The Impact of School Leadership on Teacher Retention: Where Teachers Stay and How They Thrive?

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The Policy and Research Contexts

Regrettably, worldwide teacher shortages have been endangering the future of education.

(UNESCO, 2024, p.3)

UNESCO's (2024) latest global report on teachers:

- 44 million additional primary and secondary teachers are in urgent need worldwide to meet the 2030 SDG targets.

The 'Solution': Developing Teachers

Increasing the ***quantity*** of 'high-quality' teacher professional development (i.e., meeting the government's quality criteria) has been seen by researchers and policy makers as a cost-effective approach to *improving retention* (DfE, 2019; EPI, 2020, 2021b and 2021c; RAND, 2021; PBE, 2022; Perry et al., 2022), and *levelling up educational opportunities* for every child in all parts of the UK (IOP, 2020; EEF, 2021; HM Government, 2022).

The 'solution' is off the mark.

The conceptual flaw of the human capital approach to developing teachers

- By narrowly focussing on individual teachers' learning entitlement, they have failed to address *a major source of the solution*: the school organisation that provides teachers with:

  - *resources and support* they need to learn and develop,
  - *professional work environment* that enables them to use the learning to improve teaching and learning both in their own classroom (individually) and schoolwide (collectively).

(Bryk et al., 2010; Day et al., 2011; Day & Gu, 2018; Gu et al., 2018, 2020, 2023; Johnson, 2019)

The 'Matthew Effects'

Where robust evidence is available, evaluations consistently point to the '**Matthew Effects**' of some major CPD-oriented programmes in England:

- Schools knowing how to take advantage of funding opportunities to strengthen and transform their organisational capacity and cultures – irrespective of their contexts – can retain their committed teachers and keep getting better.

(e.g., Gu et al., 2016, 2019, 2020, 2021)
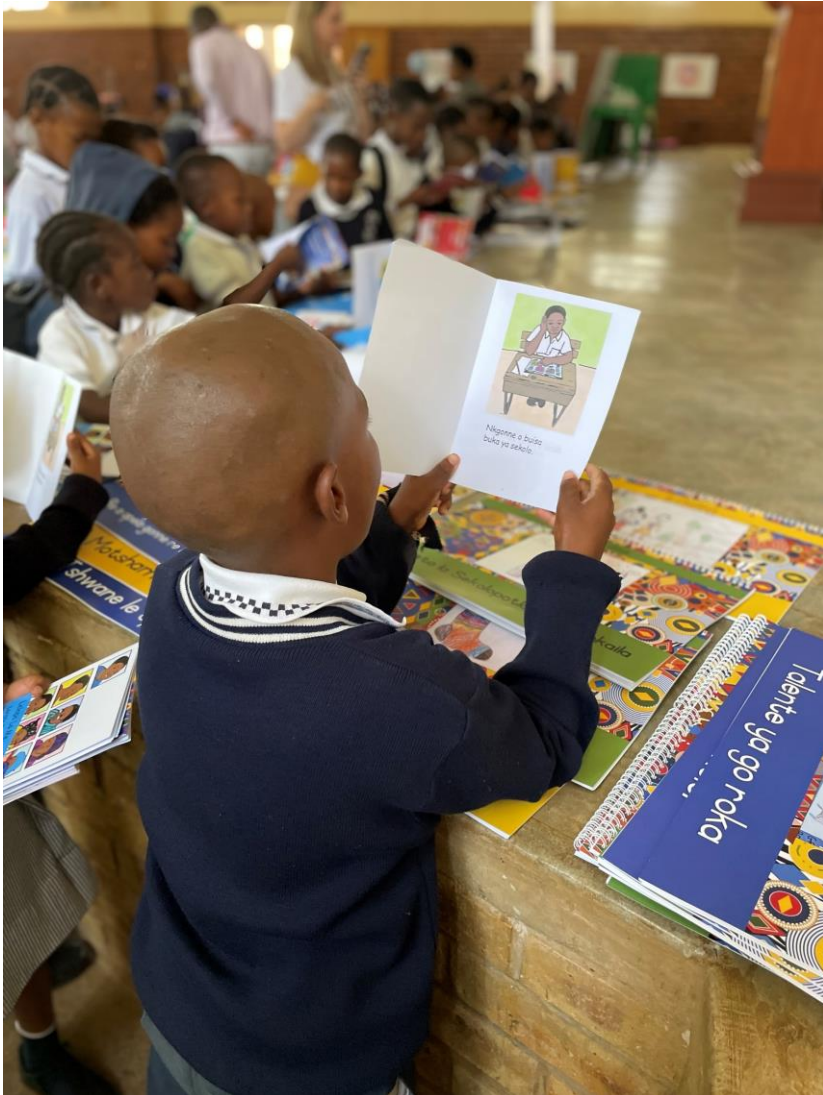
Variation in Teacher Quality

Teacher quality is especially lower in schools serving high-need communities (Loeb et al., 2005; Boyd et al., 2008; Goldhaber and Hansen, 2009; Sibieta, 2020):

- where most children, who are already disadvantaged in accessing or benefiting from rich cultural capital and social capital in their early years, are then denied access to the quality education to which they are entitled when entering the formal school system.

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Part 1: *How* does school leadership matter?

Four Research-Informed Claims about Successful Leadership

O2 How can school leaders, at every level of leadership, create working cultures which are positive, which make the best use of teachers' professional skills, knowledge and expertise and support good physical and mental health?

Teacher effectiveness: *schools matter*

- Myth: *teachers typically improve over their first 3-5 years and then plateau.*

- Teachers working in schools with more supportive professional environments continued to improve significantly after three years, while teachers in the least supportive schools actually declined in their effectiveness.

(Sutton Trust, 2014)

- School leadership is second only to classroom teaching as an influence on pupil learning. (Leithwood et al., 2006, 2019; UNESCO, 2024)

- Effective school leadership is essential to improve the efficiency and equity of schooling. (Leithwood, 2022; OECD, 2008, 2014)

Research Claim 1

- Principals achieve and sustain success through who they are and the combination and accumulation of various relatively *small effects* of leadership practices that influence different aspects of school improvement processes in the same direction.

Leading Schools with Teachers' Emotions in Mind

The Effects of School Leadership on Pupil Learning and Achievement
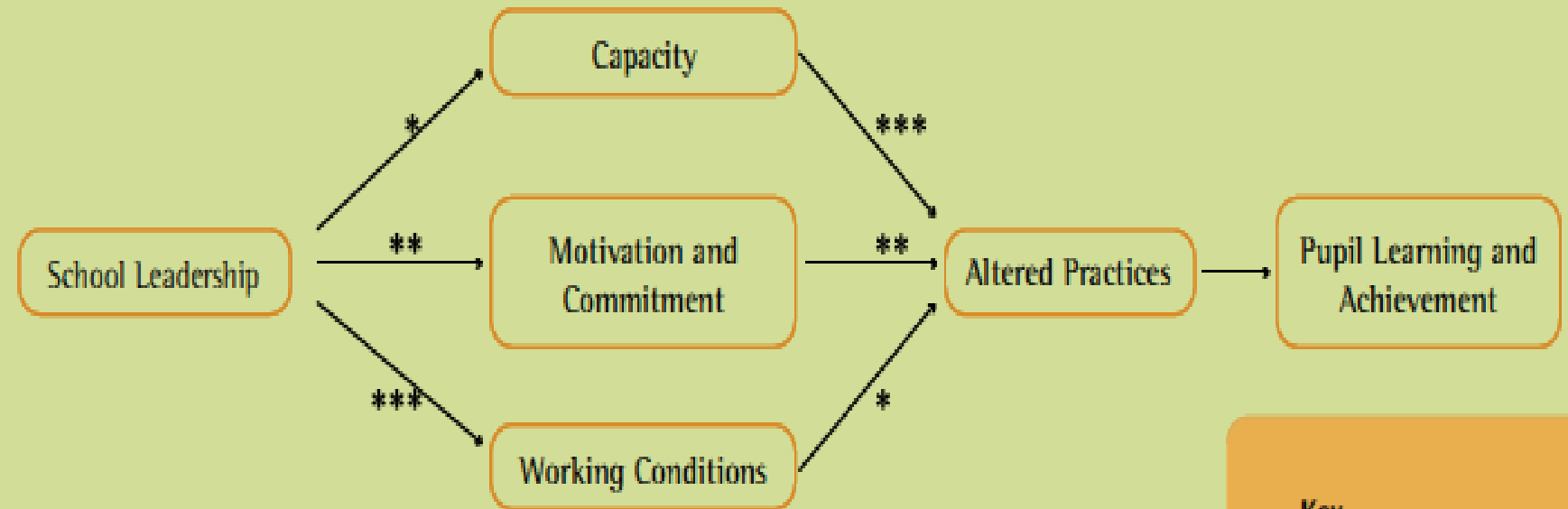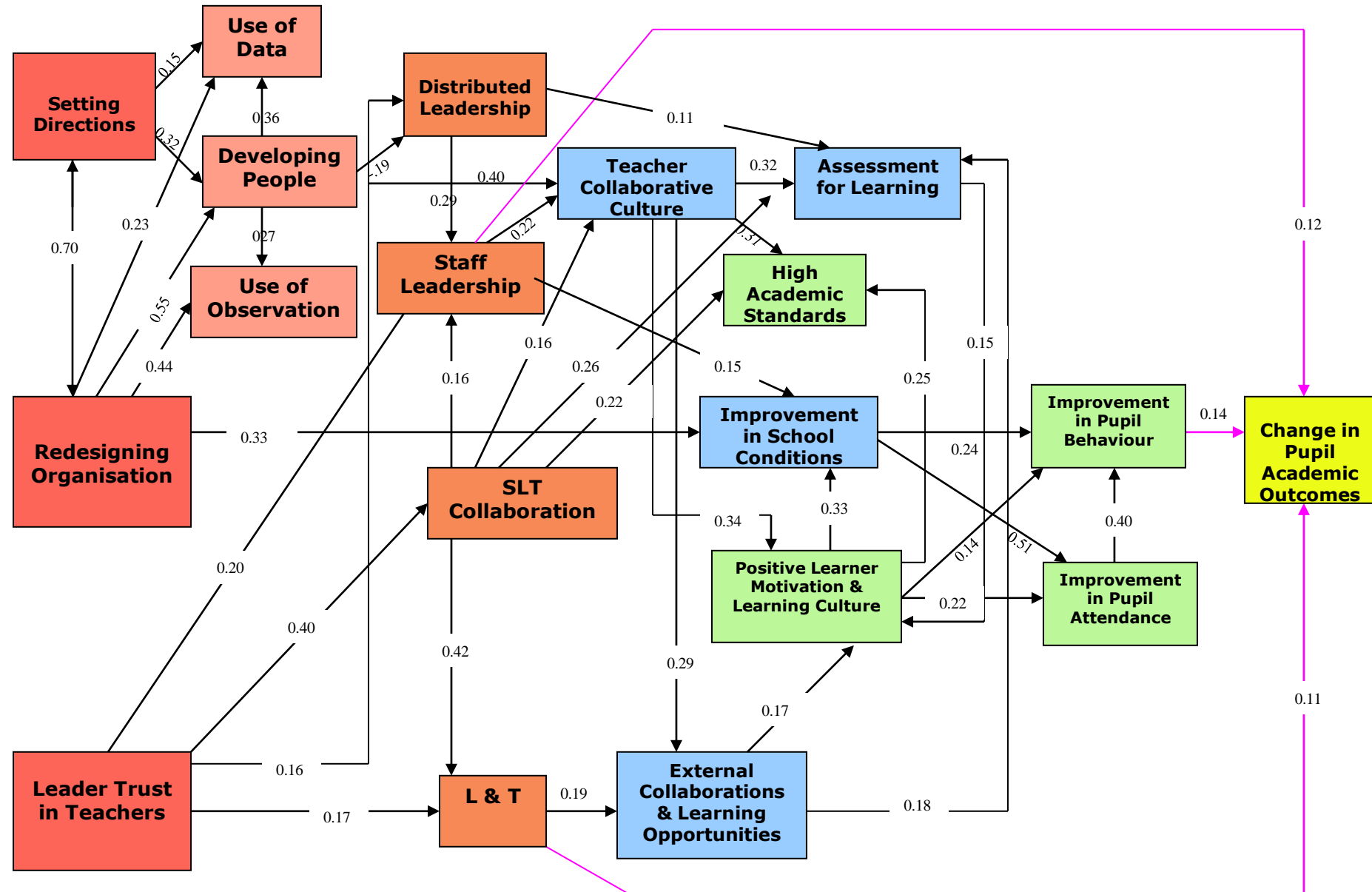(Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006)

Figure 1: The effects of school leadership on teacher capacity, motivation, commitment and beliefs about working conditions

Key

* = weak influence
** = moderate influence
*** = strong influence

Impact of *successful* principal leadership on student outcomes (Day, Gu & Sammons, 2016)

When *schools* are different…
(Day, Gu & Sammons, 2016)

Leadership practices and changes in secondary student outcomes in Rio de Janeiro over 3 years: SEM (N=744)

Q1: Set Direction

.92

Q2: Develop People

.53

Q8: Leadership Distribution to Other People

.91

.91

.30

Q3: Engage Teachers for School Improvement

.71

Q10: Leadership Distribution to Management Team

.36

.21

.42

.18

Q6: Leader Trust in Teachers

.65

Q15: School Culture

.29

Q19: Curriculum Program

.20

Q14: Academic Press

.33

Achievement Changes

.09

Q12: School Con Improvement

.68

Q13: Disciplinary Climate

.19

Q4: Manage Data Discuss with Teachers

.54

χ2=1551.077, df= 724, χ2/df= 2.14, p > .05; RMSEA= .039, CFI= .895

Research Claim 2

Almost all successful leaders draw on the same repertoire of basic leadership practices, but there is no single model for achieving success.
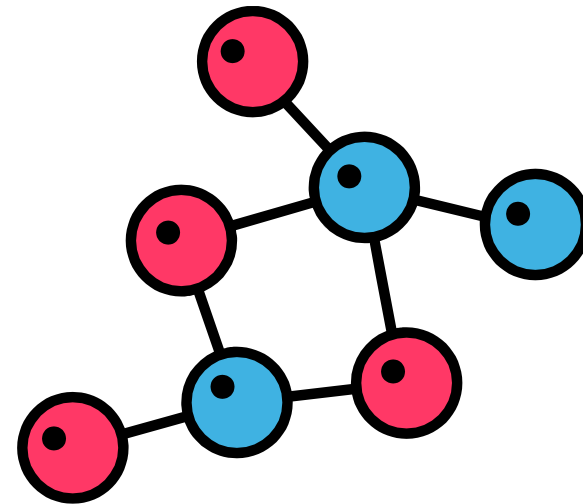
Good leaders change **organisations**; **great** leaders change **people**. People are at the heart of any organisation, particularly a school, and it is only through changing people – nurturing and challenging them, helping them grow and develop, creating a culture in which they all learn – that an organisation can flourish.

(Hoerr, 2005: 7)

Relative Impact of Five Leadership Dimensions on Student Outcomes (Robinson et al., 2009)

Four Sets of School Conditions to Improve

Leadership Practices

Rational
Path

Emotional
Path

Organisational
Path

Family
Path

Schoolwide Experience

Classroom Experience

Student Learning

(Leithwood, 2019)

Research Claim 3

There are four broad phases of leadership success:

1) Foundational
2) Developmental
3) Enrichment
4) Renewal

Principal's Line of Success: Eyhampton Secondary School

The line represents the head's view of their leadership success in terms its of effect upon a broad range of pupil outcomes during their tenure as head

1: Foundational Phase: Urgent Attention Back to Basics (3 years)
- Autocratic Leadership
- Restructuring SLT (9 redundancies enable restructuring)
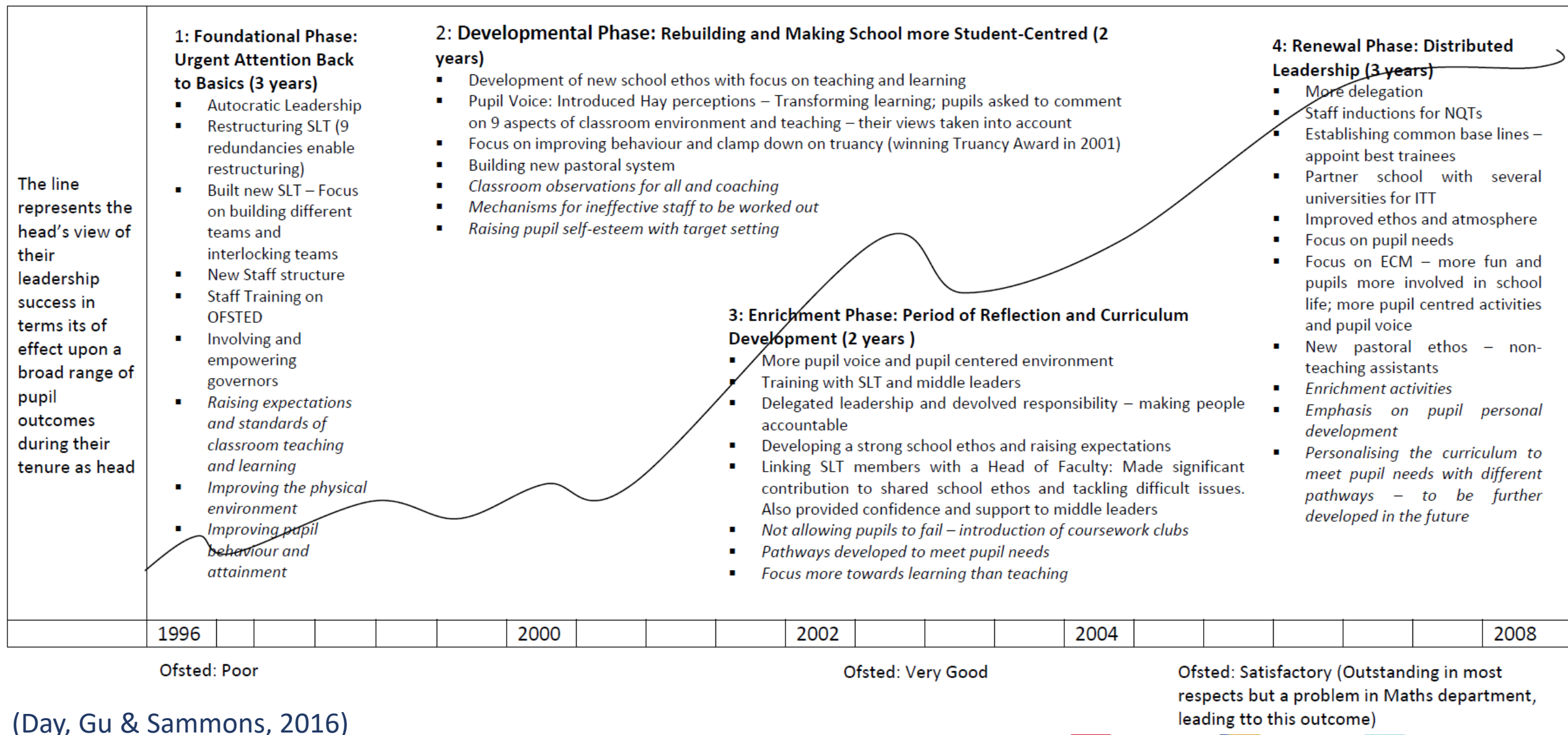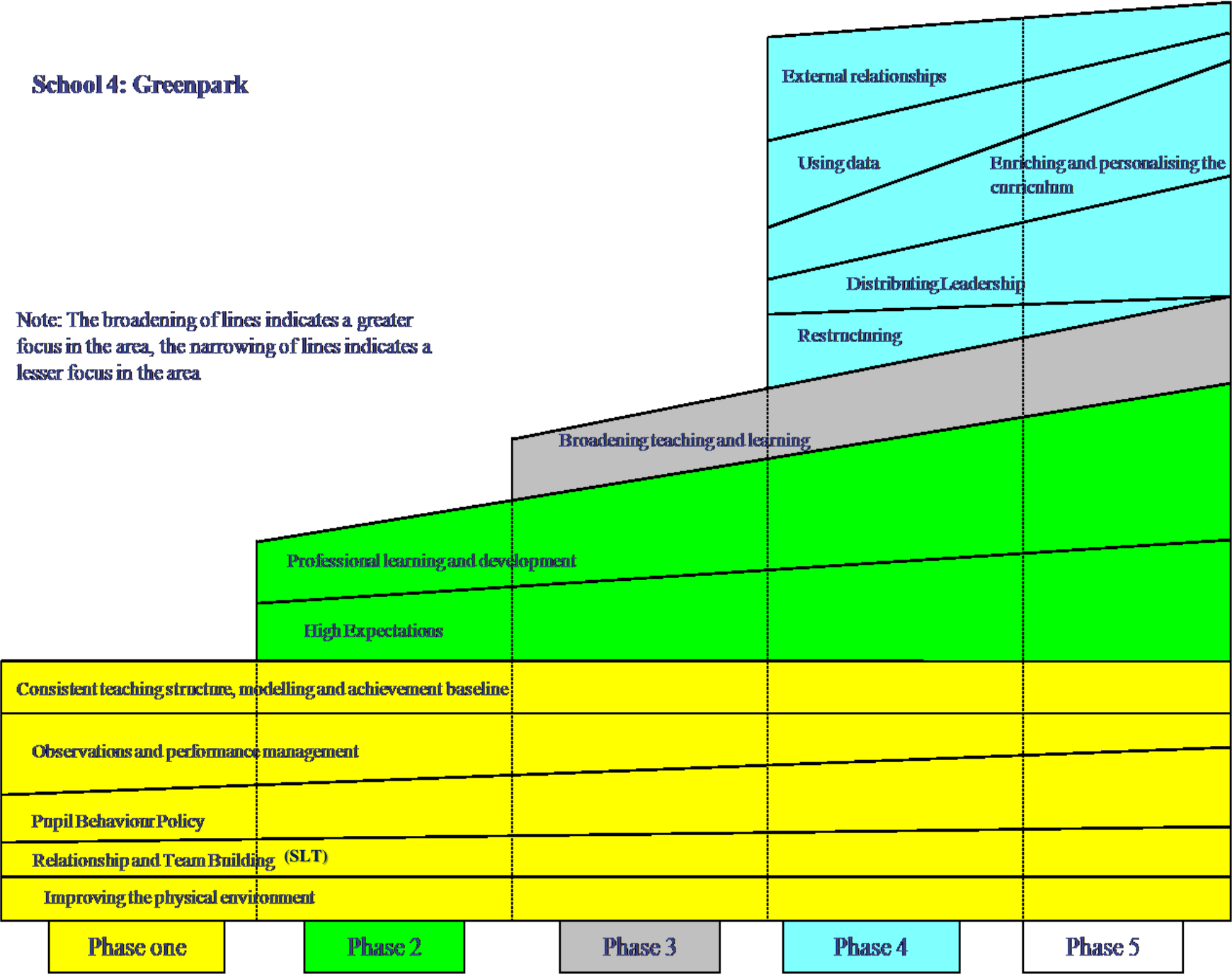- Built new SLT – Focus on building different teams and interlocking teams
- New Staff structure
- Staff Training on OFSTED
- Involving and empowering governors
- *Raising expectations and standards of classroom teaching and learning*
- *Improving the physical environment*
- *Improving pupil behaviour and attainment*

2: Developmental Phase: Rebuilding and Making School more Student-Centred (2 years)
- Development of new school ethos with focus on teaching and learning
- Pupil Voice: Introduced Hay perceptions – Transforming learning; pupils asked to comment on 9 aspects of classroom environment and teaching – their views taken into account
- Focus on improving behaviour and clamp down on truancy (winning Truancy Award in 2001)
- Building new pastoral system
- *Classroom observations for all and coaching*
- *Mechanisms for ineffective staff to be worked out*
- *Raising pupil self-esteem with target setting*

3: Enrichment Phase: Period of Reflection and Curriculum Development (2 years)
- More pupil voice and pupil centered environment
- Training with SLT and middle leaders
- Delegated leadership and devolved responsibility – making people accountable
- Developing a strong school ethos and raising expectations
- Linking SLT members with a Head of Faculty: Made significant contribution to shared school ethos and tackling difficult issues. Also provided confidence and support to middle leaders
- *Not allowing pupils to fail – introduction of coursework clubs*
- *Pathways developed to meet pupil needs*
- *Focus more towards learning than teaching*

4: Renewal Phase: Distributed Leadership (3 years)
- More delegation
- Staff inductions for NQTs
- Establishing common base lines – appoint best trainees
- Partner school with several universities for ITT
- Improved ethos and atmosphere
- Focus on pupil needs
- Focus on ECM – more fun and pupils more involved in school life; more pupil centred activities and pupil voice
- New pastoral ethos – non-teaching assistants
- *Enrichment activities*
- *Emphasis on pupil personal development*
- *Personalising the curriculum to meet pupil needs with different pathways – to be further developed in the future*

1996   2000   2002   2004   2008

Ofsted: Poor

Ofsted: Very Good

Ofsted: Satisfactory (Outstanding in most respects but a problem in Maths department, leading tto this outcome)

(Day, Gu & Sammons, 2016)

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

School 4: Greenpark

Note: The broadening of lines indicates a greater focus in the area, the narrowing of lines indicates a lesser focus in the area

External relationships

Using data

Enriching and personalising the curriculum

Distributing Leadership

Restructuring

Broadening teaching and learning

Professional learning and development

High Expectations

Consistent teaching structure, modelling and achievement baseline

Observations and performance management

Pupil Behaviour Policy

Relationship and Team Building (SLT)

Improving the physical environment

| Phase one | Phase 2 | Phase 3 | Phase 4 | Phase 5 |

(Day et al., 2011)

Research Claim 4

There are differences in culture between schools and between countries, but challenges are broadly the same.

Too Much Reform

Policy developments have been driven by competing paradigms of social explanation over time:

- Incoherent
- Disjointed
- Unpredictable
- contradictory
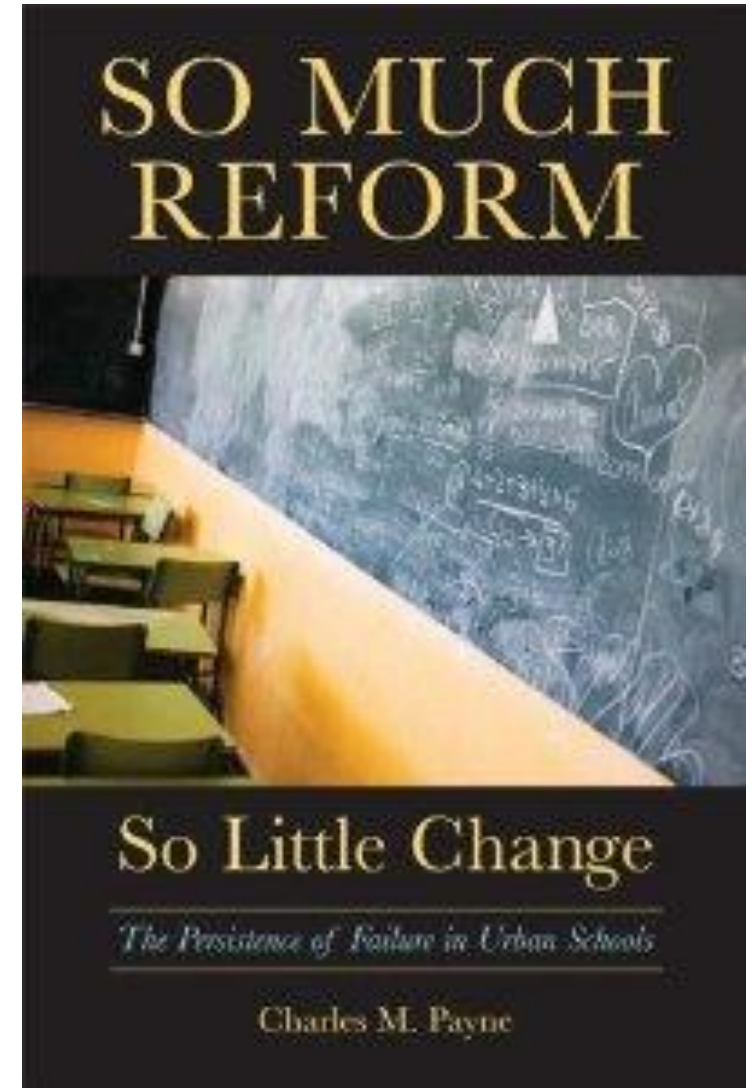
Sense Making

… schools' responses to district policies must be understood as a function not only of **leaders' identities** but also the multiple contexts in which their sense-making is **situated**. (Spillane et al., 2002, p. 755)

Policy Enactment *as* Organisational & Leadership Behaviour

The role of senior leaders:

- **diagnosing** the school's needs, challenges and priorities

- deciding "*whether and how to **ignore, adapt, or adopt***" a policy locally (Spillane et al, 2002, p. 733)

- influencing *how* the policy is **interpreted** by their teachers

- transforming practice in ways that are **educationally and culturally meaningful** to the needs of their staff and pupils.

School *Enablement*: The Power of Enabling Collective Agency

Evidence from the International Successful School Principalship Project (ISSPP) shows that in successful schools, what the leaders appear to be doing exceptionally well is using policies and reforms as opportunities for change purposefully, progressively, and strategically to(re)generate collaborative and coherent cultures and conditions which encourage and support the staff to learn, to reflect, and to renew their practice (Gu et al., 2018).

(UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report Background Paper by Day, Gu & Ylimaki, 2024, p.7)
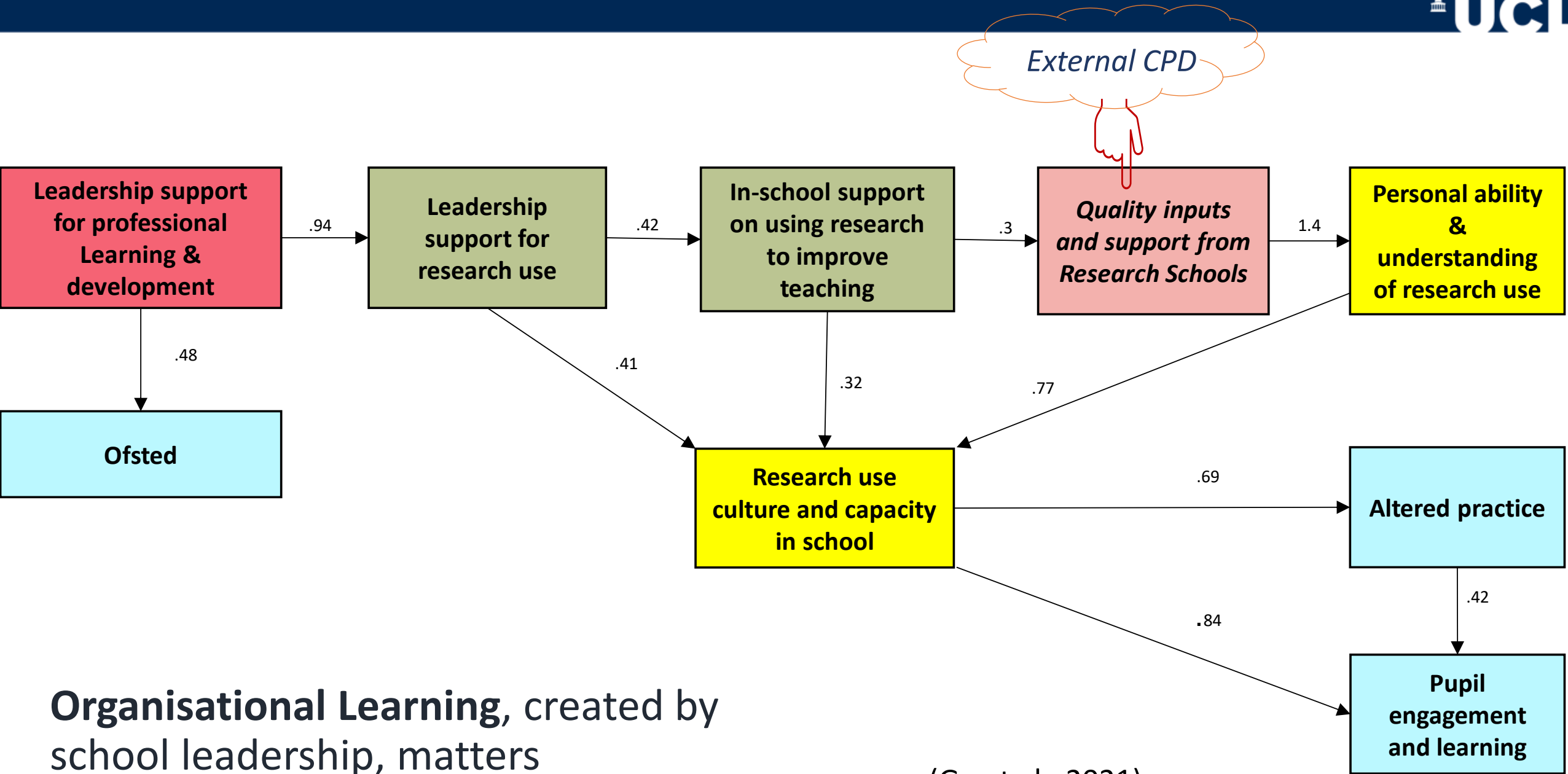
Organisational Learning, created by school leadership, matters

(Gu et al., 2021)

- A 'good' research-informed innovation can rarely travel into the day-to-day realities of classrooms on its own merits without school leaders that can help teachers engage with it and apply and adapt it to their own classroom contexts.

(Gu et al., 2021)

Positive Disruption: The Courage to Disrupt Systems and Lead

ISSPP Case study in England: Four Pathways to Innovate Improvement

Pathway 1:   *Disrupting the mindset* of fear and nurturing values-led cultural dynamics

Pathway 2:   *Breaking boundaries* to restructure relationships and building the social foundations of learning and improvement

Pathway 3:   Growing capacities to lead from "an empty vessel"

Pathway 4:   Instilling inquiring minds and learning to see the impact

(Gu & Mincu, in press)

The significance of *internal accountability* in policy enactment

External accountability systems work not by exerting direction and control over schools, but by mobilizing and focusing the **capacity of schools** in particular ways. The **people** who work in schools, and the **systems** that surround them, are not just active agents in determining the effects of accountability systems. **Their knowledge, skill, values, and commitments, as well as the nature of the organizations in which they work, *determine* how their schools will respond**. (Elmore, 2003, p.196)

Accountability = account x *ability* (McKinsey, 2021)

Part 2:

The Leadership that Inspires Collective Mind:
Where **Teachers Thrive and** ***Stay***

The Research

- **Research is an integral part of the UCL-led ECF and NPQ programmes**.
- We use **annual surveys** and **interviews** to track participants over time and investigate:
  - *Who* the intended leavers, movers and stayers are over time.
  - *The extent to which* and *how* their experiences on the ECF programme have influenced their professional dispositions and qualities, *how effective* they are as teachers, and *why* they intend to leave or stay.

Research Questions:

RQ.1: What have been the impact of early career teachers, mentors, and school leaders' learning on the ECF/NPQ programmes on their learning and retention decisions?

RQ.2: What are the main factors leading to their decision to stay?

RQ.3: How does school leadership impact – *if at all* – on their learning on ECF/NPQs and retention?

The Research Evidence:
Early Career Teachers and Mentors

Sources of Evidence: ECT Survey

- Survey invitations were sent to all ECTs in their first year of the ECF programme.

- 904 ECTs responded representing 15% response rate

- Demographics of the respondents appear to be broadly **representative of national ECT populations** for gender, ethnicity, school phase, and contract type – which gives us confidence about the relevance and representativeness of our ECTs' learning and career experiences to their peers *nationally*.

Gu, Qing; Eleftheriadou, Sofia; Baines, Lisa (2023) Interim Research Report 2: Early career teachers' and mentors' reported experiences with the ECF programme. UCL Centre for Educational Leadership: London, UK

Research Highlight 1: Strong enthusiasm in teaching and high retention rate

- **Nearly all (96%)** of ECTs and mentors were intending to **remain in teaching** next year (c.f. 87.5% national stats in 2020/1).

- The vast majority of ECTs responding to our survey reported their **strong enthusiasm for the teaching job**. More than **90%** of ECTs reported that they are enthusiastic about the teaching job and that **their jobs inspire them** – with **63%** and **58%** agreed with these '*strongly.*'
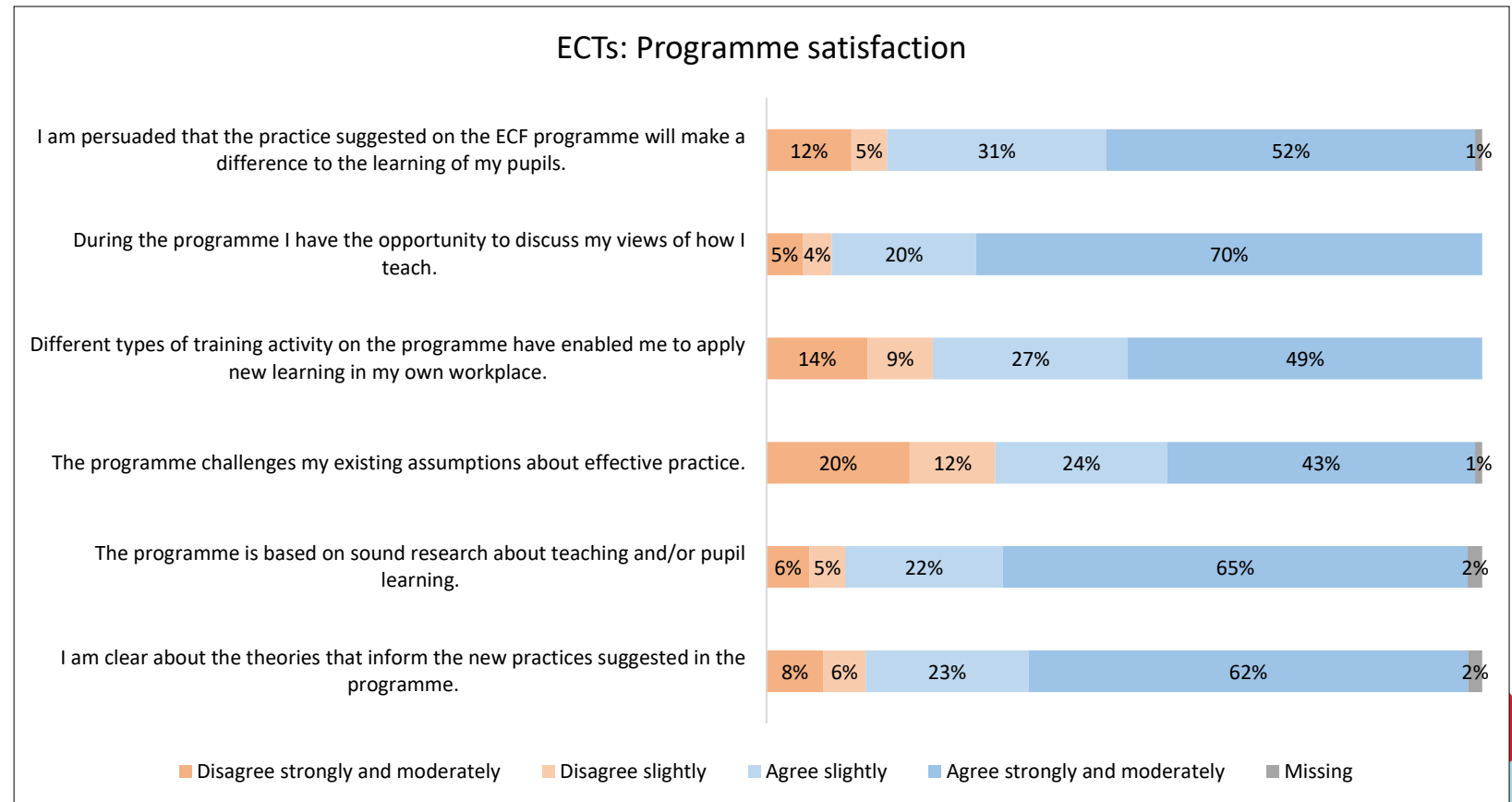

Fig.1 Intended destinations for next academic year

Research Highlight 2: Positive learning experience for *ECTs*

- The vast majority of ECTs agreed
  - ECF programme was based on **sound research about teaching and pupil learning** (**87%**)
  - the practice suggested on the ECF programme would **make a difference to the learning of their pupils** (**83%**).

ECTs: Programme satisfaction

Statement	Disagree strongly and moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree strongly and moderately	Missing
I am persuaded that the practice suggested on the ECF programme will make a difference to the learning of my pupils.	12%	5%	31%	52%	1%
During the programme I have the opportunity to discuss my views of how I teach.	5%	4%	20%	70%	
Different types of training activity on the programme have enabled me to apply new learning in my own workplace.	14%	9%	27%	49%	
The programme challenges my existing assumptions about effective practice.	20%	12%	24%	43%	1%
The programme is based on sound research about teaching and/or pupil learning.	6%	5%	22%	65%	2%
I am clear about the theories that inform the new practices suggested in the programme.	8%	6%	23%	62%	2%

Legend: Disagree strongly and moderately · Disagree slightly · Agree slightly · Agree strongly and moderately · Missing

- Almost all mentors (**94%**) reported that they are **motivated by their role as a mentor** – with 84% agreed 'strongly' and 'moderately'.

- The vast majority (**88%**) reported that **being a mentor has contributed to their own professional development** – with **65%** in 'strong' and 'moderate' agreement.
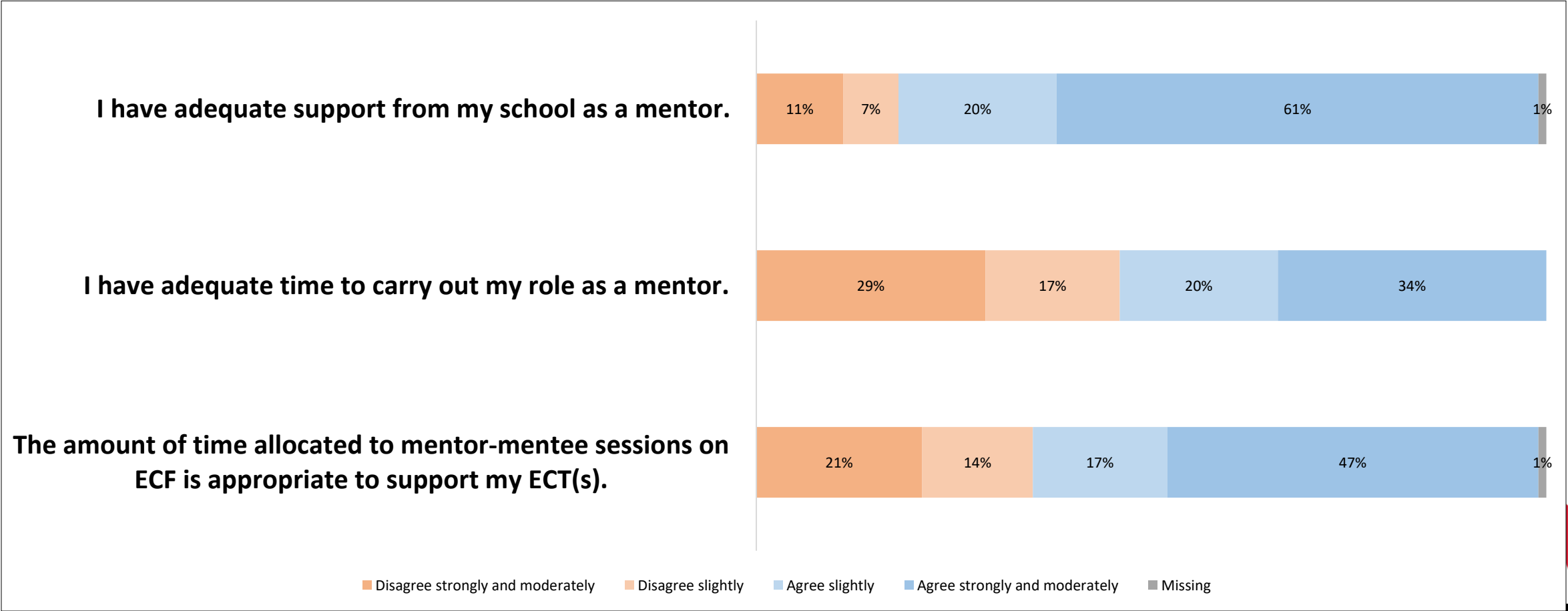
Research Highlight 4: Positive mentoring experience for both ECTs and Mentors

- **Structured mentor meetings** were the most valued strategy by ECTs as contributing to their learning on the ECF programme – with **81%** of ECTs agreed with this 'moderately', 'a lot' and 'significantly'.

- Almost all mentors (**98%**) reported:
  - they have been able to **establish a strong mentor-mentee relationship**
  - their **role as a mentor is meaningful to the development of their ECTs' teaching practice**.

Research Highlight 5: Variation in how mentors are protected for their mentoring time

I have adequate support from my school as a mentor.
11% | 7% | 20% | 61% | 1%

I have adequate time to carry out my role as a mentor.
29% | 17% | 20% | 34%

The amount of time allocated to mentor-mentee sessions on ECF is appropriate to support my ECT(s).
21% | 14% | 17% | 47% | 1%

■ Disagree strongly and moderately ■ Disagree slightly ■ Agree slightly ■ Agree strongly and moderately ■ Missing

Between-school variations:

The ECF programme alone should not be blamed for a lack of time for mentoring.

'I have adequate time to carry out my role as a mentor' *
'I am protected from administrative duties that interfere with my teaching'
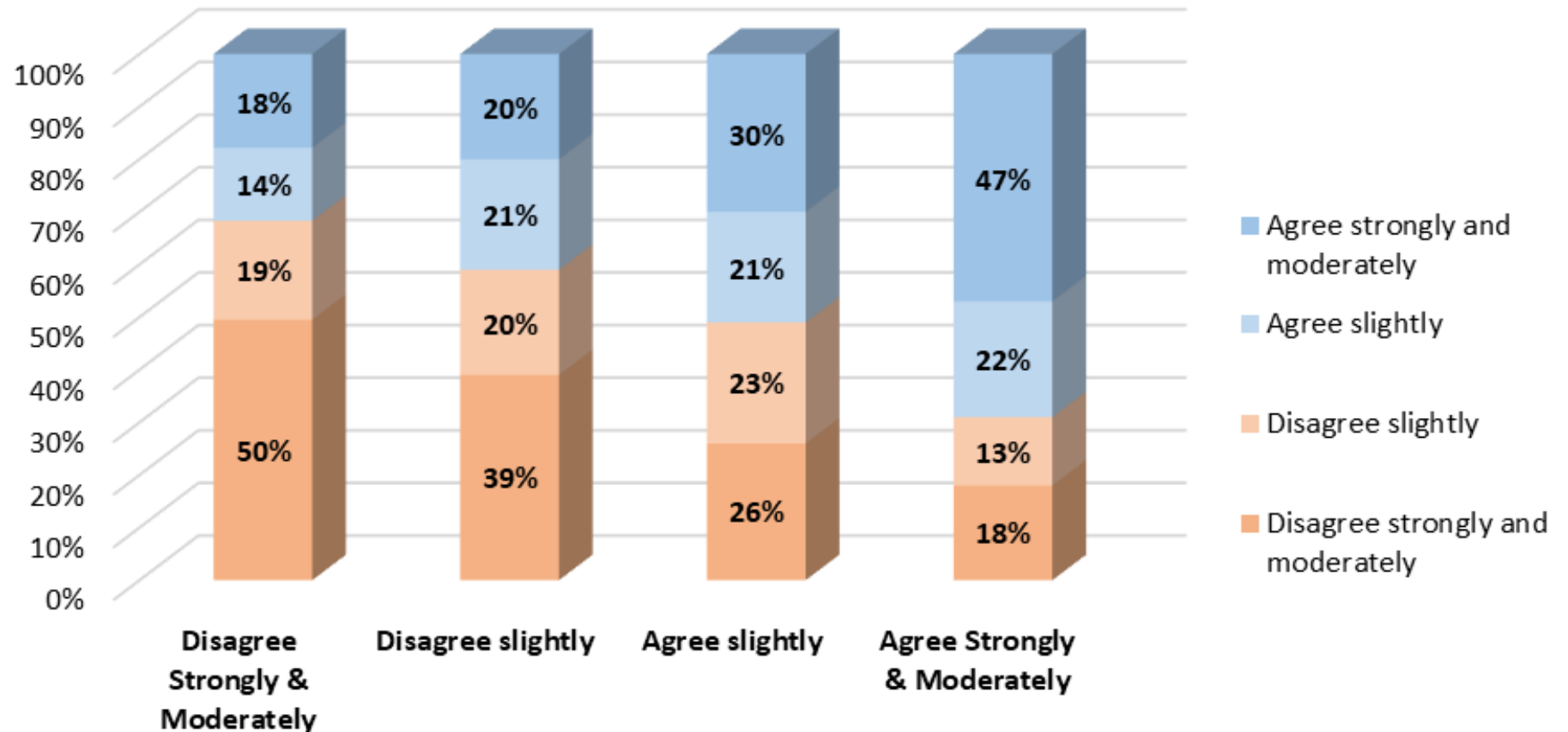
Evidence: Results of the structural equation modelling (SEM) analysis
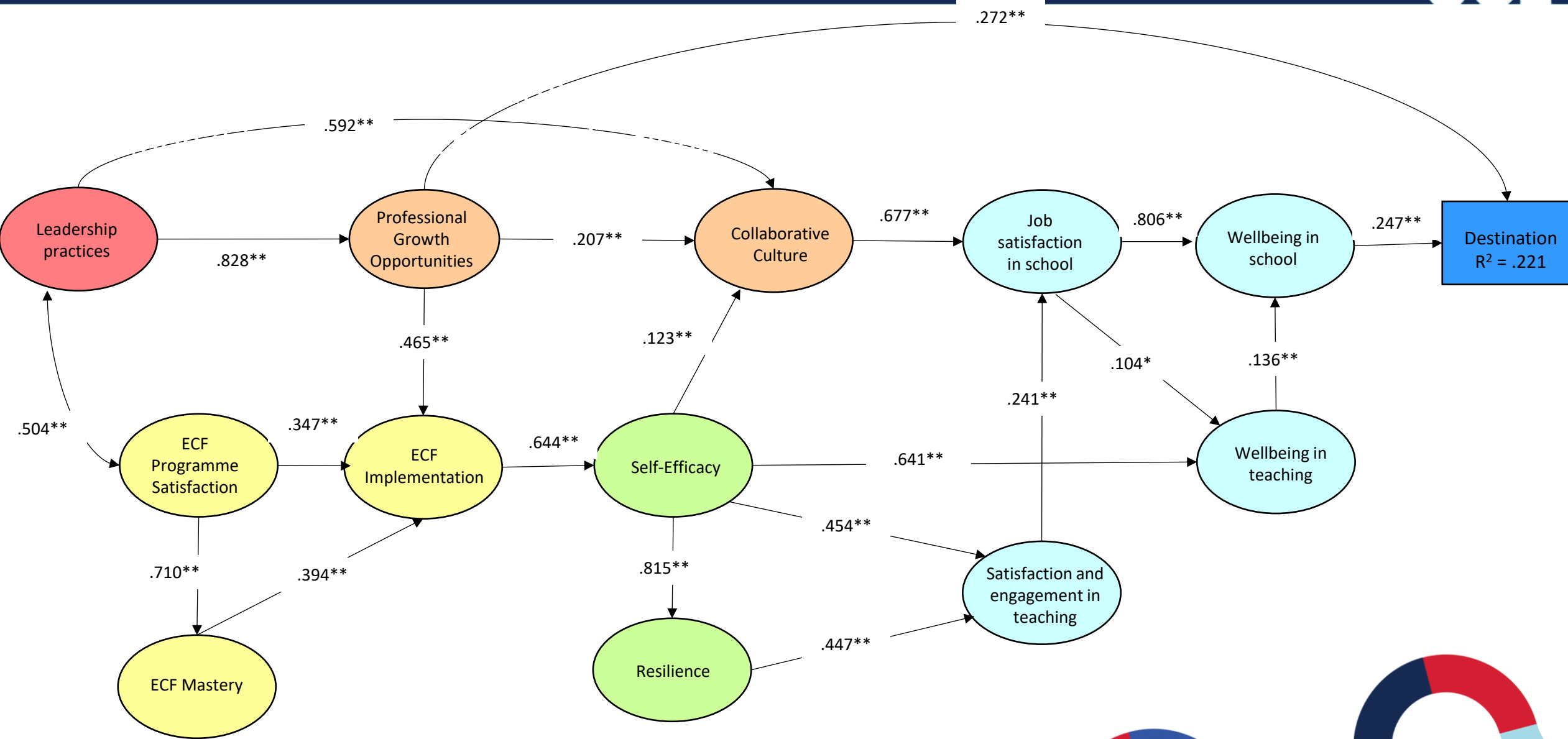
Range of model fit indices: CFI (.97-.98), TLI (.97-.98), RMSEA (.044-.049) and SRMR (.068 -.072)

Key Message 1: ECTs' learning experiences on the ECF programme is closely associated with the influence of in-school leadership**.**

Evidence: significant iterative associations between *programme satisfaction* and *leadership practices*:

- o set the expectations for educational improvement
- o establish social relations and develop teachers
- o manage teaching and learning programmes
- o restructure the school organisation to enable improvement in school
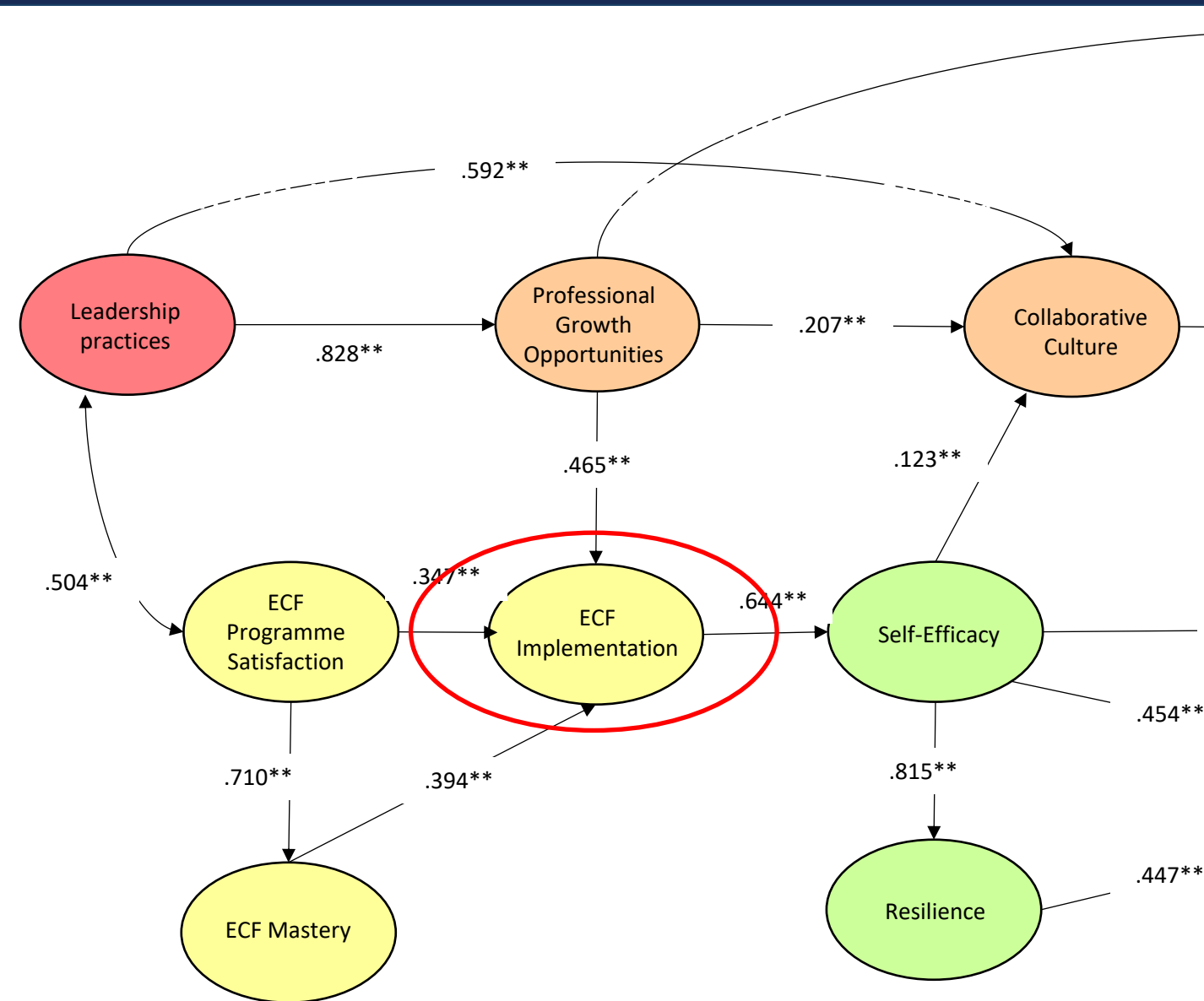
Key Message 2:

ECTs' satisfaction with their learning experiences on the ECF programme impact directly on their *mastery of the programme content* and *use of the learning* in their teaching practice (i.e. 'implementation').

It is the *use of learning* in context that improves ECTs' 'self-efficacy' and subsequently enhances their 'resilience', 'satisfaction and engagement' and 'wellbeing in teaching'.
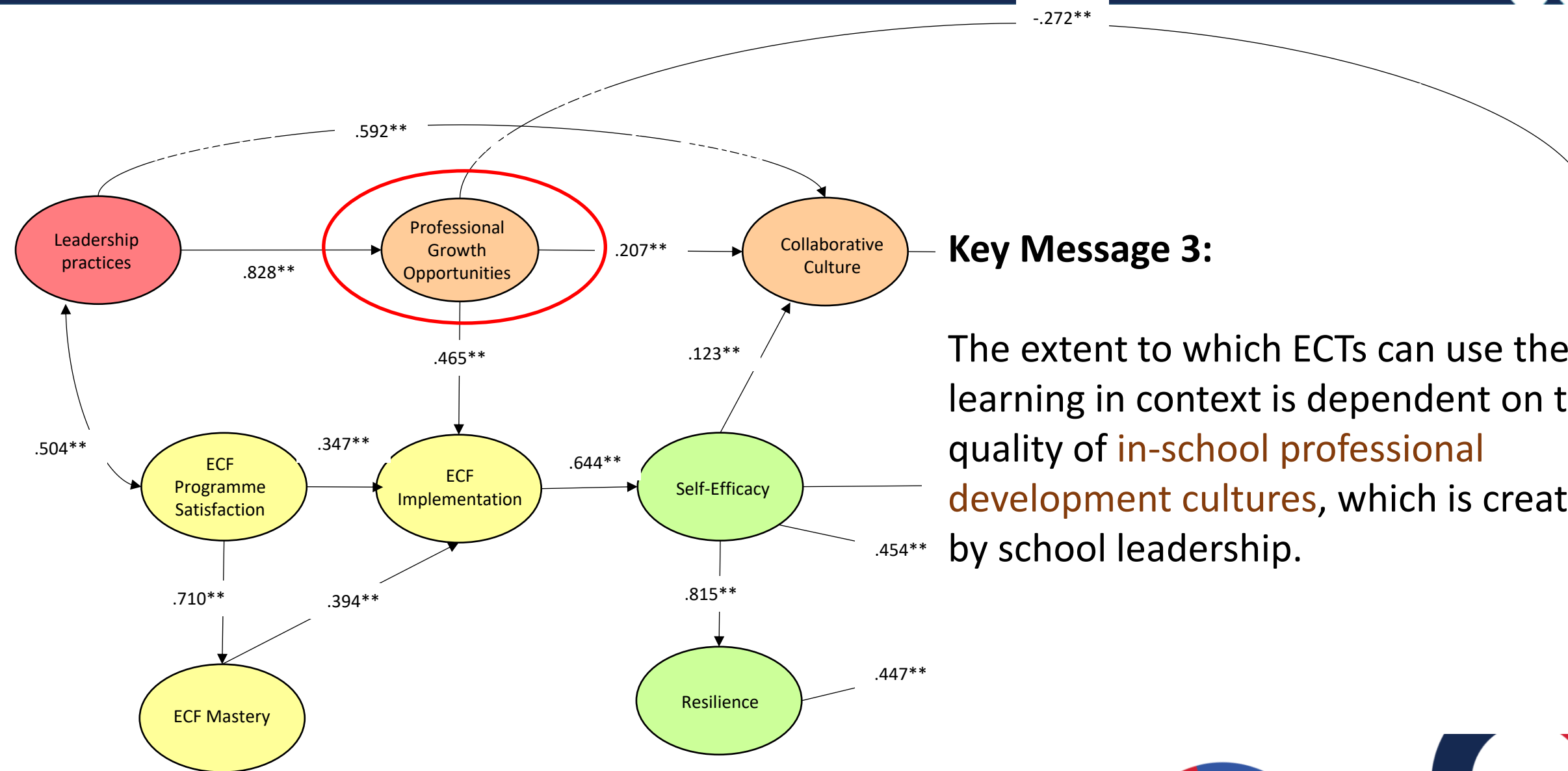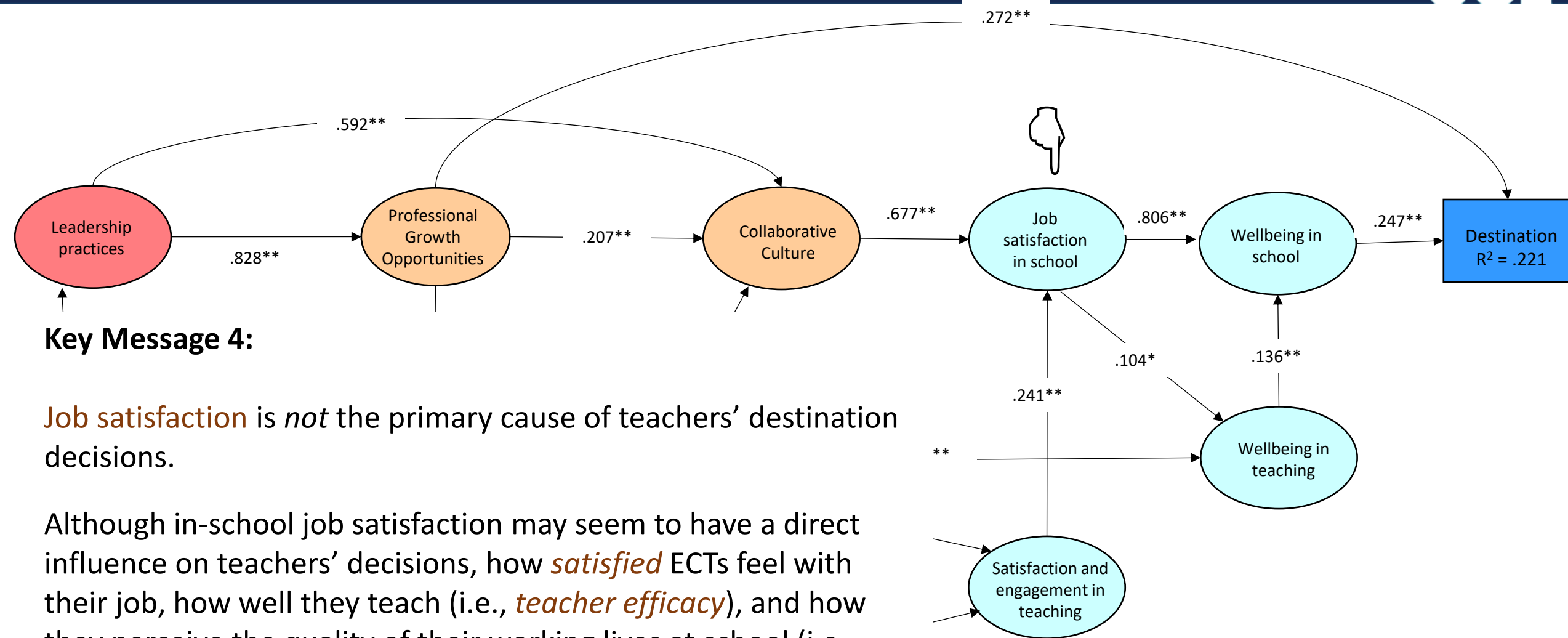
Key Message 3:

The extent to which ECTs can use their learning in context is dependent on the quality of in-school professional development cultures, which is created by school leadership.

Key Message 4:

Job satisfaction is *not* the primary cause of teachers' destination decisions.

Although in-school job satisfaction may seem to have a direct influence on teachers' decisions, how *satisfied* ECTs feel with their job, how well they teach (i.e., *teacher efficacy*), and how they perceive the quality of their working lives at school (i.e., *teacher wellbeing in school*) are dependent on the quality of in-school professional learning cultures, which are shaped by **school leadership**.

Diagram labels:
- Leadership practices
- Professional Growth Opportunities
- Collaborative Culture
- Job satisfaction in school
- Wellbeing in school
- Destination R² = .221
- Wellbeing in teaching
- Satisfaction and engagement in teaching

Path coefficients:
- .272**
- .592**
- .828**
- .207**
- .677**
- .806**
- .247**
- .104*
- .136**
- .241**
- **

Example from a case study: School Enablement

ECT:
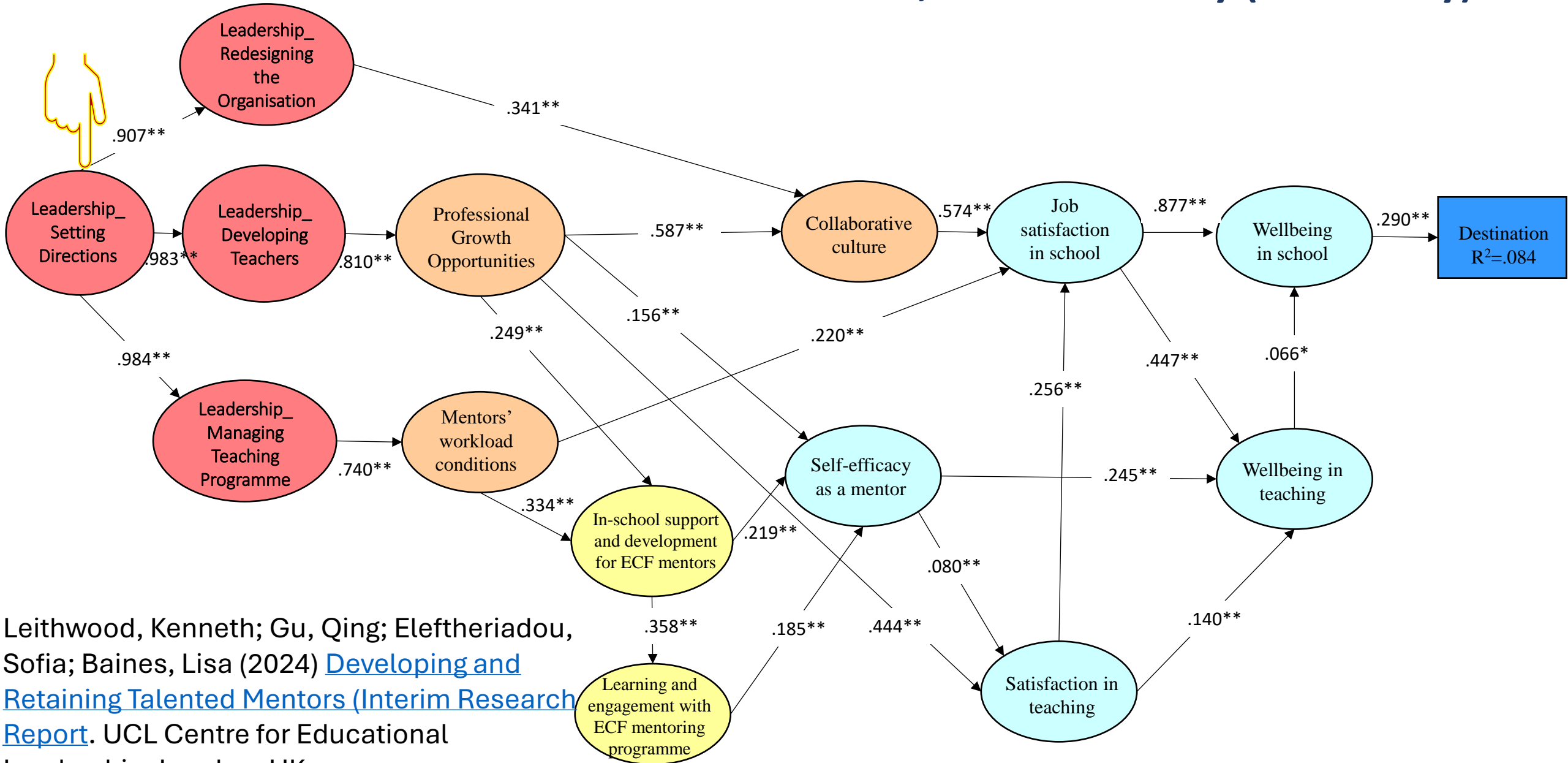
I felt like I was being treated like a **human being**, not a trainee. … That's very powerful, … because it made me felt I was needed: It was OK to struggle, and we cared that you succeeded. I felt like I was a valued member of the school, and that they were doing everything in their power to keep me here happy. … I wanna become the best math teacher I can be and learn from my department.

Mentor:

There're so many people involved in making this (mentor-mentee) relationship work and it's an institution that makes it possible. Because no matter what I say, if he didn't have the support of the Head of Department, then we wouldn't be able to put into place the things that we talked about. It's like a well-oiled machine…

That's what teaching is about, isn't it? You're changing people's lives. Yes, that's the whole reason to be a teacher. And *I'm now changing even more lives because I'm changing the teachers who are changing the student*.

Where Mentors Learn, Thrive and Stay (ECF survey)

Leithwood, Kenneth; Gu, Qing; Eleftheriadou, Sofia; Baines, Lisa (2024) Developing and Retaining Talented Mentors (Interim Research Report. UCL Centre for Educational Leadership: London, UK.

"Paths" of influence connecting school leadership to ECF mentors' retention decisions through *Job Satisfaction* and *Well-Being*

Three especially plausible *connectors*
- collaborative school cultures
- professional learning opportunities
- perceptions of workload conditions
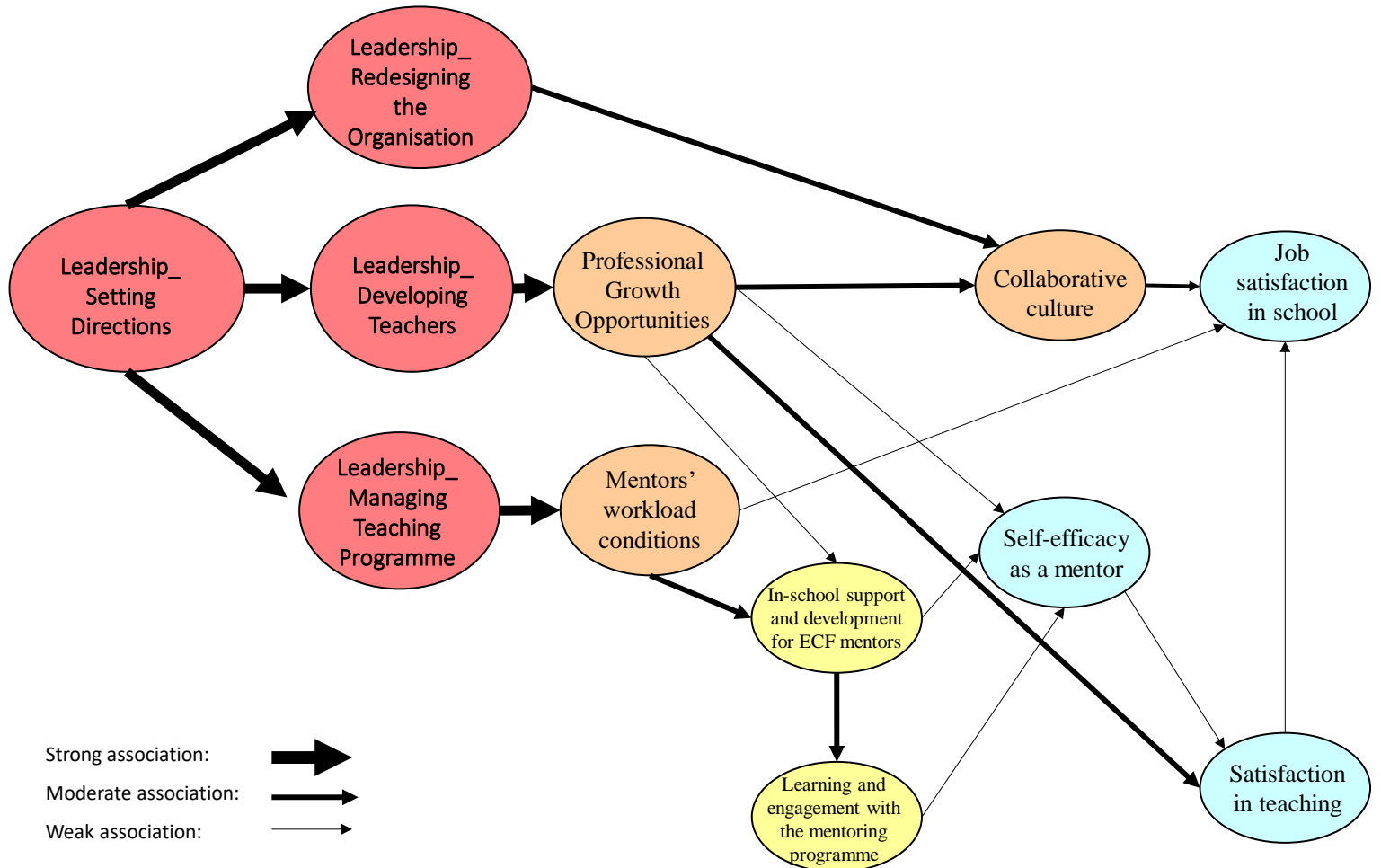
The Research Evidence: NPQs

Key Message 1:

The vast majority of NPQ participants remained **enthusiastic** about their leadership roles and felt that their jobs **inspire** them.

- **Nearly all (92%** for NPQ SL/H and **93%** for NPQ Specialists**)** of school leaders were intending to **remain in teaching** next year (c.f. 87.2% national stats in 2022).

- The vast majority of school leaders responding to our survey reported their **strong enthusiasm for the leadership job**.

  o More than **80%** of school leaders reported that they are enthusiastic about the leadership job and that **their jobs inspire them** – with **52%** and **43%** finding these *'very true.'*
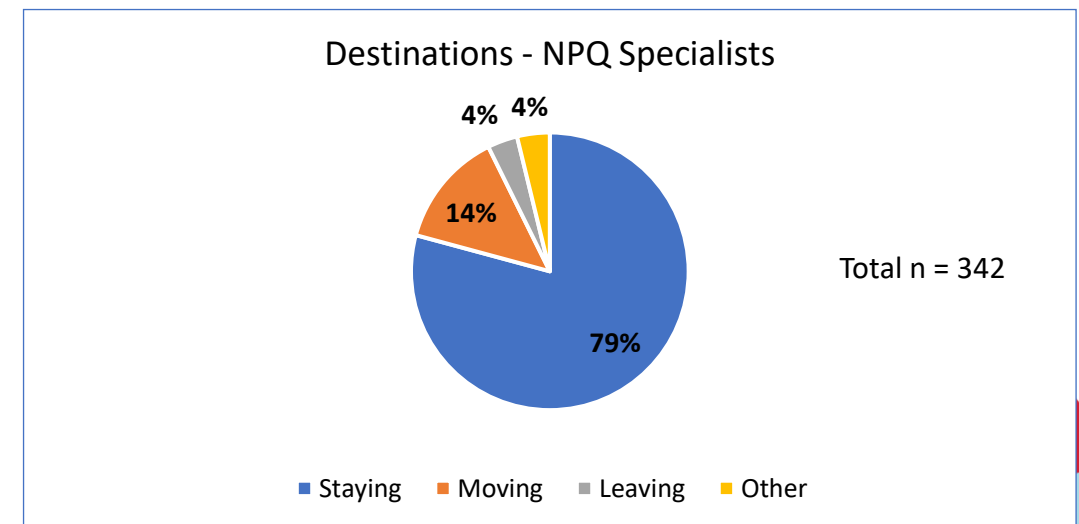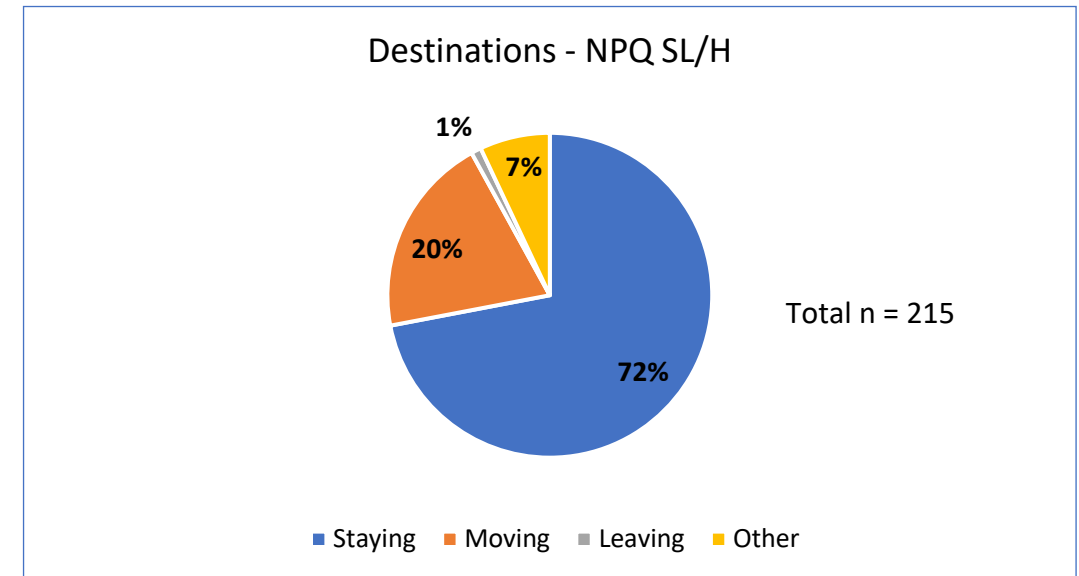

Destinations - NPQ SL/H

1%
7%
20%
72%
Total n = 215

■ Staying ■ Moving ■ Leaving ■ Other

Destinations - NPQ Specialists

4% 4%
14%
79%
Total n = 342

■ Staying ■ Moving ■ Leaving ■ Other

Fig.1 Intended destinations for next academic year
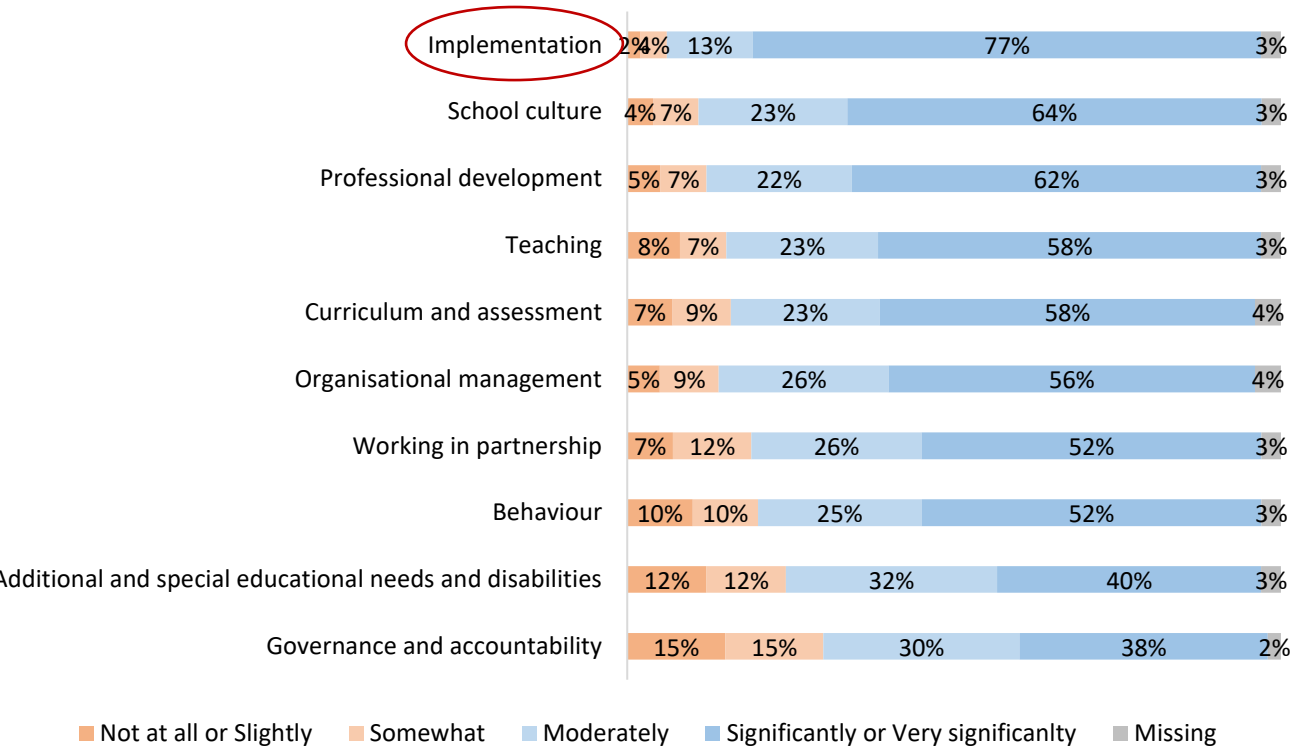
Key Message 2:

Learning from the NPQ programmes has broadened participants' professional horizons as school leaders and led to improved practice.

Planning and conducting the *implementation project* has enabled them to apply leadership learning in context, learn through the impact of changes in practice, and identify improvements.
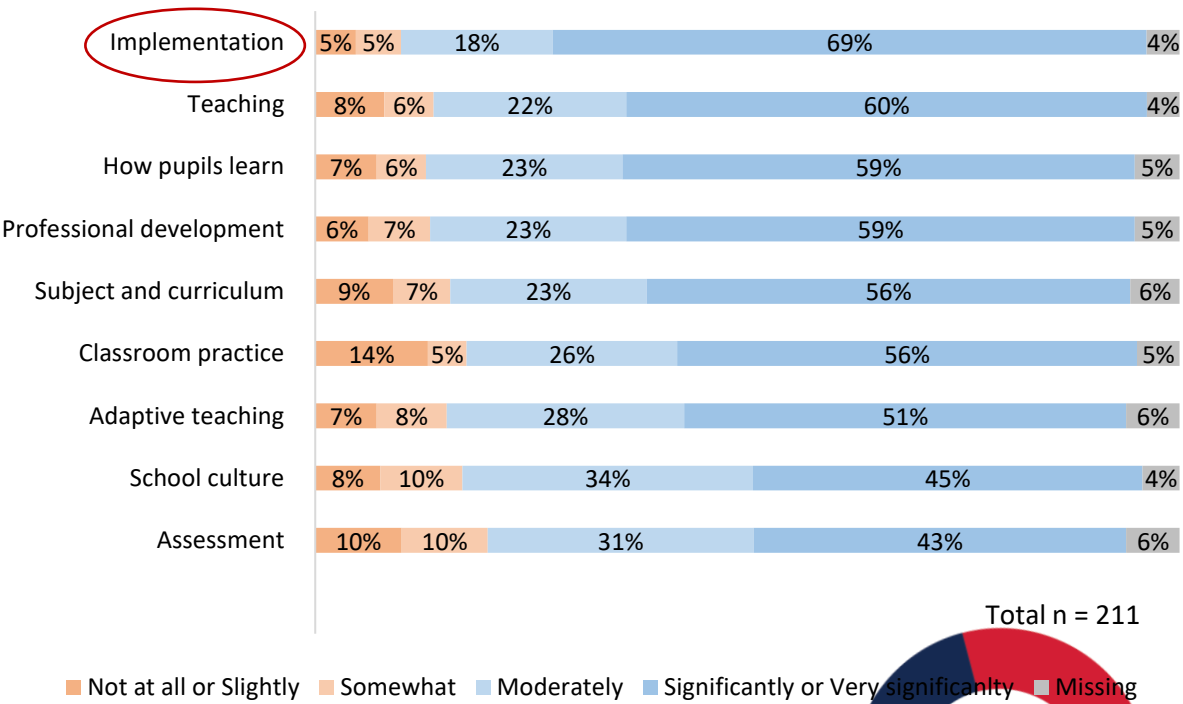
Application of NPQ learning in practice

Implementation (NPQ SL/H): To what extent have you applied your learning from each domain in your leadership practice?
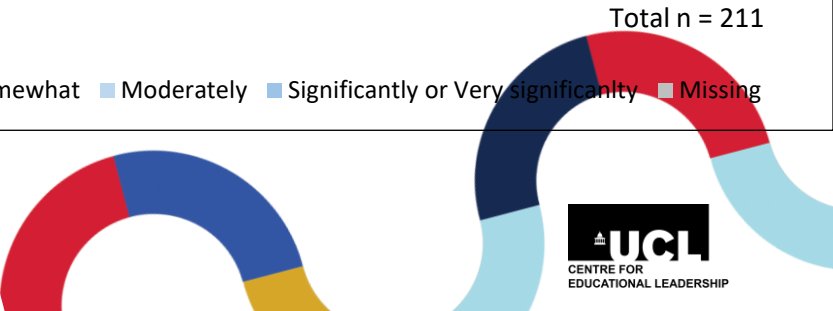
Domain	Not at all or Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Significantly or Very significantly	Missing
Implementation	2%	4%	13%	77%	3%
School culture	4%	7%	23%	64%	3%
Professional development	5%	7%	22%	62%	3%
Teaching	8%	7%	23%	58%	3%
Curriculum and assessment	7%	9%	23%	58%	4%
Organisational management	5%	9%	26%	56%	4%
Working in partnership	7%	12%	26%	52%	3%
Behaviour	10%	10%	25%	52%	3%
Additional and special educational needs and disabilities	12%	12%	32%	40%	3%
Governance and accountability	15%	15%	30%	38%	2%

Legend: ■ Not at all or Slightly ■ Somewhat ■ Moderately ■ Significantly or Very significanlty ■ Missing

Total n = 269

Implementation - NPQ Leading Teaching: To what extent have you applied your learning from each domain in your leadership practice?

Domain	Not at all or Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Significantly or Very significantly	Missing
Implementation	5%	5%	18%	69%	4%
Teaching	8%	6%	22%	60%	4%
How pupils learn	7%	6%	23%	59%	5%
Professional development	6%	7%	23%	59%	5%
Subject and curriculum	9%	7%	23%	56%	6%
Classroom practice	14%	5%	26%	56%	5%
Adaptive teaching	7%	8%	28%	51%	6%
School culture	8%	10%	34%	45%	4%
Assessment	10%	10%	31%	43%	6%

Legend: ■ Not at all or Slightly ■ Somewhat ■ Moderately ■ Significantly or Very significanlty ■ Missing

Total n = 211

NPQ Leading Literacy, Literacy Lead (Secondary)

Three examples of Impact on knowledge, department and school:

Example 1: How NPQ pedagogy has improved teacher knowledge

From a literacy perspective, that **cross phase knowledge** is very important. I mean the secondary school literacy leads often don't know anything about phonics. So you know you're really going back to basics and exploring phonics that takes some time to do that properly. I think it's very important that secondary school teachers know what happens in primary school. I think that's crucial.

Example 2: Learning to review: Change in approach to lead learning in school

I have made it quite a major change in my approach. Sometimes there's a feeling of you delivering an INSET and then that's done. But it's about reviewing honestly as a leader, feeling being able to say *"That bit didn't quite work. Let's review it."* I tried to really take that approach with things. So rather than just delivering an INSET, I actually delivered something at the Curriculum Committee first, with just heads of departments. Then I followed that up for the whole school INSET, and then I did a learning walk. Then I fed back from that learning walk and then I did another small meet. So that sort of process that I wasn't doing in the past. I think it has been core to making the INSET successful and I do think that literacy is now something of which all teachers understand the importance.

NPQ Leading Literacy, Literacy Lead (Secondary)

Example 3: Learning to monitor and improve practice within and across departments

It's about continuing to monitor things and reflect on them, and being quite open when things aren't going as expected. For example, like with the things that I've been working on, it was sort of knowledge we defined it, we looked at it, and then we started to think about it, and we did a lot of reading on meta cognition, cognitive load, retrieval as part of our reading on NPQ. So when we go to department meetings, we started talking about, "*Well, what are different strategies people use to try and make sure that that is having an impact on students?*" So we've built in a lot more mini whiteboard questioning, a lot more sort of just low stakes, quizzing all the way through.

David [Head of Department] brought a lot of cross department teachers together as part of his **NPQSL** to talk about the different ways that they taught under the umbrella of things like retrieval or assessment and feedback. I really enjoy talking to different departments. Obviously, we all teach different subjects in many ways, but the actual teaching and learning practice is really translatable. And then from that there's a new appraisal system. I think Mary's put it in partly based on her **NPQ Leading Teacher Development**. Rather than being just observed as part of appraisal, you can now choose to go and observe someone else based on your target. So I went to maths to be really interested to see how they teach and what our students are experiencing in the school. It was great.

Key Message 3:

Schools matter. A collaborative and trusting school environment with high expectations and room for innovation offers the necessary social, professional and organisational conditions for school leaders to apply their learning from NPQ programmes to improve practice in themselves and in others.

How Schools Matter

- **A safe professional environment** that allows autonomy and risk-taking

In terms of leading teaching and learning, we are quite unique in the sense that middle leaders are given quite a lot of opportunity to plan and create their own CPD. Obviously you know the overarching emphasis on the school, the school development plan, and what our key focus is as a school. Within that, we can then decide on what's bespoke for us as a department. And I think that that helps you to utilise what you've learned a bit better. (NPQ Leading Teaching, Head of Subject, Secondary)

- **An organisational environment** that supports and enables learning

They [co-headteachers] gave me time to do some monitoring, to share the outcomes with them. They gave me chances to go on external courses as well. So that support was already there. … I didn't have to fight for what I wanted to do because it was a mutual decision and that worked in my favour. (NPQ SL, Assistant Headteacher, Primary)
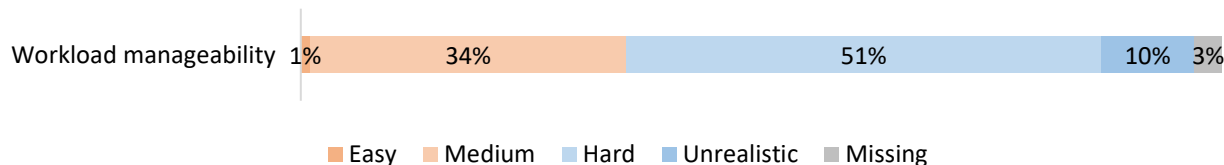
- **A social environment** that promotes learning and fosters team collaboration

We constantly want to offer new challenges and constantly offer opportunities for people to grow, and that's really, really important. What I think is important as well is that we have a common language and lots of the training that our staff have managed to attend are the NPQs. This enables us to have that common language. But we don't want people to just stand still. So we've also got lots of middle leaders that have been on many training courses over the many years, and we don't want them to just stagnate and just to stand still. (NPQ Headship, Deputy Headteacher, Primary)
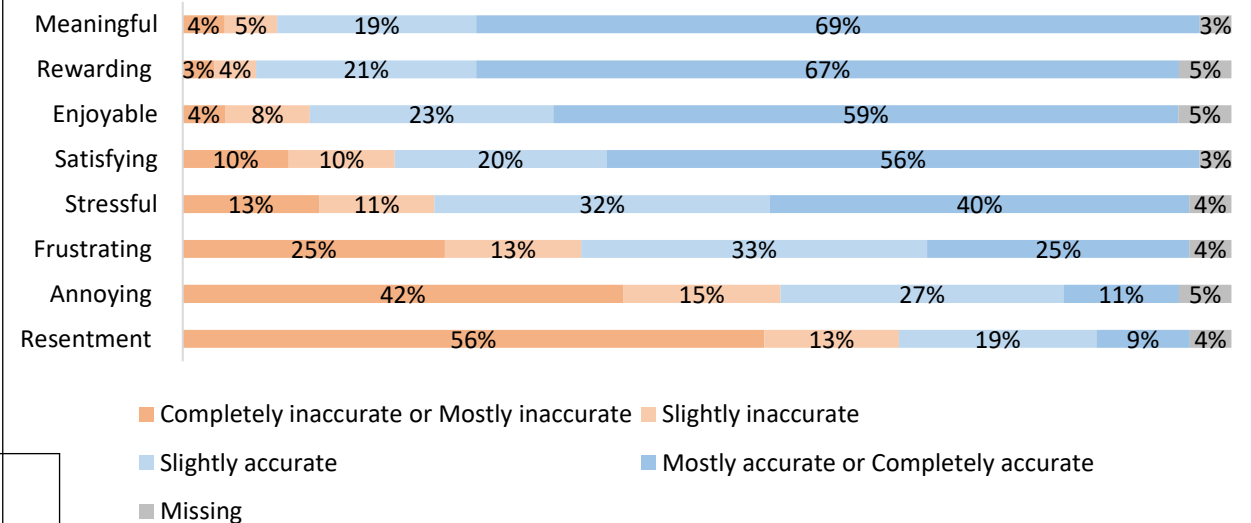
Work & Load (NPQ SL-H)

- The majority of school leaders (**88%**) felt that their **_work_**load is **meaningful and rewarding**.

- A third of school leaders found their **work_load_** to be _medium_ (34%) and half of them found it _hard_ (51%).

Workload (NPQ SL/H): To what extent do the following words describe how you generally feel about your workload in your school?:

Word	Completely inaccurate or Mostly inaccurate	Slightly inaccurate	Slightly accurate	Mostly accurate or Completely accurate	Missing
Meaningful	4%	5%	19%	69%	3%
Rewarding	3%	4%	21%	67%	5%
Enjoyable	4%	8%	23%	59%	5%
Satisfying	10%	10%	20%	56%	3%
Stressful	13%	11%	32%	40%	4%
Frustrating	25%	13%	33%	25%	4%
Annoying	42%	15%	27%	11%	5%
Resentment	56%	13%	19%	9%	4%

Legend: Completely inaccurate or Mostly inaccurate; Slightly inaccurate; Slightly accurate; Mostly accurate or Completely accurate; Missing

Workload (NPQ SL/H): Which of the following words best describes how you feel about your workload manageability in your school?

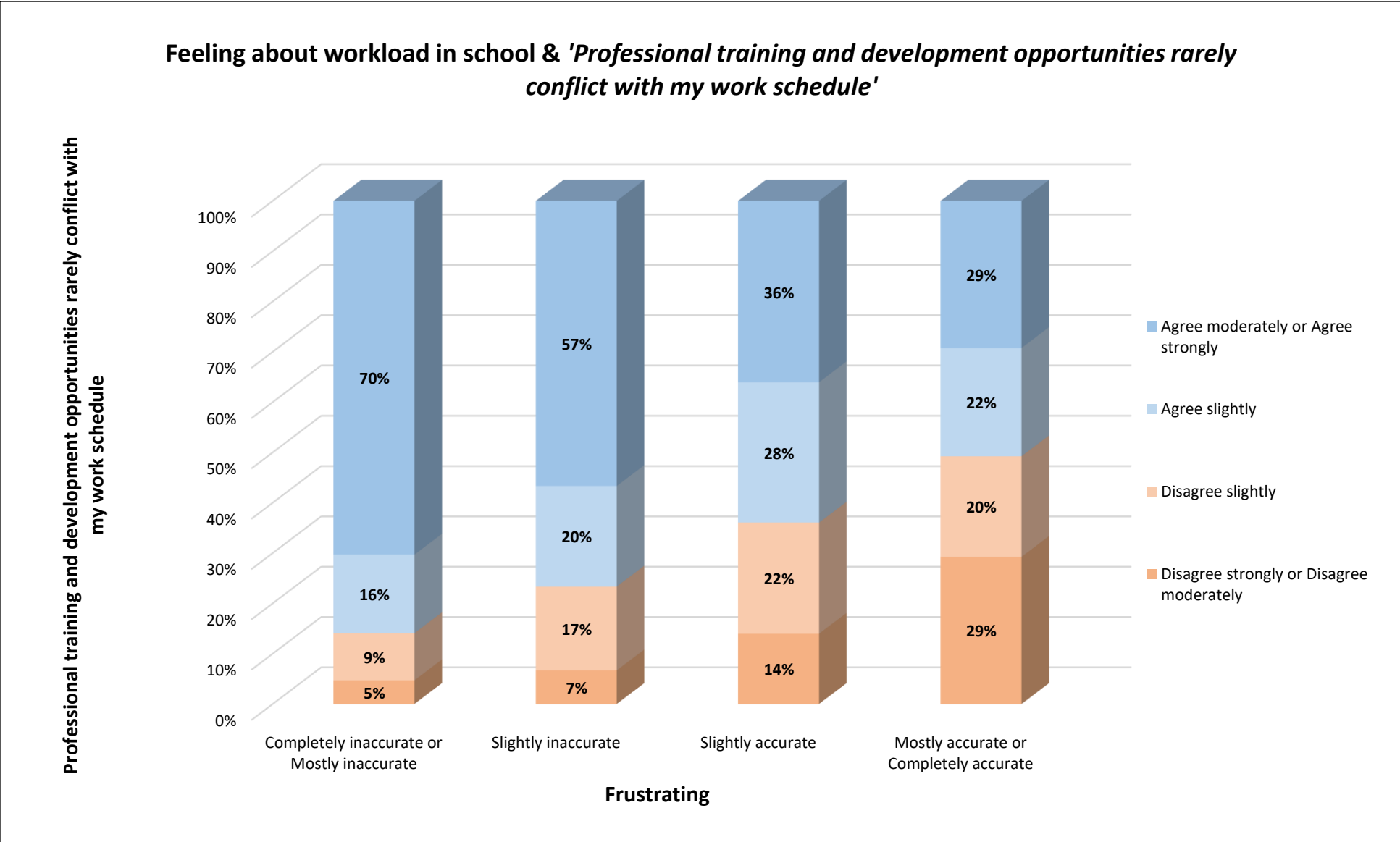|	Easy	Medium	Hard	Unrealistic	Missing
Workload manageability	1%	34%	51%	10%	3%

Total n = 269

Between-school variations: Participants' perceptions of work*load* reflect schools' *work*load cultures and conditions. The NPQ programme alone is not solely responsible for the negative emotions towards **workload**.

Surveyed participants who felt that the professional learning and development opportunities *rarely conflicted* with their work schedule in school were less likely to report that their workload is 'frustrating'.
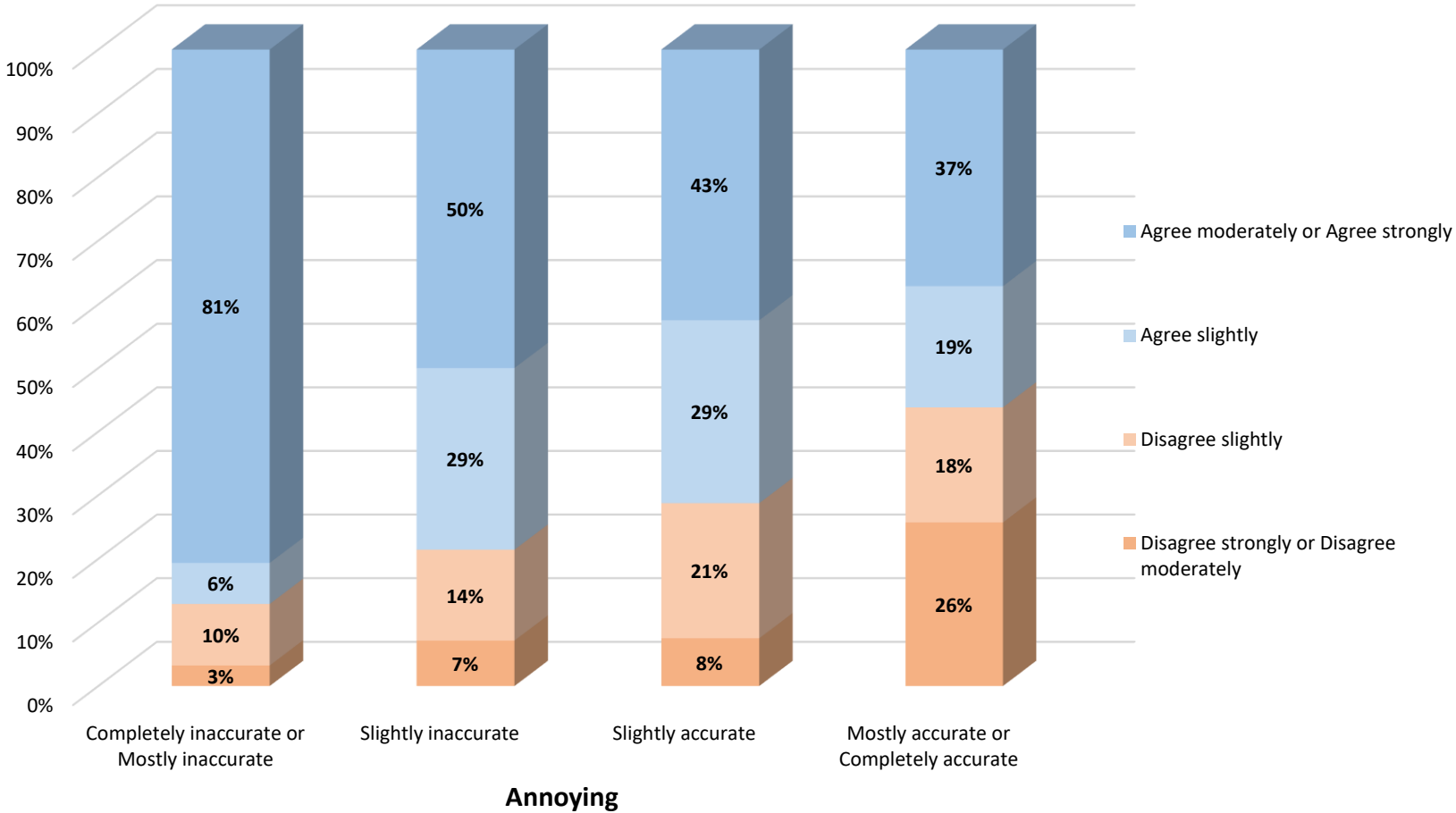
Feeling about workload in school & *'Professional training and development opportunities rarely conflict with my work schedule'*

Professional training and development opportunities rarely conflict with my work schedule

	Completely inaccurate or Mostly inaccurate	Slightly inaccurate	Slightly accurate	Mostly accurate or Completely accurate
Agree moderately or Agree strongly	70%	57%	36%	29%
Agree slightly	16%	20%	28%	22%
Disagree slightly	9%	17%	22%	20%
Disagree strongly or Disagree moderately	5%	7%	14%	29%

Frustrating

Between-school variations: Participants' perceptions of work*load* reflect schools' *work*load cultures and conditions. The NPQ programme alone is not solely responsible for the negative emotions towards **workload**.

Surveyed participants who felt that the professional learning and development opportunities *rarely conflicted* with their work schedule in school were less likely to report that their workload is '**annoying**'.

Feeling about workload in school & *'Professional training and development opportunities rarely conflict with my work schedule'*

Professional training and development opportunities rarely conflict with my work schedule

- Agree moderately or Agree strongly
- Agree slightly
- Disagree slightly
- Disagree strongly or Disagree moderately

Annoying

|	Completely inaccurate or Mostly inaccurate	Slightly inaccurate	Slightly accurate	Mostly accurate or Completely accurate
Agree moderately or Agree strongly	81%	50%	43%	37%
Agree slightly	6%	29%	29%	19%
Disagree slightly	10%	14%	21%	18%
Disagree strongly or Disagree moderately	3%	7%	8%	26%

Key Message 4

Participants in the NPQ specialist programmes improve their self-efficacy and resilience as leaders; however, such programme satisfaction is dependent on the nature of leadership in their schools.
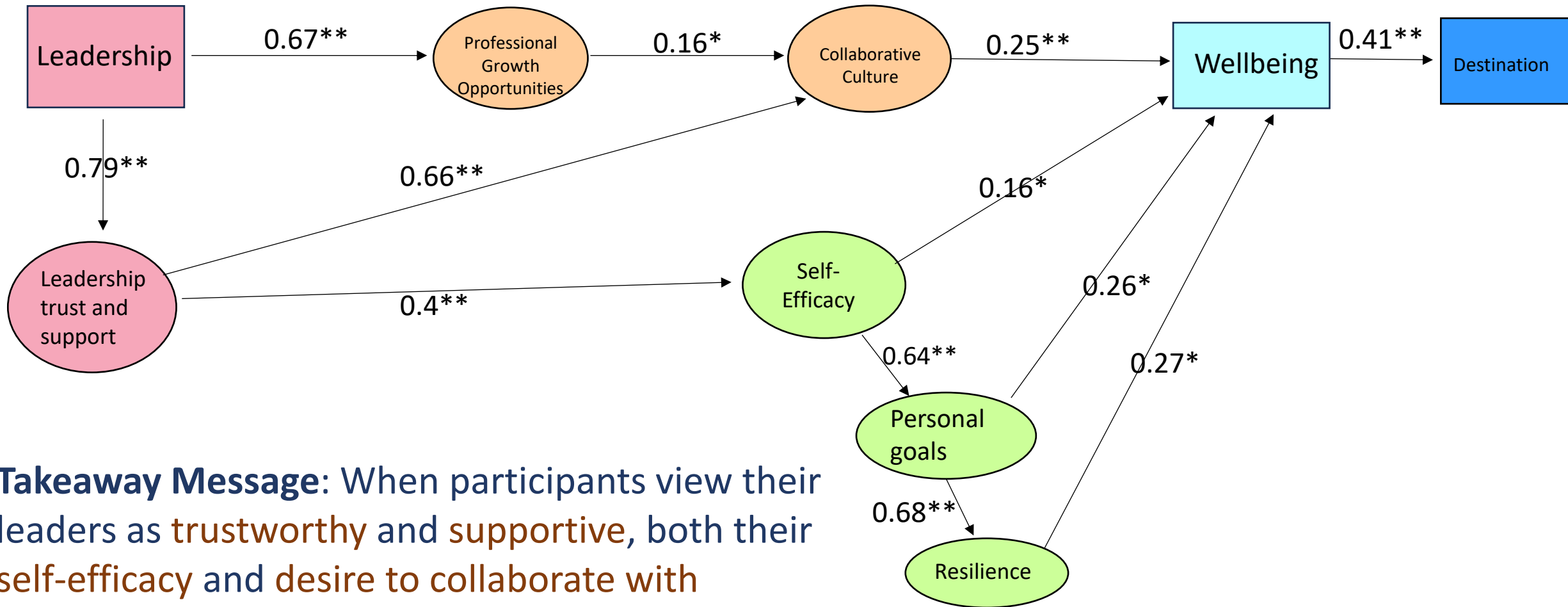
The specialist NPQ programmes can make a difference in participating leaders' retention decisions *IF* their learning is supported by school leadership.
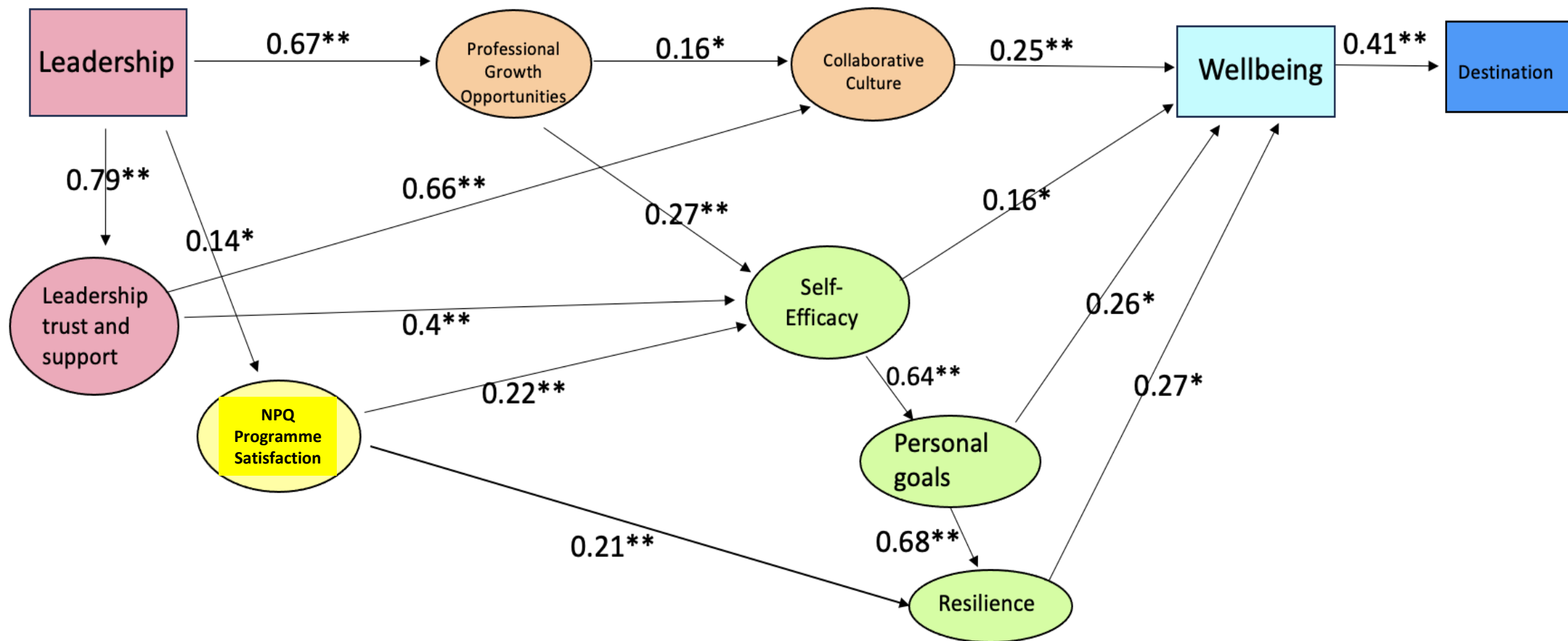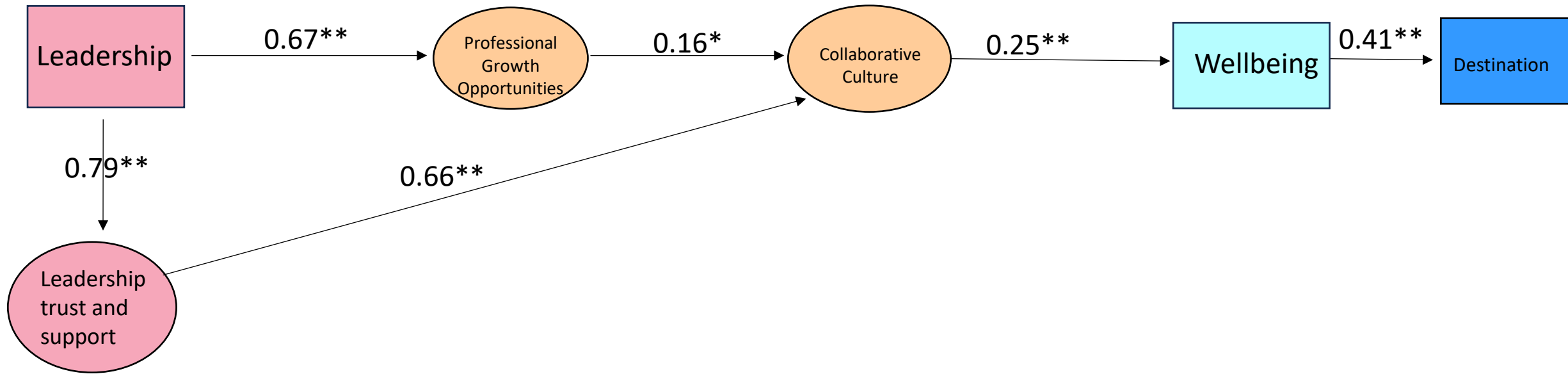
N = 329, RMSEA = 0.062, CFI= 0.912, TLI= 0.904

Takeaway Message: When participants view their leaders as trustworthy and supportive, both their self-efficacy and desire to collaborate with colleagues are increased.

Takeaway Message: The influence of collaborative culture, professional growth opportunities and leadership trust and support combines to improve participants' wellbeing (social/relational; cognitive; affective; psychological functioning).

So What?

There is encouraging news for ECF reform: The ECF programme *can* have and *has* had a positive impact on the learning and development of many ECTs.

For most ECTs, participation in the ECF programme in their first year of teaching *can increase* their self-efficacy, resilience, job satisfaction, and wellbeing in teaching.

However, …

- **Schools matter**: *Where teachers thrive and stay*

The ECF programme *alone* is *unable* to 'transform' support for ECTs' professional development, as the DfE envisaged in its reform strategy (DfE, 2023). The school organisation provides the necessary conditions that enable the desired learning transformation to happen.

The evidence also suggests that any systems-wide solution to teacher development and retention that is based <u>only</u> on the *human capital approach* to developing teachers is less likely to bring about the desired retention outcomes.

School leaders retain high quality teachers by helping to create productive work environments aimed at achieving ambitious, socially valued goals for all students.

Given similar student populations, a high-retention ("sticky") school is doing many things well, a low-retention ("slippery") school, not so much.

The environments in which teaching and learning take place will continue to change and, if they are to sustain their capacities to teach to their best, teachers will have to learn to live new lives.

(Day & Gu, 2010)

The school organisation – *where teachers learn to live their new lives.*

Thank You

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