UNDERSTANDING LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOUR IN SCHOOL EDUCATION IN INDIA

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Abstract

The expectations for schools and school leaders have significantly altered, and countries are modifying their educational institutions to meet the demands of modern society. Now, as nations overhaul their educational systems to better prepare children for life in a world of quick technological development, economic and political globalisation, and more migration and mobility, the position of school leaders has undergone a significant adjustment. The leadership of the school heads in the educational setting is what allows for the best staff participation. Therefore, it would be crucial to research the preferred leadership philosophies and characteristics of the school administrators. The development of leaders and leadership are essential components to enhancing teaching and learning in the classroom. The research review emphasises the significance of keeping abreast of research trends related to effective leadership at the school level education, especially for principals and teachers, who play a crucial role in establishing direction, fostering a positive school culture, including the proactive school mind-set, and boosting staff motivation and commitment necessary to foster improvement and promote success for schools in trying circumstances. Less research has been done with academicians in leadership positions that focuses on how they build their leadership in learning and teaching, despite the fact that there is a wealth of literature on the subject. Understanding the many leadership philosophies and qualities necessary for school leadership is the main goal of this essay. It also focuses on recent trends in school leadership.

Keywords: *Democratic leadership, Leadership styles, Leadership traits, Motivation, School based management.*

Introduction

Aristotle said, 'A civilized society is one where good people become good citizens.' Good teachers are the key factors for excellence in student achievement. The level of education a country provides its population is intimately related to its progress. The primary goal of education is to create morally upright and useful citizens. It is challenging to create a solid higher education system without a thriving K–12 education

system. School administrators are enhancing teaching and learning at the school level in the current environment of raised expectations. The successful implementation of educational goals in schools depends on competent leadership. Principal and teacher leadership are both critical, according to research on school leadership. The heads of the institutions are in charge of successfully managing the resources at their disposal to achieve the desired result.In the framework of a school, in addition to material and financial resources, people are the most important resource. The heads of the schools need to be energetic, qualified, and experienced in order to be effective.The National Policy on Education, 1986, reaffirmed the same. If created, Indian Educational Service could present a special chance to streamline and modernize Indian educational administration. India, which has vedic roots, holds the principal and teachers in high regard and wants them to serve as role models for both the country's inhabitants and their wards. They are revered as the guardians of the national conscience.

Objectives of the study:

- To understand the concept and framework of leadership.
- To identify leadership styles and leadership principles in school management.
- To understand trends, and directions in school leadership in India.

Research Methodology

The paper is descriptive in nature. The secondary sources that the paper mostly draws its information from include academic journals, books, and essays.

Review of the Related Literature

Several research studies conducted in India established a relationship between the effectiveness of the school principal's leadership style and overall institutional climate and school performance. Manjeet (2005) came to the conclusion that principals saw themselves as task- and people-oriented since they score highly on both dimensions of leadership. In Kerala, Chirayath and Khalique (2005) found that schools with open and autonomous organisational climates have headmasters with Style II leadership, which is high task and high relationship; schools with controlled and paternal organisational climates have headmasters with Style I leadership, which is high task and low relationship; and schools with familiar organisational climates have headmasters with Style III leadership, which is low task orientation with high relationship. According to Wiemers (2008), there aren't many educational leadership programmes in India that are explicitly designed to develop capable school leaders. His research, conducted in collaboration with Andhra University, on a sample of 51 schools in the Andhra Pradesh districts of Visakhapatnam, East Godavari, and Vizianagaram revealed that none of the headmasters had received more than a course in educational management during their

undergraduate education, and some of them had not received any training in administration. The schools included private unaided, aided, government, and municipality schools. The most interesting conclusion was that, according to 50 headmasters surveyed, administrators should be given specialised training before being appointed to a headmaster position.

Educational leaders make sure that both academic and non-academic staff members receive ongoing training to function in the creative and ever-evolving educational process, and they create professional learning communities (Uriah &Agbor, 2013). It is stated that adopting effective leadership ideas and practises is very important in educational administration. The essential traits of an effective leader have been validated in the realm of education. Over the years, key topics for educational leadership have been covered frequently in literature on management and leadership in education. The offered syntheses have their origins in the writers' reflective capacity to connect thematic issues across more expansive and complicated themes. Effective educational leadership in educational management has been highlighted in this article, along with a quality wake-up call for a better model that is applicable in the context of Indian education. Success is certain, provided the leadership styles, principles, and procedures are implemented in the proper spirits in educational management, according to what is known about the leadership styles, principles, and practises that constitute effective educational leadership. Thought should be given to maintaining the tradition of excellent educational leadership, there is always opportunity for development. The writers tend to argue that exceptional educational leadership concepts and styles can be wisely and appropriately embraced to improve educational management in India at all levels. The current state of affairs is not developing and progressing in the proper direction as a result of the haphazard management and growth of education. To provide investigation of dominant leadership styles and to provide educational leaders with a strong foundation in theory and practise, the gap between theory and practise needs to be closed. Educational leaders might experiment with different tactics in order to succeed in their goal of providing good educational leadership. The use of styles and practises is economical. This entails encouraging teamwork, promoting performance, and improving teaching and learning.

Leadership Styles

The strategies used to inspire followers are known as leadership styles. There is no "one size fits all" approach to leadership. The right leadership style should be chosen and modified to match different types of organisations, circumstances, groups, and people. Therefore, having a good awareness of the various leadership styles is beneficial since it broadens the range of tools at your disposal. Transactional leadership or autocratic leadership is a style in which the leader conceals total control over the workforce. Even if the proposals are for the benefit of the team or organisation, staff and team members

rarely get the chance to make them. The advantage of autocratic rule is that it is very effective. Decisions are taken swiftly, and effort to put them into action can start right away. The majority of employees dislike being treated in this manner, which is a drawback. In times of crisis when choices must be taken swiftly and without any opposition, autocratic leadership is frequently the best option.

Bureaucratic leaders strictly adhere to the rules, and they expect and make sure that their workforce does the same. When dealing with machinery, poisonous materials, or at heights where there are major safety dangers, or when there are significant financial stakes, this leadership style is acceptable. In organisations where employees perform routine duties, bureaucratic leadership is also beneficial (Shaefer, 2005). This style of leadership has the disadvantage of being ineffectual in groups and organisations that value adaptability, creativity, and innovation (Santrock, 2007).

What to anticipate from leaders and followers is described by charismatic leadership style. Although it is a recognisable style, Bell (2013) suggests that it may be viewed as less tangible than other leadership philosophies. Charismatic leaders, also referred to as those with transformational leadership styles, excite their teams and are enthusiastic about inspiring them to take action. Teams' resulting enthusiasm and dedication are a huge help to productivity and goal achievement. The lack of trust placed in employees in favour of the leader is a drawback of charismatic leadership. As a result, there is a chance that if the leader leaves, a project or even the entire organisation could fail. Additionally, a charismatic leader could start to feel invincible even when others are cautioning them against the course they are taking; this mindset can destroy a group or an organisation.

Democratic leadership style entails that decision-making is delegated to team members, but that leaders ultimately make the final call. They foster team members' creativity. This aids in the skill development of the workforce. Team members are inspired by more than just monetary compensation since they feel that they are a part of something bigger and more meaningful. Democratic leadership poses a risk because it can sputter in circumstances where promptness or effectiveness are crucial. For instance, acquiring information during a crisis can cost a team crucial time. Another potential risk is that team members lacking the necessary knowledge or skills might not contribute in a high-quality manner.

Depending on one’s perspective, the laissez-faire leadership style is either the best or the worst (Goodnight, 2011). This enables individuals to operate independently. Laissez-faire leaders delegate authority and refrain from taking action; they may grant teams the flexibility to fulfil their tasks and choose their own due dates. Typically, they provide their subordinate the authority to decide how to carry out their duties (Chaudhry &Javed, 2012). If necessary, they offer teams resources and counsel. Otherwise, they avoid

becoming engaged. If the team leader routinely evaluates team members' performance and provides them with feedback, this leadership style may be successful. Greater autonomy among team members can result in high job satisfaction and enhanced output. However, it might be detrimental if team members don't have the knowledge, abilities, or drive to complete their work efficiently. Inadequate managerial control over their workforce can also result in this kind of leadership (Ololube, 2013).

The fundamental tenet of the transactional leadership style is that team members sign a contract with their leader promising to follow their orders. In exchange for their work and compliance, team members are typically paid by the organisation. If a team member's work doesn't reach the required standards, the leader has the right to discipline them. This exchange (of work for compensation) is the basis of the simple working relationships that develop between employees and managers or leaders.

Findings and suggestions:

Reforms in education have long been acknowledged as being necessary. The majority of curricula need to be updated, and there is a chronic lack of funding, particularly in government institutions. Even the union budget for education is limited. The shock of COVID-19, like it had for the rest of the world, is currently the main problem the sector is facing. The epidemic has provided educators with a multitude of new and wholly different issues as a result of the shift to e-learning.Having access to a digital device to participate in online classes is a major challenge, and professors also had to learn how to use new technologies like LMSs and Zoom while adjusting to new pedagogical approaches. It is crucial that we take into account changes to make the Indian educational system more flexible and resistant to such shocks in the future as we continue to respond to the pandemic.

Education changes have historically proven challenging since the field is so intricate and subject to so many different factors, particularly in a large country like India. Children are taught in a variety of languages and each state has its own unique policies. Empowering educational leaders at all levels, including as principals, cluster resource people, block education officials, and mentors, is the most practical method to make the system shock-proof. Their general strength and adaptability will rise if we can give them the means to meet local needs.

Additionally, it is considerably simpler to expand initiatives aimed at strengthening educational leaders than those aimed at directly enhancing schools. This is due in part to the differences in educational policy between states and, to a lesser extent, to the demands and specifications of various schools and institutions. These can vary greatly amongst schools, even if they are only a few kilometres apart, depending on a number of variables like culture, language, or geography. For instance, the closer you are to urban

regions, the more probable it is that schools would deal with dropout and attendance concerns brought on by migrant labourers' children going back to their original communities. Sometimes the issues faced are unique to a particular area or building that the school is housed in. This individuality makes it difficult to implement reforms at the scale the country requires.

This issue can be solved by concentrating on educational leaders since it enables reforms to be scaleable while still taking into account the unique characteristics of various locations. First and foremost, educational leaders are rooted in the communities that they serve. Since they are the most knowledgeable about the nature of the issues impacting their schools or colleges, they are also most equipped to address them. As a result, empowering these people will significantly improve the educational system because they are most suited to implement solutions.

In addition to providing educational leaders with a deeper understanding of the problems, this proximity to them has other advantages. The quickest possible response to any potential problems is the most crucial. Additionally, being close to the action improves ties with coworkers and students, which can increase an educational leader's efficacy. There is strong evidence to support the idea that education leaders may help their team members perform better, stay motivated, and maintain good mental health by offering advice and mentoring. Thus, empowering educational leaders would greatly enhance the educational experience and hasten the development of Indian education.

Principles of leadership:

Develop a sense of responsibility in workers: Help to develop good character traits that will help them carry out their professional responsibilities;

Ensure that tasks are understood, supervised, and accomplished: Being interactive is key. A leader must be able to communicate properly in order to be understood. Leaders should spend most of their day engaged in interacting and communicating with team is essential.

Keep the subordinates well informed: Know how to communicate with not only junior staff, but senior staff and other key people as well;

Be familiar with your people and consider their welfare: Know the fundamentals of human nature and understand the significance of genuinely caring for your employees;

Understand who you are and work to become better: Understanding who you are, what you know, and what you can do (your qualities) is necessary for knowing oneself. Self-improvement entails enhancing your qualities consistently. Self-study, formal education, workshops, contemplation, and social interaction can all help with this;

Make wise decisions in a timely manner: Utilise effective planning, decision-making, and problem-solving techniques;

Seek accountability and accept responsibility for your actions: Look for ways to elevate your company. A leader should be ready to take the responsibility of mistakes. Analyse the issue, make the necessary adjustments, and then on to the following challenge.

Leader as a role model role: Set a positive example for your team. Employees need to witness leaders exhibiting organisational values and ethics in addition to being told what is expected of them. Leaders must model the behaviour they want in their followers;

Train as a team: Instead of concentrating on your department, section, or individual employees, consider the entire organisation as a unit that must grow and flourish as a whole; and

Employ your organization's full potential: By cultivating a sense of unity within your team, you will be able to use all of your organization's resources to achieve your goals. Effective educational leadership is crucial for the efficacy and advancement of education (Ololube et al. 2012). To maintain it, leaders must cultivate sustainability in their approach to, commitment to, and protection of teaching and learning in educational institutions; in how they support themselves and those around them in promoting and supporting teaching and learning; in how they are able and encouraged to sustain their vision and avoid burning out; and in how they take into account the impact of their leadership in educational management.

Conclusion:

So, the question of how to empower educational leaders to lead education reforms still persists. It is crucial that this be done on a large scale so that educational leaders are well placed to undertake changes and raise the standard of education across the nation. Thinking from a social platform is one strategy that might succeed in this. Educational leaders can be brought together on a common platform by utilising technology and the most up-to-date pedagogical instruments. They may be able to use a range of resources from this platform to better their schools and themselves. Applications that assist with project management, data collection, and performance evaluations (of projects or schools), for instance, would be beneficial to many leaders. However, the platform serves as a location for educational leaders to network with others from across the nation. This enables them to share knowledge, work together, and advance education.

The best method to both, improve the current state of education and prepare it for the future is through empowering educational leaders. By increasing the number of knowledgeable, competent, and powerful educational leaders, the system becomes more

flexible while preserving individual variation. The future of Indian education will be quite promising if this can be made a reality and these leaders serve as the spearhead of educational innovation and reform

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