EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCE IN SCHOOLS OF THE FUTURE: THE SUPERLEADERSHIP PARADIGM

By :

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Abstract

The impact of technology on education has generated varying possibilities of approaches and techniques in the teaching-learning process in the Malaysian educational setting. In effect, the impact has been pervasive in the management and administrative culture in schools to the extent that there is a growing demand toward a continual building of competency, capacity and capability of educational leaders and managers through various training programs

A. INTRODUCTION

This thematic presentation attempts to address the foreseeable implications of the changing characteristics of the teaching-learning context towards building the capacity of educational leaders in the 'Super Leadership' paradigm. The presentation will begin by explaining the changing models of teaching-learning situations in schools and the characteristics of leadership and management styles in the traditional, contemporary and futuristic context. The aim of the presentation is to advance and generate ideas and strategies toward the development of the 'super leadership' training programs for educational leaders and managers in schools of the future.

B. CHANGING ROLE OF TEACHER

Given the past and current scenarios of the worldwide development of education generally, it can be anticipated that schools of the future will have teachers who are free from the 'tyranny' of the traditional model of preparing lesson plans and the outmoded methods of teaching-learning techniques. It has been anticipated that they will have to function and perform more effectively as 'enablers, facilitators, problem solvers, catalysts or organizers' in terms of knowledge dissemination in innovative settings of the new educational environment.

Thus, their role as prime movers of new learning strategies will be inclined towards propelling students to leam not only through personal and practical experiences but through observations, inventions, innovations and creations of new knowledge, principally aided by the computer and information systems

and technologies.

From the general assumptions stated above, it is clear that the traditional role of the school must go beyond the prevailing curriculum and educational practice where knowledge is disseminated by teachers through interface instruction, textbooks and black boards.

The irony is, as pointed in a report of 'A Task Force on Public Education for the 21st Century' (2004) in 'Renewing Our Schools, Securing Our Future': "We are trying to prepare Today's students for Tomorrow's economy with Yesterday's ideas"

C. ASSUMPTIONS AND CONSIDERATION

Clearly, there are several assumptions whereby future learning orientations in the school system will be different from that of the past and the present. Future development of society will not only be knowledge-based and information-rich, but also the generations will be technologically skillful and computer savvy. The demand of the market forces of the knowledge economy (k-economy) in the era of the globalization, especially in terms of the information and communication economics, deems it necessary for new modalities of educational opportunities to be made available to all strata of the Malaysian society. Similarly, new approaches with respect to the technical knowhow and skills of applications of the computer systems will not only be accessible to all prospective learners, but the computer technologies themselves will also be within reach to all sectors of the population.

Correspondingly, new systems of teaching and learning will also emerge in the future educational environment. Interface method of teaching-and learning will be the practice of the past. It will gradually be replaced by the 'on-line' and 'distance-teaching and learning' methods through 'electronic note-book' techniques from any comer around the globe and during any hour of the day.

With the advent of the broadband technologies of the information and cyber systems, the 'e-teaching' and 'e-leaming' systems via the education 'super highways' will be greatly enhanced. Thus, it can be anticipated that the modalities of the 'e-teaching' and 'e-leaming' systems will be the 'in thing' of pedagogy in the future education environment.

D. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT : A PARADIGM SHIFT

In terms of leadership and management, educational leaders in schools should anticipate that the future environment of the school organization will see a greater degree of decentralization. In has been argued that, administratively, the organization of a tightly-organized centralized system of education seems to determine and constrain effective educational management at school and classroom level.

Proponents of the contrary argument strongly point out that the decentralized system of school governance can generate greater degree of participatory management, especially in motivating educational actors in influencing educational outcomes at the school level. Similarly, it has also been argued that, with centralization, well formulated educational reform designs often fail to make any

sustainable impact at the school and classroom level.

Research Findings

In this regard, interestingly, a longitudinal study was conducted in eight developing countries— South Korea, Papua New Guinea, Thailand, Phillipines, Indonesia, Trinidad and Tobago, Jordan El Salvador by a group of research scholars, organized b the International Institute for Educational Planning UNESCO, Paris (1989- 1999). Seven critical findings were identified and cited as the rationale for a decentralization policy, especially in terms of school governance, administration and classroom management.

First, centralized policies never (or seldom) get communicated to all schools, especially those that are located in rural and remote areas of the country. Thus, school heads do not often realize that they are supposed to be doing something different.

Second, if centralized policies get communicated to schools, they were in vague terms. In such situations, school heads and the administrative personnel at the schools either implement the policies incorrectly, in part, or not at all.

Third, centralized policies coming from the top are (often) seen as inappropriate because teachers see the centralized policies and directives out of touch the realities of the classroom and school environment.

Fourth, there is an apparent feeling of over expectation of teacher capabilities that the actions and activities expected of them to implement new policies and practices place demands on them that they are unprepared or unwilling to meet.

Fifth, the means and support for implementing new policies are generally inadequate. Very often, financial and infrastructure support do not come in timely, or are transparent, causing breakdowns in implementation.

Sixth, School-based information available at national or central level, for example, data collected and collated under the Educational Management and Information System (EMIS) do not include information on school variables and pedagogical practices at the classroom level. Indeed, macro level data and information do help much in solving micro level issues at school and classroom level.

The study's seventh finding suggests that seemingly good practices very often interact in negative ways. Many of the well thought policy decisions at the central level are too focused on conformity of implementation rather than diversity of method of implementation based on local and local context.

E. SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT : A STRATEGIC APPROACH

Correspondingly, four reasons seem to justify that the school- based management is a critical strategy that would allow for greater improvement in the management in schools of the future.

First and foremost, the school-based management approach can strengthen the developmental and

transformational role of the school reform process. Second, school-based management engenders local level initiatives with sustainable locally developed programmes for lasting reform effects. Third, school-based management can enhance local leadership capabilities in *terms* of *management* experience and problem solving instead of heavily relying on directive from the top. Fourth, school-based management recognizes the professional role of heads of school and teachers as key players and the community as stakeholders at the downstream level in terms of decisions that affect them.

Thus, educational leaders and management staff of the future school need to anticipate not only the implementation policy of decentralization of school administration and management but also the introduction of more open curriculum polices and designs with minimal rules and procedures coming from the central departments and organizational. School-based curriculum and co-curriculum with wider subject options for student learning, and school-based assessments and learning evaluations will slowly replace the current policies learning toward fulfilling the requirements of tests and examinations.

F. IMPLICATIONS : LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT MODEL OF THE FUTURE PRINCIPAL

The cursory analysis generally outlined above strongly suggests that there are several far reaching implications of the changing character of schooling in the future educational environment. Not only it has implications on the changing needs and character of teaching- learning orientation, areas of curriculum focus, accessories of support systems as well as modalities of learning evaluations, testing and assessments, but, more importantly, its implication is also related to the approaches and style of leadership and management behavior of principals in schools of the future.

What are the anticipated challenges of principal leadership and management behavior for schools of the future? What are the new challenges that future principals have to confront in their anticipation of the changing learning environment of schooling in future? What new and critical characteristics of leadership behavior could be expected for principals to effectively manage schools of the future generations?

Clearly, the answers to all of the questions above call for a deep analysis of various multi-dimensional issues of leadership patterns and management styles of principals.

Suffice to say, at this juncture that there are at least three major characteristics that are vital for future principals to be address; they are a higher degree of professionalism, ethical standards and integrity; a greater sense of leadership *flexibility, capability* and capacity; and a greater degree of management adaptability and openness to the changing modalities of the teaching and learning culture in schools of the future

Past Orientation : 'Traditional-Conservative' Leadership Model

In terms of management approach, in the Past, the model of school leadership and management has been very traditional in nature. The structure of the education system is tightly based on hierarchy and it is hinged on the conservative approach of the bureaucratic system of administration and governance. Policy directives on curriculum implementation, staffing and infrastructure development of the school sent down through 'circulars' from the central agencies become the source of all of the decision making processes of the downstream activities.

Under such conservative, traditional or perhaps classical style of leadership and management approach, the nature of response of the officials and personnel in the educational organizations and the school system has been overwhelmingly 'reactive'.

All activities at the level of the school were designed, organized and tailored to the education laws, roles and regulations as prescribed by the central agencies.

Present Orientation : 'Enlightened' Leadership Model

Over the past three decades, however, the model has gradually shifted to slightly different paradigm of leadership and management behavior. With an expanded education system, an ever increasing growth of student populations and teachers, greater role and demand of parents and communities through the political system towards ensuring positive development of education as a whole, the paradigm of educational leadership and management seems to have shifted to what is termed as an 'enlightened' form of leadership behavior in organization.

Some leeway had been given to administrators and teachers of the school system so that they can 'bend' some rules and regulations in response to their contextual needs and situations for as long as the main policy guidelines and principles are well-adhered. In this regard, some form of 'proactive' leadership characteristics could be observed in many schools and institutions

Future Orientation ; 'Super Leadership' Model

However, in schools of the future, it can be anticipated that leadership and management styles of principals will have to change from the 'enlightened' model of leadership to the 'super leadership' paradigm. The rationale is obvious. As extensively discussed above, the model of teaching-learning methodologies, student characteristics and pedagogical behavior, and probably the formats of curriculum designs in schools of the future would have changed.

In essence, the 'super leadership' model of management is based on the principle that principals as educational leaders in the school system must not only be able to lead their teachers and staff, but they must be able to 'lead them so that they can lead their own selves'. This 'leading others to lead themselves' approach will be the next the dominant leadership paradigm in the years to come.

The following table indicates a generalized model of the conceptual relationship between style of management and approach that is generally discernable from the changing leadership and management

behaviour as practiced in the Past, Present and Future.

Changing Leadership Behaviour in Education Organization

Period/ Approach	Past Orientation	Present Orientation	Future Orientation
Management	Traditional/ Conservative/ Classical/ management model	Enlightened and creative management model	Super Leadership management model
Orientation Response approach	Reactive in thinking and action	Proactive/action orientation	Self-leading approach (leading others to lead themselves)

(model chart)

G. FEATURES OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT PARADIGMS

The next pertinent question that should be asked is: What are the principal features of the three paradigms of thé leadership model as suggested above? Based on research studies and findings by Oakley E. and Krug D (1991) and Manz C. and Sims H, (2001), the following is an outline of the identified features of the three paradigms.

1. Conservative / Traditional Leadership Model : Reactive Orientation

Are resistant to change, Feel they have no control of environment, See reason they cannot do things, Often work very hard but not smart, Focus on finding to fix, Are afraid of risks or major challenges, Are blinded by problems in a situation, Suffer excessive minor stress, Avoid blame or responsibility, Cannot let go of the past, Are limited by what worked in the past, Are devastated by failure, Are poor listeners, Have low self esteem, Run out of energy quickly, Focus on what they want to avoid, Find it difficult to choose or decide, Do things right, Feel the heed to have all his or her own answers, Analyze, analyze, analyze, Are "tell-oriented, Create sporadic motivation, Make all the decisions personally, Are highly opinionated, Push the organization for results, Teach subordinates to accept direction, Are afraid of loosing control, Are in self-protect mode, Focus of finding and fixing problems, Quick to fire those who fail.

2. Enlightened Leadership Model : Creative Orientation

Know true power lies within the people in the organizations, Continually quest for better understanding to bring about the best in the people, Highly sensitive to their needs, Have high versatility to move up and down of the 0-10 continuum, Realize not about doing it one way or another, but make conscious choices, Spend much more than 80% of their energy on creative mode, Spend only 20% of their energy on Reactive mode, Most important factor harnessing people strengths knowledge, creativity, awareness, energy, commitment, Believe in behavior of leadership has major impact on the followers, Followers are *readily made to* commit that their ideas must work, Go to extremes to help those who help themselves, Exploit the power of empowerment and autonomy-get energized, Open, creative, common ownership, sharing a vision. Actions of Enlightened Leadership style Inspiring, compelling vision, Positive discipline, People first (people oriented leadership), Self-responsibility, Expectation for results.

3. Super Leadership Model : Futuristic Orientation

Orientation of super leaders: Lead others to lead themselves, Critical first step: Master the art of leadership. Teach followers to do the same.

Super Leader Emphasize

Strong work values and orientation, Exemplary model of leadership behavior, Encourage high performance, Consistency of reward system - verbal and non verbal, Self leadership of others and very supportive of them.

Distinctive Strategies of Super Leaders :

Listen more, Ask more questions, Foster learning from mistakes, bncourage problem solving, Share information, Encourage creativity, I ncourage teamwork, Foster independence, Develop committed selfleaders.

Strategic Approaches for Future Principals as Super Leaders in School :

a) Build Effective Information System by :

Enhancing effective communication channels to all teachers and staff, Leading teams who will virtually lead themselves to lead others, Developing professionally trained teams or groups working in networks, Generating all teams working in synergy and synchrony, etc.

b) Organize Effective Working Structures by :

Developing self-managing teams with minimal guidance, Establishing networks within and beyond school borders via internet, Improving internet infrastructure in school and capability of teachers, Making decisions through group efforts and consultations.

c) Establish a Holistic Culture of Professional Excellence in Self-leading by :

Encouraging consultative approaches in all decision making processes, Doing the right things the

first time, Sharing of visions, missions and values with teachers, students, parents.

Predictable Organizational Outcome of Super Leadership Model

High on long-term performance of the institution / organization, Low on short-term and frustration, High self-confidence of followers in organization, High self-development attitudes and values of followers, Strong sense of human resource flexibility, Strong sense of staff commitment to creativity and innovation, Ability of school organization to work effectively in leader's absence, High commitment to team work for greater productivity.

Conclusion : Strategy for the Development of Superleaders in Malaysian Schools

There is great urgency for the Malaysian education system to develop their school leaders, particularly for the current and future principals, with super leadership characteristics. In this context, there is an apparent need initially for a process of re-examining of the existing philosophy, concepts, paradigms and orientations in the training of Malaysian educational leaders.

The new focus must be geared especially toward greater appreciation and internalization of super leadership qualities in order to be in tandem with the anticipated leadership orientations of the future educational environment in the country. Toward this direction, the emphasis should be focused on the development of super leadership qualities for principals and the supportive educational leaders in the school system. Staff training institutions like Institute Aminuddin Baki need to also undertake a continual and thorough process of reviewing their philosophy and goals, re-evaluating their programs and refining the existing contents of their training curriculum and modules.

Also, it is important to increase the financial allocations of professional staff development programs for research, advanced training and attachments of young trainees in local as well as overseas centers. At the school level, there is a dire need of programs toward the development of in-house systems of leadership training in all school districts working in collaboration with specialized training institutes and centers which are located in the universities. Toward this end, it is important that there are more senior staff posts to be positioned at *Institute Aminuddin* Baki than the *current number in order* to provide the quality super leadership training for the future.

The aim and purpose is to inculcate and develop among principals and educational leaders about the new style and value orientations of super leadership model. The model essentially emphasizes development of positive attitudes and values in terms of professional *integrity, competence and* capability in conducting their role within the context of the national educational goals and in tandem with the new culture of super leadership training of the international environment.

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