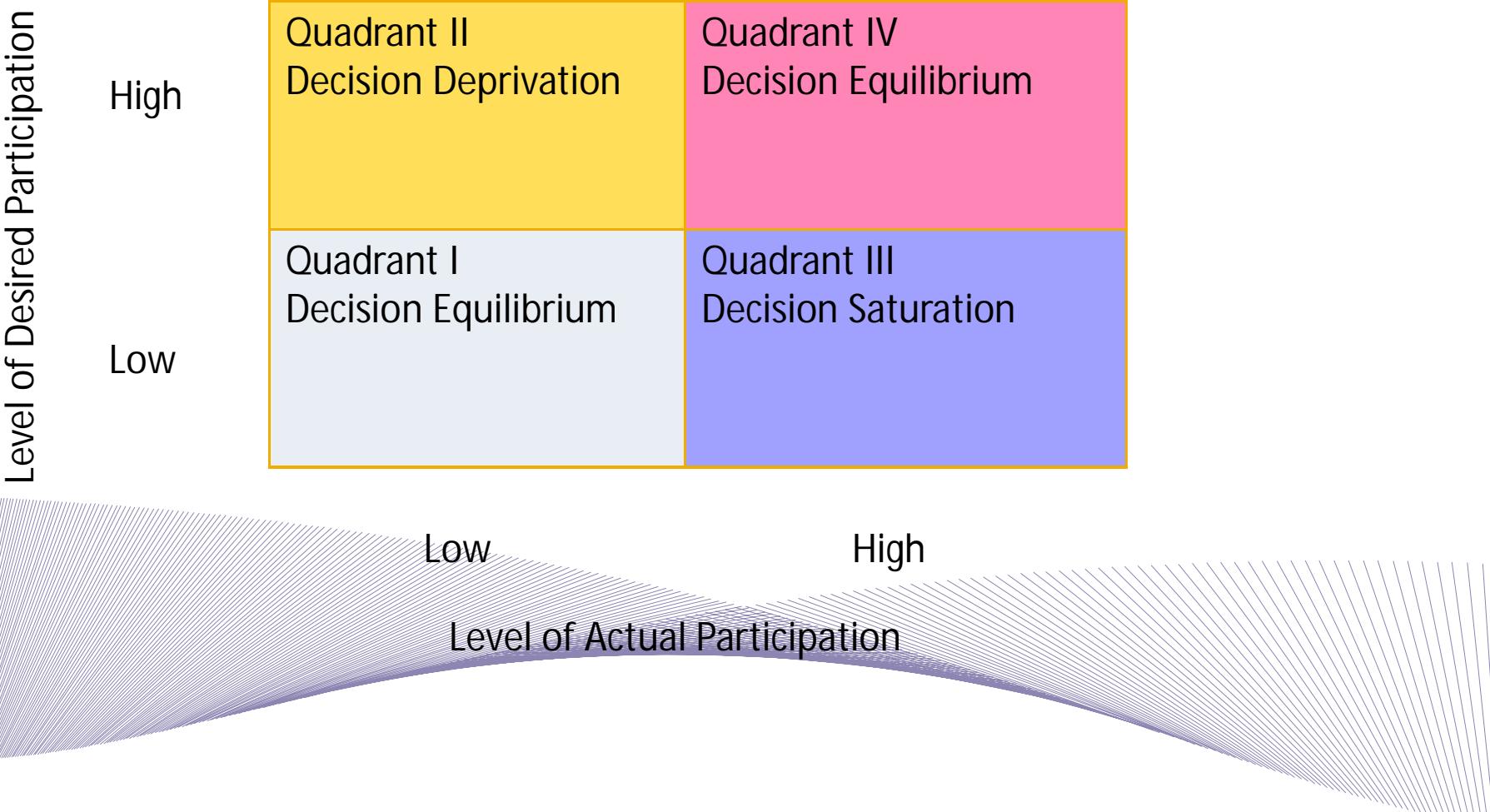
Centralization  Decentralization

# With what level of desire?

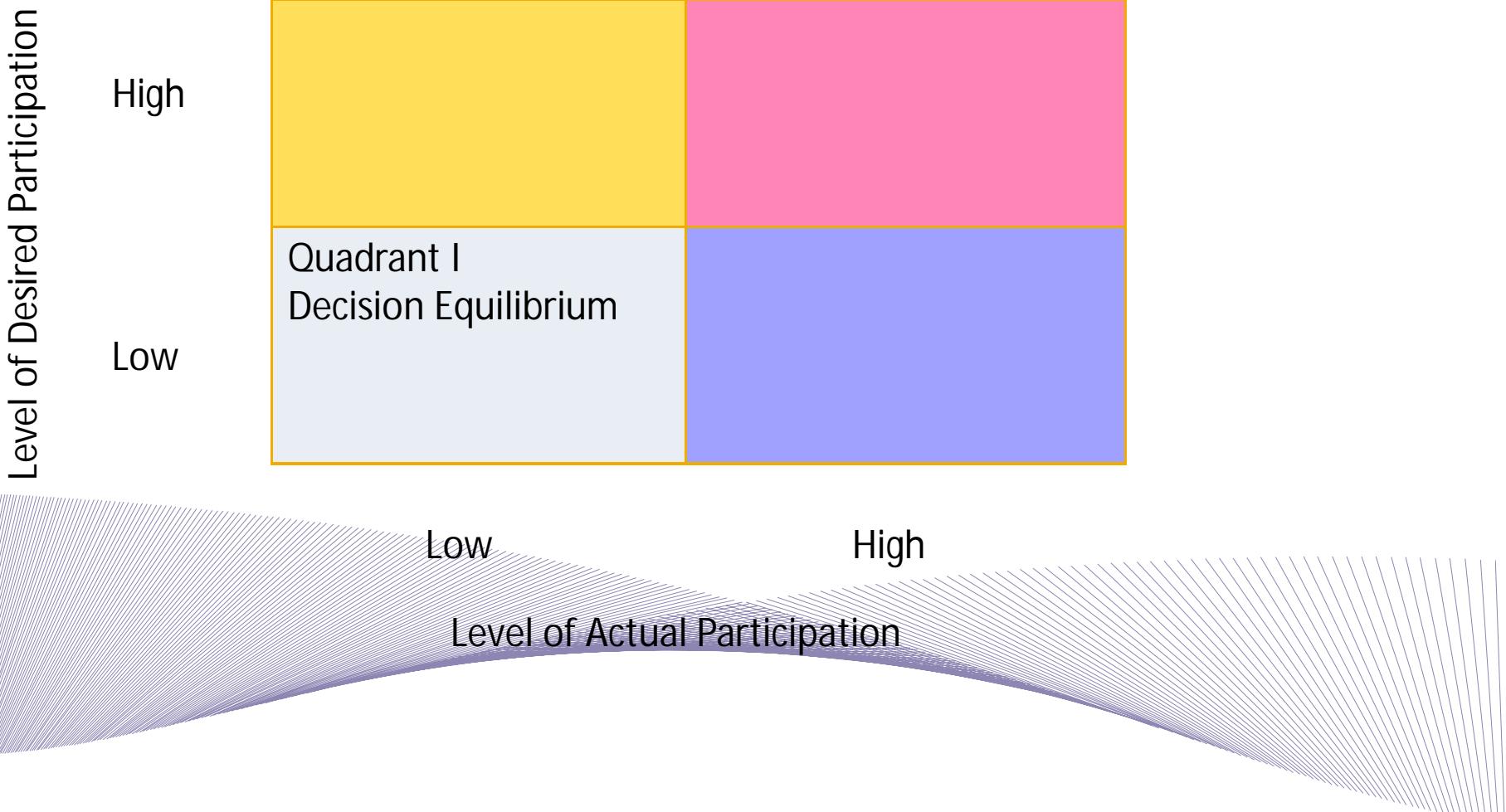
- Alutto and Belasco's (1972) Analytical Framework for Participative Decision Making in Curriculum and Pedagogy



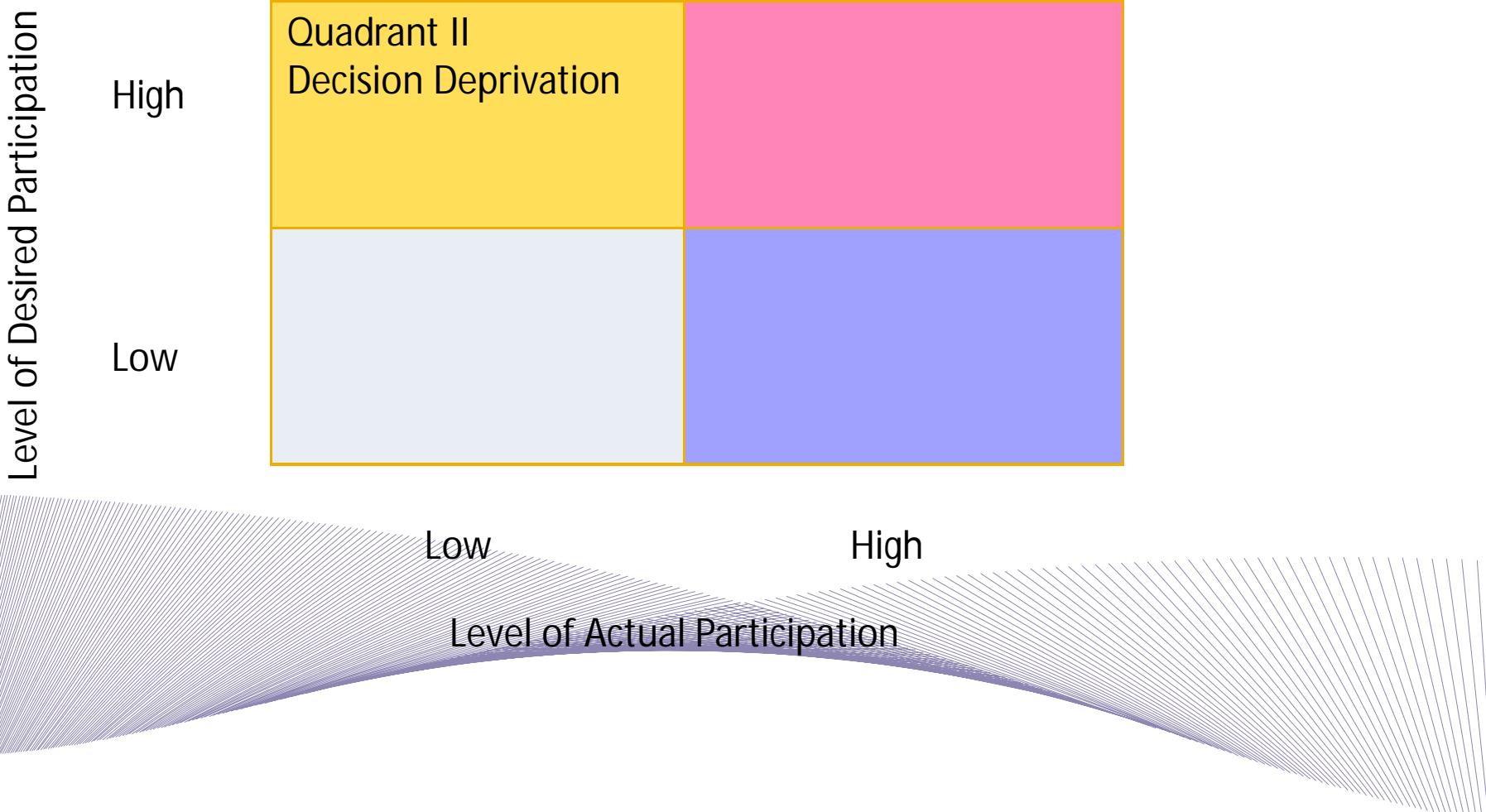
# Alutto and Belasco's (1972) Analytical Framework for Participative Decision Making in Curriculum and Pedagogy



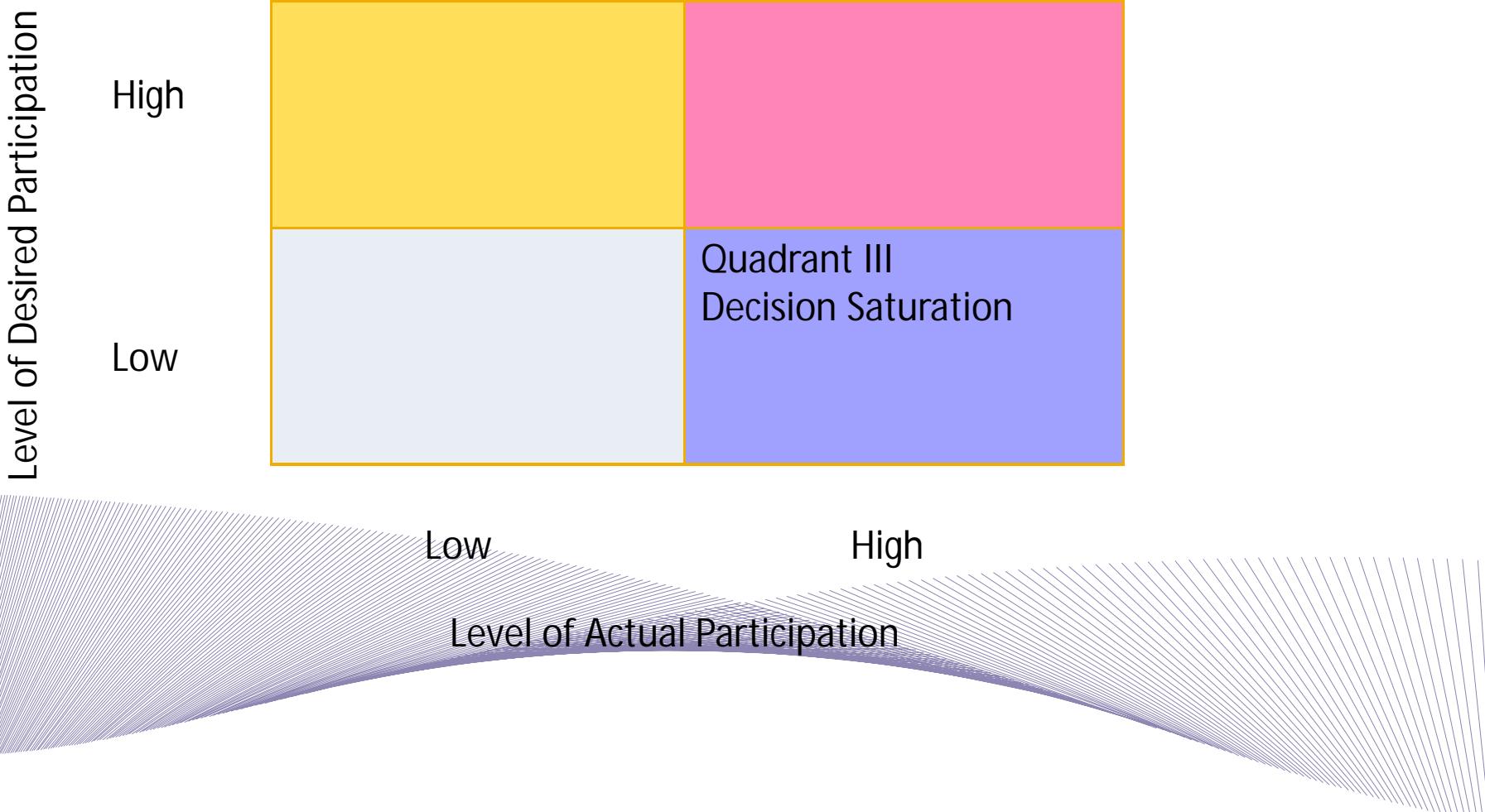
# Alutto and Belasco's (1972) Analytical Framework for Participative Decision Making in Curriculum and Pedagogy



# Alutto and Belasco's (1972) Analytical Framework for Participative Decision Making in Curriculum and Pedagogy



# Alutto and Belasco's (1972) Analytical Framework for Participative Decision Making in Curriculum and Pedagogy



# Alutto and Belasco's (1972) Analytical Framework for Participative Decision Making in Curriculum and Pedagogy

Level of Desired Participation

High

Low

Quadrant IV  
Decision Equilibrium

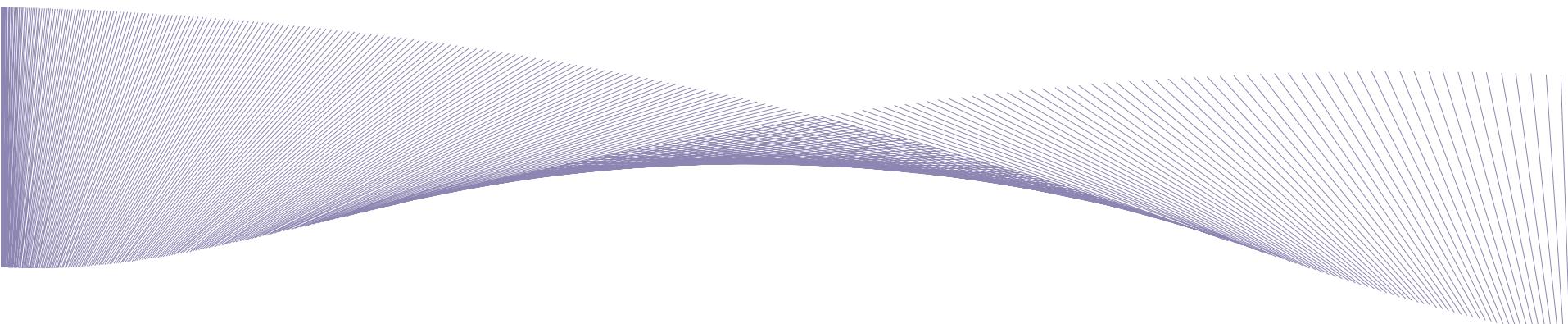
Low

High

Level of Actual Participation

# HKECE as an illustration

- Contextual understanding
  - Market-driven nature of HKECE
  - Educational reform after 1997
  - Historical background of teacher development
  - Leadership practice in local preschools



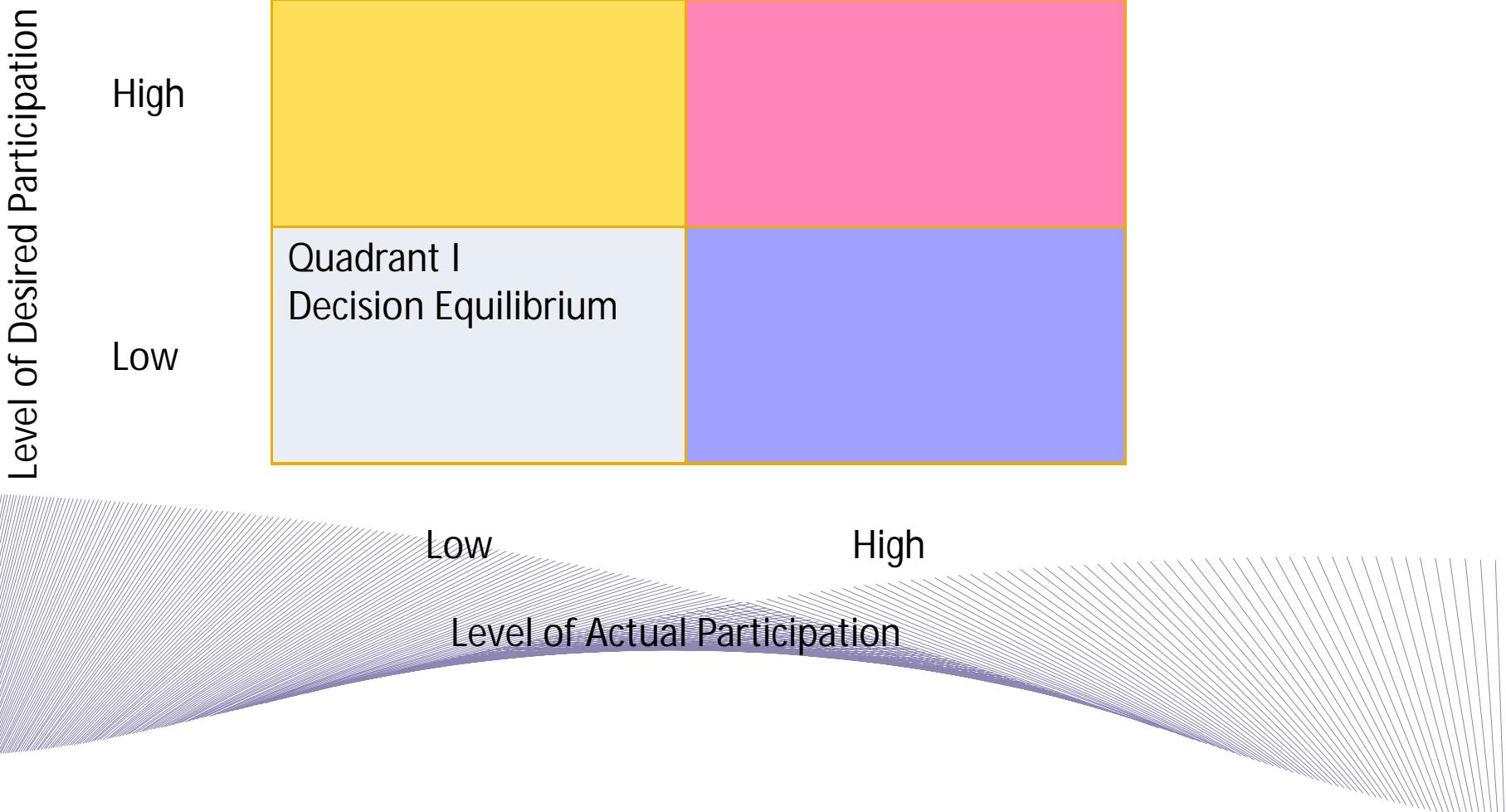
# Market-driven nature of HKECE

## The Market Place

- Governance of ECE sector
- Parental demand
- keen competition among preschools

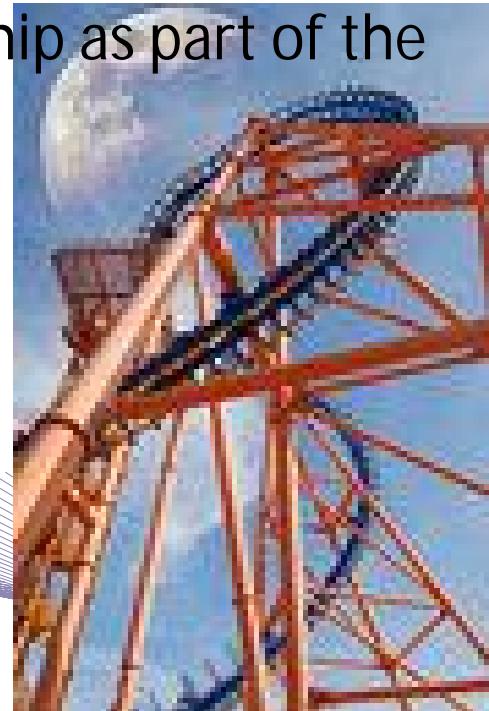


# Alutto and Belasco's (1972) Analytical Framework for Participative Decision Making in Curriculum and Pedagogy



# Educational reform in HKECE after 1997

- The international literature on educational leadership is moving beyond a focus on a single head and towards multiple leaders.
- Many governments of the Asian countries have identified strategies to promote distributed leadership as part of the educational reform agenda.



- Effective teacher leadership for curriculum change in ECE, funded by the Research Grants Council of Hong Kong Government.

*Guide to Pre-primary Curriculum  
2006*



Advocating a change in the role of teachers for greater responsibility for leading curriculum change

# Historical background of teacher development

## *Professional Socialization*

- In the past, those who had 9 years of basic education could register as permitted teachers.
- The majority of preschool teachers were originally “trained” in a modified form of apprenticeship
- By 2012, teachers are required to receive PD at 2-year Higher Diploma and preschool principles at degree level.

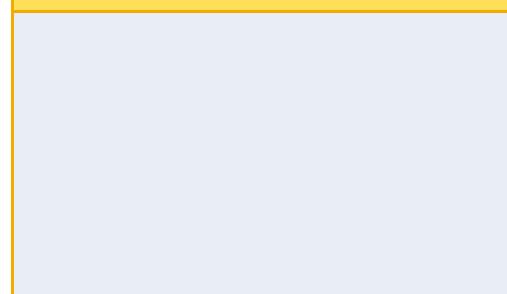
# Alutto and Belasco's (1972) Analytical Framework for Participative Decision Making in Curriculum and Pedagogy

Level of Desired Participation

High

Quadrant II  
Decision Deprivation

Low



Low

High

Level of Actual Participation

# Leadership practice in local preschools

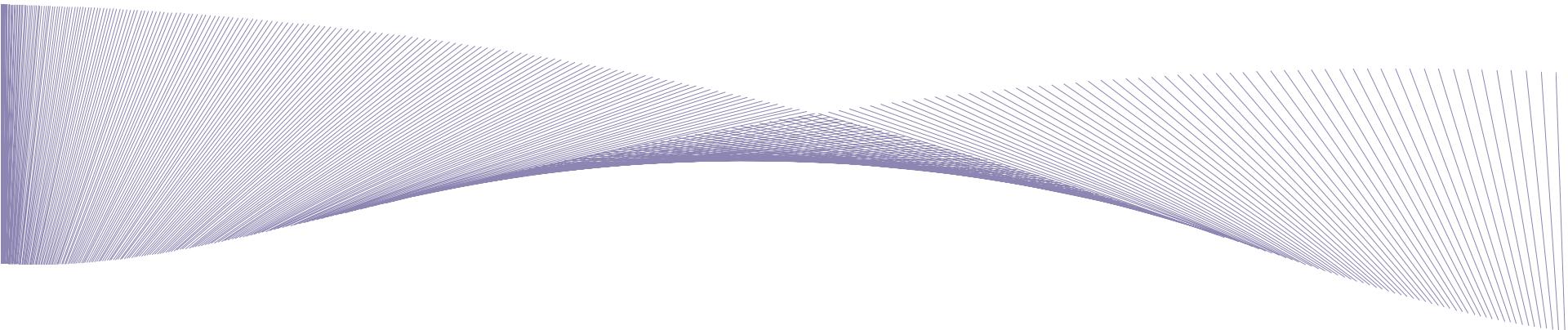
## *High power distance*

- The hierarchical superior/subordinate relationship existed in local preschools; and the centralized power and authority held by the school principals was uncritically accepted by their subordinates
- Recently the practice of decentralized leadership is emerging (Ho, 2012).



## *Collectivism*

- Recent research conducted by Ho (2012) indicated that the school principals leveraged harmonious relationships as a power source to bring to the surface conflicts and support morale for collective actions

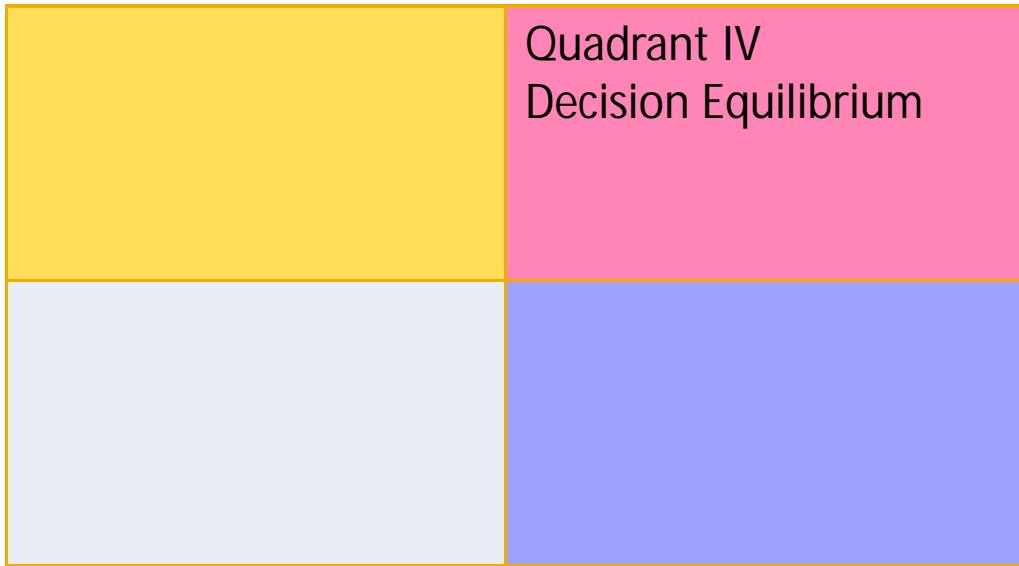


# The ultimate goal

Level of Desired Participation

High

Low

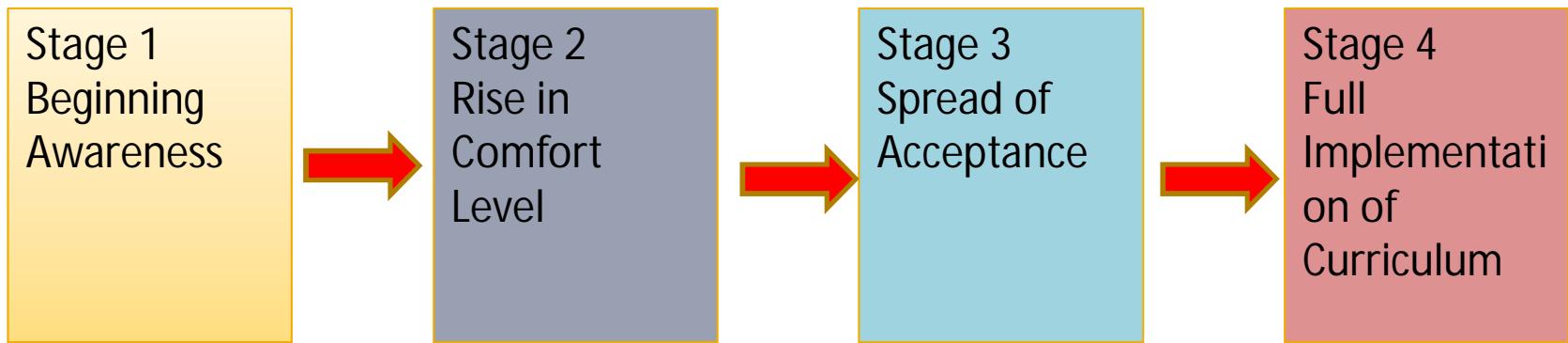


Low

High

Level of Actual Participation

# Practical considerations in promoting teacher leadership in curriculum change



*Marlow, S. & Minehira, N. (1996). Principals as Curriculum Leaders: New Perspectives for the 21st Century. Retrieved on 28 March 2013 from <http://prel.org/products/Products/Curriculum.htm>*

## Stages and Characteristics

- Stage 1

### Beginning Awareness:

Teachers are made aware of the curriculum change or innovation through education and staff development activities.

## Focus of the Principal / Curriculum Leader

- Commitment of time and money for staff development
- Current level preparation of teachers
- Teachers' perceptions about gains and losses associated with change
- Provide ample staff development

## Stages and Characteristics

- Stage 2

### Rise in Comfort Level:

As teachers participate in staff development activities, they begin to collaborate with other teachers and feel more comfortable with the technical and pedagogical aspects of the change.

## Focus of the Principal / Curriculum Leader

- Provide ongoing support for teachers
- Provide opportunities for teachers to “practice” the change in a low-risk setting
- Encourage collaboration among teachers
- Include parents in change process

## Stages and Characteristics

- Stage 3

### Spread of Acceptance:

As teachers collaborate and feel comfortable with the curriculum, more teachers begin to change their practice , forming a “critical mass.”

## Focus of the Principal / Curriculum Leader

- Increased number of teachers changing practice
- The level of collaboration among staff
- Teachers are beginning to suggest modifications for the curriculum

## Stages and Characteristics

- Stage 4  
Full Implementation of Curriculum:  
The curriculum change is fully accepted and becomes institutionalized in the organization.  
It becomes integrated with other curricular areas and is modified as it is evaluated.

## Focus of the Principal / Curriculum Leader

- Change is being integrated across grade levels and/or subject areas
- Teachers begin to evaluate the impact of the change
- Evaluation procedures become more standard
- Evaluation modifies implementation

# References

- Alutto J. A. and Belasco J. A. (1972) A typology for participation in organization decision-making. *Administrative Science Quarterly* 17(1): 27–41.
- Duke D. L. , Showers B. K. and Imber, M. (1980) Teacher and shared decision-making: the costs and benefits of involvement. *Educational Administration Quarterly* 16(1): 93–106.
- Harris, A. (2004) Distributed leadership and school improvement: leading or misleading? *Educational Management Administration & Leadership* 32(4): 11–24.
- Ho, C. W. D. (2010). Teacher participation in curriculum and pedagogical decisions: Insights into curriculum leadership, *Educational Management, Administration and Leadership*, 38(5) 613–624.
- Kirk, D. and MacDonald, D. (2001) Teacher voice and ownership of curriculum change. *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 33(5): 551–567.
- Lumby, J. (2003) Transforming schools: managing the change process. In: Thurlow M, Bush, T. and Coleman, M.(eds) *Leadership and Strategic Management in South African Schools*. London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 101–116.
- Marlow, S. & Minehira, N. (1996). *Principals as Curriculum Leaders: New Perspectives for the 21st Century*. Retrieved on 28 March 2013 from  
<http://prel.org/products/Products/Curriculum.htm>
- Slater, L. (2008) Pathways to building leadership capacity. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership* 36(1): 55—69.
- Smith, D. L. and Lovat, T. J. (2004) *Curriculum: Action on Reflection*. Tuggeragh, NSW:

# The Hong Kong Institute of Education



# Department of Early Childhood Education



Kiitos!  
(doraho@ied.edu.hk)

Homepage:

[http://www2.ied.edu.hk/ece/en/staff\\_pub.asp?id=18&catid=1#a1](http://www2.ied.edu.hk/ece/en/staff_pub.asp?id=18&catid=1#a1)