UNDERSTANDING LEADERSHIP IN REGARDS TO SCHOOL EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Leadership has been an area of absorption among scholars and researchers. Leadership skills are a precondition to procure to a systematic and methodical approach which would direct the organization, group institute or an individual to a progressive ground. There has been a lackadaisical yet progressive change which persevered to conceptualise and determine the substantive definition and alms of leadership. Educational leadership hence attracts interest owing to its contribution towards academics. This research work sheds light on to the importance of leadership and its application in academics. The work delves into a study of the effects of leadership on the students' learning process and to focus on the meaningful work which the educational leaders are engrossed in and outside the classroom and educational premises.

KEYWORDS: *Leadership, School Education, Educational Leadership, Leadership Effects on Students*

INTRODUCTION

Leadership has been a topic of keen interest for centuries, dating from the early Greek philosophers like Plato, to the recent management analysts and writers, whose books fill bookshops. Leadership has been an area of practical skill and research which encompasses the ability of an individual or a group of people to influence and guide individual or a team towards a desired goal. Leadership can be summed up saying, it is an "*influential power relationship in which the leader's power promotes movement/change in their followers*" (Northhouse, 2007). However, there has been a need for effective leadership which is voiced in recent times. The recent changes of the world, converting into a global environment, identifies leadership as an effective medium, a key and an answer to the success of individuals, organisations, regions, sectors and nations.

HISTORY CONCEPTUALIZES LEADERSHIP

Leadership words over a vast span of time, have been shaped and defined by numerous views. Eventually they took a stand and came to a specific definition involving multi dimension. The term '*leadership*' is framed within a historical line tracing over a period of decades. Early 20th century defined leadership, with the leader having the dominant and central control over a specific group. With the gradual passing of time, the 1930's traits studied the key involvement of the leader in determining the kind of leadership (Northhouse, 2016).

1940's observed the '*behaviour of an individual*' to be an important part of leadership. Hence crept in the distinguishing factors between leadership by persuasion and leadership by coercion. 1960's was important in the history of leadership since, the definition was by then narrowed down to specify the behaviours enacted by people which influenced others. Thereafter by the 1970's, the pattern changed and the organizational goals were dominated both by the leaders and the followers and

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emerged popular themes which further enhanced the concept and skills of leadership. (Northouse, 2016).

It is a very recent development during the 21st century, which created a debate and differentiation between the individualised processes of leadership separating it from management. At this point different types of leadership were identified- authentic leadership, spiritual leadership, servant leadership, and adaptive leadership (Northouse, 2016).

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

With the development of leadership in various fields, pattern of leadership changes in the educational institutions were also welcomed. Educational leadership since then became a priority in the making of educational policies and programs worldwide. Educational leadership plays a key role in modifying the outcomes of the school administration by influencing positively the capabilities of the teachers, students, school environment as well as the society.

Educational leadership and responsibilities must be defined adequately through a definite understanding of the related practices. These practices should be modified and nurtured for a soothing process of the teaching and learning. The effective outcomes of educational leadership can contribute to the areas which would guide in developing characteristics and responsibilities of leaders emerging in the field of education (Pont, Nusche, & Moorman, 2008).

PERSPECTIVES OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Leadership can be referred to as the influence exerted by an individual over the others in order to structure the activities within the organizations or groups. It is referred to as the social influencing process. *"The discussions about educational leadership focus upon principals, head teachers, these are classified into the categories of deputy and assistant head teachers, principals, heads of departments, subject leaders, and heads of the year"* (Educational Leadership, 2015).

Specialist leaders are informal leaders, whose influence emerges considerably from a specific subject knowledge and skills, sharing with a group or groups of learners and individuals having social impact with their peers. This is considered to be a very important skill for an individual. "*Educational institutions are considered imperative within the community; they play an important role in promoting the development and growth of the individuals. They even support learning beyond the school boundaries"* (Educational Leadership, 2015).

We can categorize educational leadership into six major areas which are stated as: (Educational Leadership, 2015).

Instructional Leadership puts emphasis upon the fundamental duties of the teachers within the school campus, which focuses upon providing structured instructions to the students, developing learning methods, rate of absenteeism, organization of class tests, examinations, evaluation, progress and achievements.

Participative Leadership talks about the making of decisions, introducing innovative instructional methods and implementation of activities. This kind of leadership involves the consultation of colleagues and subordinates to share decision making and other social resources.

Moral Leadership revolves parallelly besides academic learning, where the students are responsible to possess and cultivate within themselves the basic traits of morality. They should also cultivate etiquettes and decency within and outside the educational institutions. It puts emphasis upon the significance of vision and values, and at the same time ethical leadership.

Transformational Leadership is concerned with the commitment of the colleagues and to increase their dedication towards their job. These transformations might relate to rules, teaching-learning methods, training of the teachers, evaluation techniques, extra-curricular activities, organization of competitions, and so on. Thereafter, this kind of leadership which is positively implemented in bringing about transformations is termed as transformational leadership.

Contingency Leadership takes into consideration, how the leaders and path-breakers respond to the particular organizational circumstances, problems and move to solutions. The leaders are required to deal with them and find adequate solutions.

Managerial leadership concentrates upon the significance of defining tasks, activities and behaviours of individuals. These individuals possess different positions within an institution, in accordance to the duties they are assigned to carry out. This kind of leadership put emphasis adequately upon the tasks, activities and behaviours of the individuals.

GOALS OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

The primary goal of a leader is to lead to empowerment of an individuals, which would contribute in making significant decisions. The accountability mechanism would allow members to contribute and voice their own issues.

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The goals relating to educational leadership are stated below: (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, &Wahlstrom, 2004).

The very fast goal of educational leadership is to create a sustainable and competitive school. School leaders might find themselves in competition for their students. Empowering also becomes important while making significant decisions. Empowering can be a primary goal for the leaders when talking about accountability mechanisms. This might include making adjustability and provisions for a larger voice, leading the members of the community. Other goals can include encouragement of data informed decisions etc.

It is to be noticed that implementing and developing strategic school improvement, plans are required for the school leaders to develop the skills and technicalities associated with the implementation of such plans and productive planning. Educational leaders must possess the capability to adapt the programmes applicable to the requirements of the teachers and subordinates. The leaders need to implement measures promoting teamwork which would gradually benefit the process of evaluation and develop professionally. The teachers, hence should be trained effectively to help in possessing the knowledge of meeting the needs of the students. (Pont, Nusche, & Moorman, 2008). Providing instructional guidance is an important goal considered for the educational leaders. Providing instructional guidance would have the main objective to advance and enhance student learning. However, this would take on qualitatively in the framework of leading unambiguous grounds which would assess the work of the educators.

Goal-setting, assessment and accountability, becomes another such important area. The formulations of goals are important to assess the pros and cons, while it would also make sure to provide appropriate efforts needed for their accomplishment. The policy makers should ensure that educational leaders to have their preferences in establishing a strategic direction. It is also needed to enlarge their capacity in the development of the school plans, goals and monitoring the progress (Pont, Nusche, & Moorman, 2008). Collaborating with other schools is a new leadership dimension that emerged very recently. It can generate many positive and advantageous option to the educational systems while considered wholistically (Pont, Nusche, & Moorman, 2008).

JOB DUTIES OF AN EDUCATIONAL LEADER

The duties and expected role of the educational leader can be focused upon the areas, stated as follows:

Implementation of goals and visions with excelling and measurable expectations for all educators, students and subordinates is an important area which needs to be looked at. It is essential to consider a plan and for implementing it further, converting the goals into practice, turning it as the objectives of the institution.

The educational leaders determine and understand, to differentiate between goals and objectives. These goals can be measurable or non-measurable for the students. The measurable goals should be beneficial for the students wholistically. It is important for an educational leader to analyse the multiple sources of data and information concerning the recent practices, before considering the development or revising of the goals and objectives. An analysis of the school has to be conducted for this purpose and then analysed to find out the flaws. Hence, the collection of data and analysis is taken up as one of the fundamental jobs assigned to the educational leaders.

Communicating the shared goals is vital in a way that it considers facilitating the capabilities and potentialities of an individual in understanding, supporting and acting upon them. For this, the communication system must be proper and abiding to the norms. Certain positive qualities are required to possess by the individuals, while he gets involved into a communication with each other. They can be classified as, effective listening skills, politeness, proper feedback and truthfulness. Implementing effective communication strategies is necessary for an individual. The individuals might consider communicating with each other both in verbal or in a written manner. The educational leaders are also marked with engaging the staff and community members with individualised and different perspectives for a proper implementation of the vision to achieve the desired goals. These leaders are required to fix *"common obligations and responsibilities amongst the staff members and the community for selecting and carrying out of the strategies towards the implementation of the vision and goals. It is vital to build consensus and a plan for the distribution of responsibilities."* (Kapur, 2018)

The educational leader frequently develops a sharing of understanding and that of commitment towards the levelled standards marked for all students to overcome all barriers which might arise out of the differences in the cultures, society, economic status, religion etc. Hence, comes to uttermost importance to create an environment of culture for the students. The diverse backgrounds from where the students appear into an educational institute create an admixture of different cultures, ethnicities, religions, nationalities, socio-economic status, backgrounds and race. They

are required to understand organizational culture and work in co-operation with each other.

Hence, it is important to create procedures, structures and relationships, making provision of the application of time and resources needed for a collaborative teaching and learning procedure. Mutual benefits and a wise distribution of responsibilities can be promoted amongst the learning communities and the teachers. *"Promotion of the collaborative teaching and learning opportunities and involvement of the students within the school functions and teamwork. The teachers and the students should work in co-ordination with each other in order to facilitate the teaching and the learning processes" (Kapur, 2018).* The individuals should focus on developing professionally by building the skills, abilities and techniques that would contribute in enhancing their performance. The educational leaders take up the role of guiding and supporting job-embedded standards, which are based and focused on professional development. There should be a proper study and analysis of the situation within the classroom by the teachers and problems related to the oral communication to be solved by the potential leaders.

LEADERSHIP EFFECTS ON STUDENT LEARNING PROCESS

The fundamental objective within educational institutions, is to improve and promote students' learning. For this purpose, it is mandatory for the individuals to introduce well-organized instructional strategies and curriculum. The teaching-learning methods should be in accordance and at par with the requirements of the students (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, &Wahlstrom, 2004). Each and every student within an educational institution is different from each other while considering different perspectives and parameters, for instance different viewpoints, learning abilities, natures, skills and way of communication. The emphasis given in improving educational leadership is considered to be the key towards a successful implementation and application of the large-scale reform (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, &Wahlstrom, 2004).

The effects of educational leadership are wide, and are considered to be the largest where most needed. We can hold examples, taking the case of educational institutions, keeping apart the matter of education, development of the students and most importantly, the implementation of managerial functions are also necessary. *"These functions are planning, organizing, leading, controlling, directing, and staffing. On the other hand, when the leaders are not able to bring about solutions to the problems towards their desired goals and objectives"* (Kapur, 2018). The effects of leadership, thus would reflect a

positive outcome upon the students' learning enhancing their qualities, resourcefulness, creativeness, capabilities and ingenuity.

CONCLUSION

Educational leadership is a primary consideration associated with the enhancement of students' learning leading to their growth and development. The outcomes of educational leadership should bring a change and give direction to all matters and problems associated with the running of educational institutions. The other areas that educational leaders have to take into consideration are, vision, values, mission and standards of the educational institutions. As a matter of fact, equity and cultural responsiveness, performance appraisal systems, teaching-learning methods, building up of the professional capacity and skills of the school personnel, ethics and professional norms, creation of the community that may work in co-operation towards the care and support of the students, usage of technology, building up of the professional community of the teachers and the staff members, curriculum and the instructional systems, supervising the administrative, clerical, technical, and managerial functions in an effective manner promoting meaningful and positive engagement of the resources and the community and formulation of measures that would lead to improvement of the school.

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