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ROLE OF LEADER IN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

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Abstract

The main objective of this article is to describe a role of leader and define its importance in educational management. The role of a leader in educational management is critically important to make the educational institution provide high-quality education to students, to create an effective management system and motivate the staff to go towards the aim (Eacott, 2015). On the educational context, leadership influences the process, which finally leads to the achievement of desired purpose. A good leader should develop a vision on values of their educational institutions on personal and professional sides. A successful leader makes the staff love their job and be determined to achieve success. Educational leadership is a process, where a leader takes the initiative to facilitate the following conditions for implementing change in teaching and learning (Surya, 2011). The leader in educational leadership is responsible for setting the vision and mission of the educational institution, which serves as a guiding principle for all stakeholders, including students, teachers, and staff. Moreover, the leader must ensure that the educational institution environment is conducive to learning, which includes creating a safe and respectful atmosphere for students and teachers.

Keywords

Leader, Educational Leadership, Skills, Role, Style, Management

1. Introduction

Martin M. Chemers in Hoy and Miskel said that leadership is a process of social influence in which one person is able to enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task. (Chemers, 2014)

According to Peter Drucker, (Drucker, 2006) leadership is lifting a person's vision to high sights, the raising of a person's performance to a higher standard, the building of a personality beyond its normal limitations. Leadership style is a behavioral approach of leaders in order to have an influence and effect on their employees. In this article, I will try to demonstrate the most effective school leadership style as a research outcome. A leadership style gives the direction to leaders to set, design and implement plans and strategies to achieve the objectives of the educational institution.

2. Styles of Leadership

While discussing the role of leader in educational leadership, it is important to discuss styles of leadership. I would like to highlight (8) leadership styles, which are described shortly later in this article.

Firstly, it is autocratic leadership skill or authoritarian leadership style. This style of leadership is more focused on the final results and they often make decisions alone or with very small group of people. Usually they expect their employees do exactly what they require them to do.

Second, bureaucratic leadership style is more based on strictly following the written procedures and regulations. The bureaucratic style is more focused on specific duties within a hierarchical system, where each member of the staff has their responsibilities and duties, and there is little need for collaboration and creativity.

Third and one of the effective leadership style is Coaching Leadership style. A coaching leader identifies the strengths and weaknesses of employees to help each employee improve. This type of leadership gives a chance to team members to set smart goals and then provide them with the feedback to promote growth. Usually coaching leadership creates positive and motivating environment.

Laissez-faire leadership is accurately defined as let them be style of leadership style. This type of leader delegates tasks to team members and give them freedom of work with no or little supervision as this type of leaders are mostly busy with some other projects rather than supervising their employees. This type of leadership is effective for creative and highly experienced employees.

The democratic style is where the input received from team members is a base for decision making by a leader. In a democratic leadership style, leaders are oriented to ask their team for input and then take the feedback from the team into consideration to make a decision further.

Transformational leadership involves a leader who inspires and motivates their team to achieve a shared vision, often by providing support, encouragement, and personal development opportunities. Transformational leader expectation from their team is high and usually this style of leader encourage their team members to work and live through a transformation or considerable improvement.

Servant Leadership skill is another style of leadership, where leaders live by a people-first mindset. This style of leaders believe team members will be more effective and produce great work if they feel personally and professionally fulfilled. Emphasis on employee satisfaction and collaboration is what make servant leaders more respected by the team members.

The last leadership style, discussed in this article is transactional leadership, which is considered as more short-term and sometimes it is described as a give and take kind of transaction. In this style of leadership, leaders reward their employees rewarded for exactly the work they would have performed. This leadership style is quite often used in sales and marketing jobs.

3. School Leadership

According to the United Nations and UNESCO, strengthening school leadership to improve teaching and learning is one of the strategies put forward to achieve target 4.c of the Education 2030 Agenda, which addresses the need to increase the supply of qualified teachers (UNESCO, 2016; United Nations, 2015). The aim of the School Leadership is to get the best out of teachers and students. Effective school leadership needs a variety of skills, including communication, problem-solving, decision-making, and interpersonal skills. A school leader should work collaboratively with faculty, staff, parents and students to create a positive and inclusive school culture. School leadership also involves setting goals and procedures, and monitoring and evaluating student progress and teacher performance. The ultimate goal of school leadership is to promote academic achievement, social-emotional development and overall well – being of students and employees.

It is important to distinguish educational leadership from educational management. To describe it, I will summarize it as follows: (Waters, 2022)

Leading concerns vision rather than the implementation, which is more managing concern. Moreover, leadership includes strategic issues, transformation and ends, while managing concerns

more operational issues, transactions and means instead of ends. Also it is important to notice that if leading concerns more people, managing is more oriented on systems.

Need for distribution of leadership is caused by the increased responsibilities and accountability both within schools and across schools. Distribution of leadership in schools refers to the practice of sharing leadership responsibilities among various stakeholders in a school community, including teachers, students, parents, and administrators. There are a lot of benefits which school may receive from the Distribution of leadership School effectiveness may be improved by distributing leadership among people and organizational structures. (CSAS, 2021)

Distributive Leadership in schools is one of the most effective leadership approach where decision-making and responsibility are shared among a team of leaders, rather than being centralized in the hands of one individual. This leadership model recognizes that expertise and leadership potential exist at all levels of an organization, and that collaboration and collective decision-making can lead to more effective outcomes. School distributive leadership involve various strategies such as collaborative planning and decision-making, professional development opportunities for all staff members, monitoring and coaching programs, and the delegation of leadership responsibilities to different individuals or teams. (Tomlinson, 2004)

Basic characteristics of distributive leadership may include collaborative planning. Distributive leadership promotes collaborative planning among school leaders, which allows for a more comprehensive and coordinated approach to school improvement. Here is important to notice that collaborative planning involves cooperation of the staff in one specific department, which is preparing the plan, but collaboration across different departments too. This approach can also lead to cooperation across different fields in school and finally will lead to the correct and effective planning for the whole educational institution. (Surya, 2011)

Another important characteristic is shared decision-making. Distributive leadership involves decision-making as shared among a team of leaders rather than being centralized in the hands of one individual. The process involves bringing together a group of individuals with different areas of expertise and perspectives to work together to make decisions that affect the school community. Decisions may be much more effective if the group of decision makers consist not only from leaders, but from teachers, head teachers and representatives from different departments. A leader can't always know the depth of any department and staff's point of view, that's why if the group of decision makers include representatives from different departments, decisions will be much more efficient. Moreover, collaborative decisions raise a sense of responsibility and people, being involved in the process, will be much more motivated to make their decisions goal oriented and achieve success.

Professional Development is another important feature of distributive leadership. By sharing leadership responsibilities and encouraging collaboration, educators can learn from one another and develop new skills and perspectives. Lessons peer observation, workshops and collaboration with different departments will increase knowledge, collaboration and develop new visions.

Finally, distributive leadership in schools is flexible and adaptable to changing circumstances. It is very important for schools and educational institutions to be able to adapt to different external and internal factors. Covid-19 Pandemic was a good example of forcing educational institutions to adapt to online education. Some of them survived in this new environment and some did not.

To sum up, distributive leadership may be considered as one of the most effective leadership style for educational institutions and schools. Moreover, distributive leadership is a style of leadership, which allows teachers to have a voice and choice in decisions. This, hence, affects quality of the organizational institutions working process. The chart below sums up and illustrates the role of leader in school leadership.

Figure 1: *Role of leader in school leadership*



(Source: Author's Own Illustration)

3.1. How Leaders Can Develop and Support Distributive Leadership (DL) Teams

School leaders need specific knowledge to respond to deal with all the challenges, occurring in the educational institutions and duties and responsibilities. Leaders play a crucial role in developing and supporting a distributive leadership team in their school.

No school leadership is without building a share vision. The role of leader is to work with their team to develop a shared vision for the school and ensure that everyone understands and is committed to this vision.

To improve efficiency and effectiveness of employee's work, leaders should have *clear and clarified roles and responsibilities*. It is important not to have them only written, but also ensure that everyone knows what is expected of them. This can help to avoid confusion and conflicts and promote a sense of ownership and accountability among team members. Clarifying roles and responsibilities can also help staff members to identify areas where they can develop their skills and knowledge and hence, have a possibility of self - reflection and professional development. Moreover, it becomes much easier and more comfortable to collaborate when roles and responsibilities are clearly distributed and are not doubled. (Lathan, 2021)

In addition, good leader should provide *professional development* for their team members to help them develop the knowledge and skills they need to be effective. Many leaders have a sense of fear when their employees start own professional development out of the educational institution, when they invest in their development and do not wait until their leaders provide them with trainings. The fear of leaders is that these employees will leave from the educational institution as they grow and find a better place to work. This thought of leaders is quite common and, certainly, is wrong. Good leaders assist their employees to grow professionally and encourage them to use their knowledge in developing of the educational institution. Good leaders motivate trained and professional staff to share their knowledge with other employees and they do not overwhelm a good employee because they can do better than others do, but assist them to become better leaders. (Slack, 2019)

Laurie says, that a leader should have an ability not only to lead effectively, but also build relationships with the employees. The leader should consider team members as not only employees, who leader needs to fulfill the aim, but also realized that employee's self-awareness, health and well-being are all important for employees engagement. So good leaders encourage their employees and make them happy at work rather than turning work environment toxic. This can lead to in high-performance teams of engaged and motivated employees who are loyal, culturally aligned with the organization, and united by a shared sense of purpose in their work.

A lot of work and studies are written and done on *motivation of employees*; however, the most important is leaders to understand how to motivate their staff. Motivation affects employee's success and has a huge role in employee satisfaction. Taking motivation into account, it is important to notice that intrinsic motivation specifically plays an important role how team members may feel about their jobs, how involved and happy they are with their work. All this lead to the quality of the employees' work.

A good leader should be able to give employees motivation and help them achieve their goals.

Leaders need to understand what really motivates their employees to best meet their needs and engage them with their work. They should think how to make appropriate conditions for the team members to encourage them to work effectively.

4. Research Issues

Issue of school management and role of leader in educational leadership is becoming actual today. There are several problems that the educational system is mostly faced with. Firstly, it is inadequate vision and strategic planning as some school leaders may struggle with developing a clear vision for the school and creating effective strategies to achieve the vision. Another problem is poor communication and collaboration. Effective communication is crucial for a school leader to convey expectations, provide feedback, and foster collaboration among teachers, staff, students, and parents. Insufficient communication can result in misunderstandings, low morale, and reduced productivity. Successful leader has good communication skills and has communication with all interested parties in order to get more information about their expectations and feedback. School leaders play a vital role in ensuring the well-being and engagement of students. If leaders are not proactive in implementing student support systems, fostering a positive school culture, and promoting student involvement in extracurricular activities, it can lead to disengagement, low achievement, and behavioral issues.

Moreover, ineffective staff management may be considered as another and one of the most important problems, raised in educational leadership. Leaders must effectively manage and support their teaching and administrative staff. Issues can arise when leaders fail to provide adequate training and professional development opportunities, fail to address performance concerns, or neglect to create a positive and supportive work environment.

It is important to note that these problems are the most common in modern educational leadership and in this article, I will try to demonstrate how to work on these issues and offer the best ways of successful school leadership.

5. Conclusion

Nowadays educational leadership is becoming more and more important and role of a leader is crucially increasing. Good leaders are people who set a vision for educational institution, set a plan to achieve the goals and motivate employees to go towards the aim together and with success.

A good leader is one who works with approach I follow, therefore I lead. Leaders should demonstrate that they can be followers who are ready to become a member of employees' team and start actually working with the team members in order to achieve the aim. Good leader can increase productivity by 89% with supporting team members

Good leaders know that support, professional feedback and recognizing employees' hard work are among their most crucial tasks. However, great leaders know how to set a good example for the employees in order to encourage them to follow.

Effective school leadership is characterized by a range of qualities and practices that contribute to the success and improvement of a school. Vision and strategic planning is the first step towards the effective leadership. Successful leaders develop a clear vision for the school and create a strategic plan to achieve it. They communicate this vision to stakeholders, align goals and objectives, and inspire others to work towards a common purpose. Another step to effective leadership is strong communication and collaboration. Leaders should have communication with all interested parties, get their feedback and expectations. Moreover, leaders should create a positive and inclusive school culture that promotes respect, trust, and a sense of belonging. They establish clear expectations, values, and behavioral norms. Staff development and support is another step towards the successful leadership. Successful leaders invest in the professional growth of their staff. They provide ongoing training, mentoring, and coaching opportunities. They empower teachers to take leadership roles and contribute to school-wide decision-making processes.

Leaders should use data to inform their decision-making processes. For effective management, leaders should make evidence based decisions. They collect and analyze relevant data to identify areas of improvement, monitor progress, and make evidence-based decisions that positively impact teaching and learning.

Continuous improvement and innovation is the last step in effective educational leadership. Effective leaders should be oriented on effective analyzing and appropriate planning style, which will aim improvement and encourage the staff to be involved in continuous improvement process.

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