

## Leadership: Key to Unlock a Quality Institution

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### Abstract

*Leadership is a key element of any successful institution or organization. Every simplest organization need a leading body, leadership can even be termed as a basement of a strong organization. Therefore, leadership is very important element of education institution. Managing the institution is different from leading it. Leading is more liberal than that of management. For better performance and maximum output from the institution, leading activities in a particular way is very much necessary. Therefore, a suitable and successive leader should be opted to run an organization. This paper discusses about leadership, theories of leadership, educational leadership and institutional leadership. The explanation given in the paper are based on prior works of leadership and their qualities. The paper is concluded by discussing how good characteristics of a leader can result in building a good institution.*

**Keywords:** Leader, corporate, institutional, path-goal theory, community building, quality institution.

### 1.0. INTRODUCTION

The “Leaders are individuals who establish direction for a working group of individuals and who gain commitment from this group of members to established direction and who then motivate members to achieve the direction's outcomes” Conger (1992). It is possible to interpret the word leadership from different angles and explanations. Leadership is not a contemporary process; it is a historically developed procedure which involves a person or a group of individuals on

developing relationship as a social practice. (Bennis and Nanus, 1985) mentioned that that “leadership is like the Abominable Snowman, whose footprints are everywhere but who is nowhere to be seen”. Cumulatively, a leader is a person or a group who takes the charge of leading people sharing a common objective by imparting the strategies assumed to be better as per him/her. A leader must have the capacity to decision-making who will be eligible to take over the authority of an organisation. Leading a process is just to enhance the competitiveness and potential of an institution, employees or the society to which an eligible body is needed (Simiyu, 2015).

Leadership and management are two distinct aspects, management is more like the conservative mode of conducting a profession where the owner has full control of the organisation, and would create a direction and guide their employees to do their job in compliance with the order and stratagem of the owner. Alternatively, leadership is when the leader guides their subordinates through organization's goals, while always attempting to communicate, motivate and safeguard that they are in the proper position so that they are utilizing their talents for the commitment towards the job. Leadership tactics can also adjust, if appropriate, according to current trends, unlike management who strictly follows old, conventional rules. (Hao & Yazdanifard, 2015)

### **1.1.Theories of Leadership**

In order to clarify and define the features of leadership in an organisation in terms of its efficiency, there are various theories proposed by the scholars.

- a. **Contingency Theory:** Fiedler mentioned that leader-member relations, Task structure and power of position, effect on performance of leaders. Leadership-Member relationship depicts the extinct of trust and attraction gained by the leader towards his/her employees. Level of inspiration of employees towards their leader also defines the leader-member relationship. The leader prepares tasks for employees in such a way to obtain the maximum outcome of the work. And the last element of contingency theory is power of the position. To deal with and handle organisational challenges with trust, execution of decisions taken by the leader is mandatory. (Anonymous, 2020).

- b. **Path-Goal Theory:** The theory of the Path Goal suggests that the most effective leaders are those who, through their strong vision, keep their staff and subordinates inspired to identify and make the path of work strong to them. According to this theory, the key characteristics of a leadership are to inspire their teams to achieve the objectives of organisations by retaining influence over the outcomes of their effort. Leaders too praise the staff and offer incentives for their good work and to boost and retain the passion that gives them faith in their skill and work. (Abbas & Asghar, 2010)
- c. **Managerial Grid Theory:** Robert R. Blake and Anne Adams are the founders of the leadership grid theory. The theory explains leadership's obsession with customer demand-based development by reflecting on leadership styles to help manage teams. In some cases, this method can be hard to enforce. According to the theory, teams are kept engaged by the leaders. Also, the team is encouraged to be flexible to consider and embrace the need for change. (Abbas & Asghar, 2010).
- d. **Transformational Leadership theory:** Transformative leadership means that whenever a leader develops or changes his / her employees the process takes place in three stages. These changes in work environment enhances the poise of employees. The increase in confidence progresses the competence of work of employees. And they tend to accomplish work tasks that can lead to better achieve the institutional objectives. Some of the key characteristics of transformational leaders are that they increase the trust and awareness of the employee so that they can boost their performance and also allow them to understand their personal outcomes and development. (Abbas & Asghar, 2010)

### **1.2. Leadership in Educational Institutions**

Leadership roles are considered indispensable in educational institutions. The leaders' job is mainly intended to advise and advise employees in the right direction. In this process, they will be able to accomplish their tasks satisfactorily, as well as to solve the difficulties and challenges that will occur during the execution of their tasks. The chairman, directors and principals are the ones with the power to assume leadership roles. In order to steer students in the right

direction and help them meet academic goals, educators must also be successful leaders. (Kapur, 2019). It is important for leaders to form a culture within educational institutions that would contribute to the establishment of leadership skills not only among heads and teachers, but also among students.

Leaderships are related to combining and blending of six areas, which are depicted in the actions of the leaders. The leaders need to balance them appropriately, as developments take place within educational institutions. The main areas that are taken into account in leadership are, establishing goals and expectations, strategic resourcing, planning, co-ordinating and evaluating teaching and curriculum, promoting and participating in teaching-learning processes and development and ensuring the formation of an orderly and disciplined environment.

When changes take place within educational institutions, leaders need to properly balance them. Setting priorities and objectives, strategic tools, preparing, organising and reviewing teaching and instruction, supporting, engaging in teaching and learning activities, growth, and ensuring the creation of an organised and structured atmosphere are the key areas that are taken into account in leadership. Leaders need to concentrate on improving occupational associations, their job and their knowledge on the fundamental “teaching and learning” sector, and the “effect on student performance”. Leadership is considered the primary factor in improving school performance. Leadership encourages the achievement of desired goals and priorities and strengthens the education system. (Kapur, 2019).

With having a good academic leading tendency, schools become active learning hubs, places where learners are not only taught, but also tested, nourished and inspired. The aims of an educational system may be compromised by weak or absent school leadership, on the other hand. Learning is undermined and students suffer, when schools lack a good base and guidance. (Lathan n.d.). Lathan in his article mentioned 10 characteristics of school leadership which are as following.

- i. Community Building - In order to cultivate inclusive, compassionate and culturally sensitive school cultures, Effective school leaders build and sustain relationships between family. It is vital that school leaders are recognizable in their schools and in the community, they establish a sagacity

- of trust and develops a culture of transparency and they try to establish a community network with parents, staff, community members and students by sharing a common purpose.
- ii. Leadership skills among successful schools – To sustain a successful educational institution, leaders need to know that they alone cannot do anything or they alone cannot achieve the greatest success therefore, the cumulative struggle of all leaders, teachers and students can make the institution successful. A duty of a leader is not only to provide the needs to teachers but also enabling their leadership qualities.
  - iii. Application of Data and Resources - Successful leaders use data to facilitate quality change by site-based decision-making, including structured and school-based reviews, in order to expressly encourage equivalent and traditionally subtle opportunities for all students. The prospects provided by data are plentiful and the utmost successful leaders will take control over this knowledge to make strategic decisions to help their students.
  - iv. Necessity of a Vision and a Plan – Futuristic thoughts and a dreaming quality can be one of the greatest qualities of the successful leader. Job of the leader is to unite his/her team to achieve a defined goal by helping them with a plan and designed strategy. Leading a team is only possible when the leader himself is lucid about the vision, goals and aspirations of the institution. Having a vision is not only important to the leader but it is the duty of a leader to establish its importance among all the team members and colleagues because it is one of the ingredients which provides a sense of motivation and guidance. The vision and enthusiasm of a good leader will generate motivation, encouragement and excitement in school.
  - v. Collaborative, Inclusive Learning Environments – To achieve an educational objective, students need flexibility in learning and creative dimensions to be accessed as a part of active learning. This is understood and given priority to inclusivity by the best educators, building stable learning environments that nurture every student. Inclusive learning leaders often have the image that each and every human being can contribute to the world of learning and therefore, promote partnership between students and faculty.

- vi. Passion about Work - For almost everyone who wants to be competitive and satisfied in their career, passion is a vital ingredient. However, passion is especially relevant for school leaders, who typically have a tremendous influence on their school's atmosphere and culture.
- vii. Risk-Taking quality – All the educators should inspire risk-taking among their learners to stimulate development, genuinely effective leaders foster risk-taking among their subordinates and peers by fostering a positive atmosphere that rewards not only good ideas or programmes, but also effort, regardless of the outcome.
- viii. Leading through Example – The great saying “Do as I say, not as I do” is very prominent but of course, actions play major role than words in influencing people. Leaders who lead with greatest examples place themselves as the supreme role model to students, other peer groups and their parents. A leader who leads by example gets respect and appreciation almost always, without it he or she would have no blessing in leadership. Albert Schweitzer, a philosopher and physician once said, "In affecting others, example is not the only thing; it is the only thing."
- ix. Persevere – A leader can be best serving in his/her duty when he perseveres with the team even after facing plenty of difficulties and problems. As, it is impossible to achieve the goal sooner, the futuristic vision needs time to change from current condition. The persistence does not only show the enthusiasm of the leader towards work but also determination towards taking the team together. Thus, this character of a leader will be a great example in the entire school cultures.
- x. Lifelong Learners - The unquenchable desire for knowledge is probably the most significant of all the attributes a school leader can possess. John F. Kennedy said, “leadership and learning are indispensable to each other.” Even the greatest leaders of any company despite having maximum experience, they will be unable to learn everything regarding the work. Therefore, leading is not a matter of time but it is lifelong learning process. In their interpretation, they are modest and assured in their capabilities. They are endlessly curious people who never stop asking questions and learning.

Leithwood & Reihl (2003) and Leithwood et al. (2006) gave certain points that the educational leader has to follow

- i. Build a vision and set guidelines, define and articulate a vision, generate a common sense and prospects of a high level of success among community members, encourage nurturing objectives, and the ability to track the performance of the organisation.
- ii. The opportunity to provide creative thinking and leadership by offering an illustration and improving the talents that educators, their colleagues and staff members need to achieve the school's goals.
- iii. Organization is redesigned by establishing cultures and procedures based on the cooperation of the principal to handle his atmosphere and working conditions. All this while maintaining constructive and maintainable ties with parents and community, the school and the extended atmosphere is very essential.
- iv. Creation of productive working environments for both workers and learners, promoting organizational cohesion for successful learning-focused leadership.

## **2.0. INSTITUTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

The methods of academic institutions and corporate entities vary. Although all types of organisations have a vision and mission statements, educational institutions vary dramatically in a approach to institution building, due to the fact that faculty in academic institutions have far more latitude to define their goals and objectives compared to workers in corporate organisations who are likely to define their goals and objectives in line. In general, academic institutions are much flatter organisations without centralization, where corporations are much more bureaucratic and susceptible to varying degrees and types of centralization. The absence of hierarchy in academic institutions promotes empowerment, but the expanded autonomy enjoyed by academic workers must then be delicately balanced by transparency. Autonomy involves a sense of duty and, thus, individuals are required to be self-motivated and self-driven. Bureaucracy (academic institutions as well as corporate organisations) is common in both flat and hierarchical organisations. One of the main tasks of

institution builders in academic institutions is striking a balance between empowerment and bureaucracy. The cooperation and cohesion between key functionaries and individuals in the institution is also crucial. Academic institutions are like an ensemble in which each player is required to play a specific instrument as an expert. However, if each works without coordination as an individual player, they only create noise, but the result is a beautiful symphony if they operate in coordination and harmony with each other (Sharma & Karlo, 2014).

The importance of defining specific instructional priorities, preparing the curriculum and assessing teachers and teaching has been stressed by pedagogical leadership. It sees the key focus of the leader as responsible for encouraging better student performance, recognizing the need of teaching and learning and even quality improvement. (Day & Sammons, 2014) said that “More the emphasis of leaders’ influence on the core business of teaching and learning, the learners and their relationships with educators, the greater their influence on student outcomes”. School leaders would not be able to perform critical school enhancement activities for example recording the rate of application of instructions and fostering educator’s growth with no understanding of the skills needed produce good information, wide-ranging knowledge regarding the institution, syllabus-centric curriculum practices, coursework expertise and knowledge of learners. Although the process seems impossible task for one person, the distribution of leadership roles offers a sound rationale for this. It is also closely related to the leadership roles of directing and evolving individuals (Day & Sammons, 2014).

Institutions need leaders to preserve the current system, develop strategies for the future, and establish a long-term plan such that the leadership of an organisation can be self-replicating in the interest of time. Hierarchies are designed to fit individuals within a framework based on specified roles, abilities, and a recognizable level of knowledge. It is widely assumed that leaders in such environments will keep everybody in place and keep systems intact. Leadership isn't about being innovative as much as it is about enforcement.

(Day & Sammons, 2014) suggested a Meta-analysis of leadership for promoting student outcomes

- i. Establishing goals and expectations: Before implementing the goals, it is very important for the leader to develop the



- importance of setting goal. His/her prime duty will be conveying the importance of setting goal to others. A better leader is the one who creates the clear set of goals to which the staff will be committed. Staff commitment to goals is very much important in any sectors, their interest and commitments make the goals to reach their requirements. Therefore, a leader should also think by considering his employee's views on the topic.
- ii. **Strategical Resourcing:** For institutional and philosophical purpose the leader has to adapt précised norms and principles. Only adaptation and implementation of systematic strategies is not enough but the constant application and maintenance as very much important to build a successful institution.
  - iii. **“Planning, coordinating, and evaluating teaching and the curriculum”:** Authors suggested that regular collegial discussions regarding teaching and its impacts on students should be encouraged by the leaders. Student outcomes can be enhanced by carrying an active future goals and proper execution of teaching programs to teachers. Collecting feedbacks of teachers from students and even listening to the lectures of the teachers can help in employing the best teachers. Though no one is a born teacher, the teaching skills can be enhanced at any instance. Therefore, it is very much important to a leader to ensure his/her employee are giving their fullest contribution in building a better institution. Changes are inevitable, changes in the system can be made by tracking students' performance in the periodical assessments.
  - iv. **“Promoting and participating in teacher learning and development”:** Following on teaching-learning relationship is a must in any institution. Without knowing the relationship of teaching and learning a leader cannot lead his team well. The promotion of collective responsibility and accountability for tracking students' achievement and wellbeing is most important. Based on the follow up analysis, teachers can be suggested some solutions for teaching problems.
  - v. **Ensuring an orderly and supportive environment:** Leader has to ensure that a teacher's time is not getting wasted in doing unwanted works. Because, the proper utilization of time directly impacts on effectiveness of teaching. A consistent disciplinary routine should be executed in the institution. If any

conflicts arise in the institution, a leader must resolve them as soon as possible.

(Day & Sammons, 2014) also suggested a Meta-analysis of effective institutional leadership

- i. Educationally powerful connections can be established by maintaining a continuity between school practices and student identities, steady practices of teaching programmes, regular necessary transitions of educational settings, developing and promoting parent-teacher relationship and home-school connection.
- ii. Problems in the institution can be properly addressed by analyzing the causes of different opinions of teaching faculties and discussing the merits and demerits of current practices along with future strategies.
- iii. Implementation of smart tools in the institution must be carried after analyzing well designed valid theories and grounds.

(Hodges) in a blog titled “Six Things the Most Engaged Schools Do Differently” discussed about a report. The report suggested six recommendations for school leaders which help them to work consistently.

- i. Identifying the appropriate school leaders - A new study showed that Gallup 's Principal Insight evaluation of highly talented principals are 2.6 times more likely to have above average employee interest in the schools they led three years later. Assigning of capable leaders has a significant and permanent influence on progress of school.
- ii. Strengths of the educators – Having a principal who tracks the strengths of teachers can almost removes the risk that they may be deliberately disconnected from the job. Successful leaders will be able to know their team completely and then develop the position around the areas of greatest strength of each teacher as much as possible.
- iii. Recognising culture – A good leader understand the importance of recognition, they establish and maintain a community on a regular basis that includes substantive recognition. Which

- encourages teacher and students to be always engaging in school activities as the representatives.
- iv. Measure of teacher's involvement - Great knowledge may serve as a major stepping stone to change that improves the workspace. The best techniques for engagement-building start with efficient assessment and proceed with behaviour at the level of the local school and workgroup.
  - v. Team work - When deciding concrete strategies for making a quality workplace, successful principals promote dialogue among employees. The best thoughts always come on a regular basis from those nearest to action.
  - vi. Constant effort – “Building an engaged school is not an event, it requires ongoing and intentional effort”. Leaders generally occupy themselves with tasks to complete. For feedback they generally interact with parents, communities and the staff. Based on the reports of the feedback collected leaders design their new strategies to meet the requirements and a staff meeting is also done on the same issue to receive the suggestions and convey new strategies and designed goals. They create a clear, specific action plan, comply with their responsibilities and continue to make stable development over the time.

### **3.0. CONCLUSION**

To conclude, constructing an organisation is a dynamic activity that requires vision. Leadership to inspire and empower individuals to accomplish a mission and vision about the institution. Ultimately, whatever is done in an operational context, Construction relies on our deep belief in what's best for the company. Autonomy must be matched with transparency, excellence with relevance and Social ethos, which encourages sustainability, creation and culture.

Leader is not a superior person rather a leader should be one among equals who takes the team in one right path by considering every individual's suggestions equally. Therefore, managing things and situations is different from leading the team in a way. Leadership qualities are very much important in every part of living; therefore, leadership skills are developed in children from very young age.

Every sector has its own strategies and principles of leading. Different sectors have different leading bodies similarly, institutional leading bodies are generally head, chairman, founders and principals. They decide strategies to run an institution effectively, the process starts from selection of employees i.e. teachers to their training, activities, active participation and so on. A leader should hire his/her employees who pertains leadership qualities. Many scholars have given many explanations on how a leader should be, but in general a leader should have a futuristic vision, a defined set of ethics, good listening skills, creative and logical thinking, good behavioural intelligence, time management skills, passion about work, dedication and etc. A good leadership quality can tend to build a good institution.

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