

# SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT STYLES

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## ABSTRACT:

*Context:* School performance, teachers' performance, students' achievement and their behavioral pattern at school are influenced, among other things, by the school principal (leader). The leader takes you safely to his own personal values, he conveys an important message as to how deal with people and as to how schools should operate on a daily basis. *Research questions to be raised:* What are the main concepts of leadership, management styles and those of school principals? What is the importance of school leadership? What are the key styles that can be employed by the school principals? *The aim of the research* is to examine closely and review the national and international literature revolving around school leadership concepts as well as the role played in the students and teachers' performance and in general that of the entire school; the study also aims to define precisely the tasks and roles, to study school management styles and their combination in its management. This study is primarily a *qualitative research study* which utilizes a deductive method in drawing conclusions. *The findings are summed up as follows* a) leadership is perceived as the very "art" of transformation of the institution with the view of improving it b) The manager organizes his own activities in order to perform tasks successfully, the leader organizes his own activities in order to carry out the required tasks. c) The four basic styles as ranked by Hersey dhe Blanchard are available to leaders, but they should be used appropriately depending on the situation. *Recommendations:* a) Professional development of leaders in terms of his own roles b) managerial and leadership skills are to be used for the school effectiveness c) teachers should be informed that the leader (principal) needs to adapt his leadership style according both to the situation and the capacity of teachers for this situation in question .

**Key words:** school leadership, principal, management styles and principals' behaviour

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In their studies Freiberg and Stein<sup>1</sup> (1999) noted that schools are institutions with few changes in their organizational structure. According to these researchers schools consist of a class or a group of students and teachers with sufficient time planned out for teaching and other activities, that is, a specific time for the commencement and end of the school day as well as a management structure which in most cases is characterized by a hierarchical nature. The highest position in this hierarchy in a school is the one occupied by the leader, so the responsibility for running the school rests entirely with the leader.

Despite the similarities existing in the organizational and administrative structure of the school, the studies have revealed that schools differ from each - other, in the way as to how they are run and in terms of the impact they have on the lives of students. Hence, in the report entitled "Head"<sup>2</sup> it is stated that some schools are superior to others. They have observed that schools with an average rated performance concerning the behavior of students tend to perform above average in relation to the learning achievements. According to Dunklee<sup>3</sup> (2000) the differences between learning achievement and students' behavior are influenced, among other things, by the leader. The principal leads to his own personal values. He affects everyone's behavior, his values are "contagious", his ethical and righteous leadership instills respect and trust in the system, he conveys an important message of how to best treat people and how schools should operate on a daily basis.

By substantiating the above-mentioned case, Ramsey<sup>4</sup> (2000) claims that in an institution like the school, students and teachers tend to live in the very 'image' of the leader, because no school is able to perform at such high levels without an efficient and effective leader in place, that is, he is like the "gospel" that staff / students read from , or like a working model and behavior that is being replicated.

According to Hargreaves and Fink<sup>5</sup> (2003), the principal tasks are split into two major types: the teaching and the leadership role. The teaching role focuses on the education and the formation of students through the so-called motivating and challenging activities that are intended to raise productive children for the society at large. These researchers argue that the leadership role supplements the teaching role. The leadership role in the main consists of the personnel management (both pupils and teachers) and the decision-making process.

Against this backdrop the leaders in Albania are responsible for the smooth functioning of activities at the school level, measuring the efficiency and effectiveness of the teaching process, leading the staff meetings, observations of the teaching process as well as the students' achievement, regulating the activities of students, evaluation of teachers and provision of

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<sup>1</sup> Freiberg, J. H & Stein, T. A. 1999. *Measuring, Improving and Sustaining Healthy Learning Environments, in School Climate: Measuring, Improving and Sustaining Healthy Learning Environments*.

<sup>2</sup> Raportin "Head" (1999) i Rutter Maughan, Mortimore dhe Ouston

<sup>3</sup> Dunklee, D. R. 2000. *If You Want to Lead, Not Just Manage: A Primer for Principals*

<sup>4</sup> Ramsey, R. D. 1999. *Lead, Follow, or Get Out of the Way: How to be a more effective leader in today's schools*

<sup>5</sup> Hargreaves, A. & Fink, D. 2003. *Sustaining Leadership*

instructions on the most appropriate methods of teaching, maintenance of school infrastructure etc..

Leaders differ from one-another on how best to apply these responsibilities. Mazzarella and Smith<sup>6</sup> (1989) observe that some leaders embrace an autocratic management style, some others use a democratic style, while others do employ "laissez-faire" (non-interference) management style. Ramsey<sup>7</sup> (1999) believes that leadership styles are as varied by nature as people's personalities. According to him, some management styles are open, some others are closed, some flexible and some others are rigid. Some other leaders make use of a manipulative style, some others use the participating styles. Some styles are oriented towards the product, while others towards the process.

## **2. THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this study is to examine the role that school leadership plays in the performance of students and teachers and in general for the entire school. This study also intends to determine the difference between a leader and a manager and what are their respective duties and roles. The interpretation of different management models shows that no single style is well-suited to manage a school effectively. Rather the combination of styles is effective if they are used appropriately depending on the situation. The school is held to be the brain of each country and the leader is seen as the person who sets up a suitable atmosphere where students can be prepared and trained effectively in order for them to be able to meet the challenges of the future.

Through the literature review and relevant theories, this study seeks to provide answers to these questions:

- a) The key concepts of leadership, management style, school principals
- b) What is the importance of school management?
- c) What are the current styles that headteachers make use of?

## **3. KEY CONCEPTS**

### ***a) The concept of leadership***

To start with, Fullan<sup>8</sup> (2003) conceives leadership as divided into two functions: personal competencies related to self-development and self-management; social competences relating to social development and relationship management.

Maxwell<sup>9</sup> (1999) has quite a different opinion. He argues that the leader can set to work the people more than it is expected of them acting on the mere assumption that their productivity is prompted drastically. Sergiovanni<sup>10</sup> (1999) describes leadership as a personal thing that consists

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<sup>6</sup> Mazzarella, J. A. & Smith, S. C. 1989. *Leadership Styles in School Leadership: Handbook for Excellence*

<sup>7</sup> Ramsey, R. D. 1999. *Lead, Follow, or Get Out of the Way: How to be a more effective leader in today's schools*

<sup>8</sup> Fullan, M. 2003 *Core principles as a means of deepening large scale reform*

<sup>9</sup> Maxwell, J. C. 1999. *The 21 Indispensable Qualities of a Leader: Becoming the Person Others will want to Follow*

<sup>10</sup> Sergiovanni, T. J. 1999. *Rethinking Leadership*

of the heart, head and hands, while Sashkin<sup>11</sup> (2003) describes leadership as the art of the transformation of people and institutions with the aim of improving them. Leadership is the art and science of "inspiration" as well as of the realization of common dreams. The same opinion is also held by Alička<sup>12</sup> (1998) who states that leadership is an art, the leader is the creator, the conductor and the actor. When it comes to leadership there is talk about the ways and the styles, while in the case of the leader the talk is centered around the capabilities, the qualities and the competences.

Leadership<sup>13</sup> is a process that leads to the achievement of planned and desired things. The leaders develop a vision for their schools based on their personal and professional values .

### ***b) The concept of management style***

Mazzarella and Smith (1989) conclude that the management style concerns the way how a leader leads and this is reflected in different situations. In other words it has to do with the way how they communicate while in the process of leadership, with the way as how they exercise power and authority and how these affect both teachers and students. Based on the above definition, the management style can be described as the way as how a leader communicates with his staff (teachers and students) by leading and motivating them to achieve the set goals. Owens<sup>14</sup> (1991) is of the same opinion when he states that management style is defined by what the leader does in order to motivate his subordinates in order for the objectives set by the school to be achieved. He notes that some leaders put high value on performance, while others do maintain good interpersonal relationships.

Hersey and Blanchard<sup>15</sup> (1993) observe that the leader develops his own style after going through a period in education and training. These authors believe that the management style is related more to the perception of subordinate towards the behavior of the leaders, rather than the way as what the leader thinks of the styles. This means that the evaluation of teachers for the leadership style depend on the mode of their communication with the leader. They point out that management is not about following through an order, but an invitation to move forward together.

### ***c) The concept of the leader***

Hall and Morgan<sup>16</sup> (1986) claim that the leader is otherwise the school symbol both for people within and in the community, since he is in charge of the school structure. The leader is a person who controls the activities of the school and is perceived as a significant figures in the initiation and implementation of innovations at the school level.

Fullan and Watson<sup>17</sup> (2003) do confirm this conclusion by stating that the leader is considered to be the individual responsible for setting standards in his school in relation to the way as how he

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<sup>11</sup> Sashkin, M. & Sashkin, M. 2003. *Leadership That Matters*

<sup>12</sup> Alička, J. 1998 *School management – an art: The Principal a creator*

<sup>13</sup> *School leadership and evidence – Full report, 2003, European Training Foundation*

<sup>14</sup> Owens, R. G. 1991. *Organisational Behaviour in Education*

<sup>15</sup> Hersey, P. & Blanchard, K. H. 1993. *Management of Organisational Behaviour: Utilizing Human Resources*

<sup>16</sup> Hall, V., Mackay, H. & Morgan, C. 1986. *Head Teachers at Work*

<sup>17</sup> Leithwood, K., Fullan, M., & Watson, N. 2003. *The schools we need: Recent education policy in Ontario. Recommendations for moving forward.*

leads and the way as how he defines and meets the school objectives based on its total values. Fullan<sup>18</sup> (2000) states that the leader is directly related to school reforms and to the promotion of knowledge and attitudes. Alička<sup>19</sup> (1998) highlights the fact that the leader should ‘touch’ both the results and people, in particular he cares more for teachers and their performance. They are closely related to each other. Teachers who feel good in themselves surely do achieve good results.

Based on the above, the leader in this study is defined as an individual who has a leading position in the school with his roles and responsibilities for the success or failure of the entire institution.

#### **4. THE IMPORTANCE OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT**

Fullan<sup>20</sup> (2008) states that nothing can be more important in the 21<sup>st</sup> century than learning how to administer change. In his book, "6 secrets of change" Michael Fullan has presented an overview of international educational reforms in recent decades and has discovered the six "secrets" for managing and administering change. These "secrets" are not huge mysteries, but they tend to simple truths, which as Fullan points out, are difficult to understand in depth and extremely difficult to operate. The challenge is for the leaders to learn them and to share them within the school. Leaders are those who make it possible for the school to survive and to thrive.

Secret one – ‘*you should love your own teachers*’. One way of loving your teachers is to create the conditions for success to safely happen.

Secret two: ‘*establish their relation to the goal and objective that you have for the school*’. This means that you have to create mutual relations which are more than just cooperation. There is a social and intellectual unity at school.

Secret three: ‘*Capacity building should preside over the order of the day*’. Obligation is not good enough to motivate teachers. Individuals and groups have a highly developed capacity when they develop knowledge and skills, if they use resources wisely and if they are committed to conducting important things together and on a continuous basis.

Secret four: ‘*Learning is on a daily basis is an endeavour*’. The achievement of the goal and the realization of new innovations can be attained if learning occurs within the context. If teachers do not teach within the specific context of their work, they can only learn in a superficial way.

Secret five: ‘*Transparency of rules*’. In order for the school be effective it must be transparent. We are fully aware that people tend to hide away their problems, whether the environment

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<sup>18</sup> Fullan M. 2000 .*The Return of Large-Scale Reform*.

<sup>19</sup> Alicka, J. 1998 *School management – an art: The Principal a creator*

<sup>20</sup> Fullan, M. (2008). *Six secrets of change. What the best leaders do to help their organizations survive and thrive*.

condemns them. So what should be done is to develop the environment in such a way that the problems should be experienced in a normal way and solutions found accordingly.

Secret six: *Systems of learning*. One reason why schools fail in the learning process is because the leader is looked at as an individual. They can come and go and the school goes through its ups and downs

There is a broad-based consensus among researchers that the importance of effective management must be taken fully into account. Sashkin<sup>21</sup> (2003) argues that questions of management are of importance because leaders help reduce the uncertainty in schools or in the society at large. Schermerhorn<sup>22</sup> (2000) states that management is the 'heart of every school' because it determines either its success or failure. The importance of leadership at school is reflected in every aspect: the process of teaching, the academic achievement, students' discipline, school climate etc.. Basically the principal in the role of a leader needs to be equipped with leadership skills in order to provide for a social behavior in school as well as for a cooperative climate/environment.

Finn<sup>23</sup> (2002) asserts that the most important thing for a school is the quality of its management, particularly the quality of management (staff) in a school environment. In this context, Hurley<sup>24</sup> (2001) supports the idea that the leader is "the response" to the development of a school and improvement of its performance. This means that the main job of the leader is to create an atmosphere that promotes effective teaching, learning as well as productivity. Therefore, the type of a climate that exists in a school can be used as unit to measure the effectiveness of management (leader). Cunningham and Cordeiro<sup>25</sup> (2000) claim that the leader is at the center of all school initiatives to improve both teaching and learning.

## 5. HERSEY-BLANCHARD LEADERSHIP STYLES

Leadership styles are not about managing people. Neither are they confined only to planning, organizing and evaluating the results achieved. To be a leader does not mean to be just a perfect professional in any given direction, but it means to also be a leader in the way as how you approach the others both in communication and behavior. The style of leadership that leaders choose to introduce their roles will determine whether they will fulfill their task, the organizational goals and whether they will be able to achieve and maintain positive relationships with the staff.

The situational leadership model by the author Paul Hersey of the book "Situational Leader" in collaboration with author Ken Blanchard of the book "One minute manager" was developed by the late 70s '. In the early 80s the authors developed a leadership model of their own brand based on the situational leadership theory according to the situation, which was later reformed in 2001 in collaboration with Johnson.

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<sup>21</sup> Sashkin, M. & Sashkin, M. 2003. *Leadership That Matters*

<sup>22</sup> Schermerhorn, J. R., Hunt, J. G. & Osborn, R. N. 2000 *Organisational Behaviour*

<sup>23</sup> Finn, C. E. 2002. *Bureaucracy and School Leadership*

<sup>24</sup> Hurley, J. C. 2001. *The Principalship: Less May Be More*

<sup>25</sup> Cunningham, W. G. & Cordeiro. 2000. *Educational Administration: A Problem-Based Approach*

The Hersey-Blanchard situational leadership model consists of two basic concepts: the leadership style and the level of readiness of teachers. These researchers characterize the leadership style as the sum of the behavior towards **office** + **behavior** against the relations that a leader ensures for school teachers. These researchers categorize all leadership styles in four behavior-oriented types, (a) *telling*, b) *"selling"*, c) *participants*, d) *delegating*.

**a) *The telling leadership style***

According to Hersey and Blanchard, this leadership style is characterized by high task and low relationship. This style is effective when the leader should increase the low maturity at work and the low psychological maturity (inability, unwillingness and uncertainty) of teachers who are lacking in the necessary competencies and motivation to accomplish a task. The leader gives detailed instructions on *when*, *where* and *how* teachers will fulfill their performance. The leader leads, supports and closely supervises the performance of teachers. Decisions are taken by the leader, regardless of the contribution of teachers; communication is one-sided and top-bottom. Hersey and Blanchard refer to this style as power, management and structuring.

**b) *The selling leadership style***

This style is characterized by high task and high relationship. Style is appropriate when the leader should be able to lead the lower to average level of maturity, low maturity at work and a high psychological maturity (inability, but readiness and trust) of his teachers. The leader who uses this style gives specific guidance to teachers and supervises their work. In addition, he supports teachers by explaining what and why the tasks must be carried out according to the instructions provided. Uncertainty among teachers are clarified on the basis of the answers they receive from their leader. Decisions are taken by the leader, who sometimes consults with teachers. So there is a two-way communication, but often times, the director has the final word on matters. Hersey and Blanchard refer to this style as persuasion, explanation and clarification.

**c) *The participating leadership style***

This task involves low tasks and high relationship. This style is appropriate when the leader will have to lead the average low level of maturity, high maturity at work and a low psychological maturity (inability, but readiness and trust) of his teachers. The leader devotes a little time to providing necessary guidelines and the rest of the time it devoted to encouraging, supporting and strengthening the confidence of his teachers. Communication is a two-way process, teachers have ample opportunity to throw in ideas and these suggestions are examined by the leader. Hersey and Blanchard refer to this style as collaboration and facilitation.

**d) *The delegating leadership style***

Hersey and Blanchard claim that this style is characterized by low task and low relationship behavior. This style is effective when the leader has to lead a high level of maturity, high maturity at work and a high psychological maturity (capability, readiness and security). In this case the teachers are very competent and highly motivated. Leaders assigns to the teachers the task they have to accomplish, will have to answers their questions and provides little or no leadership. Teachers are allowed to make their own decisions about the task within the given constraints of the leader. Hersey and Blanchard refer to this style as delegation and allocation of responsibilities.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

In this study the following conclusions can be drawn:

Leadership is perceived the ability of leaders to establish relationships with teachers such as their individual gifts and those of the teaching process by bringing on continuous performance improvement and professional development. Seen from such a perception, leadership has an important role to play in students' achievement and school performance.

A leader organizes his own activities in establishing good interpersonal relationships with employees, motivating and encouraging employees to be independent and to be able to fulfill a common vision for improving school performance.

Hersey and Blanchard claim that the situational leadership styles may be different in different organizational environments. They also claim that a leader that works with experienced teachers, would be better off if he delegates the responsibilities to the teachers to perform their own tasks perfectly, because it may be the case for them not to welcome the instructions and directives of what to do. On the other hand, if a leader works with teachers who are not willing because of lack of experience, then this leader will definitely be directive in his role.

Basically, the four basic styles as ranked by Hersey and Blanchard are available to leaders, but they will have to be used appropriately depending on the situation.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

In light of the literature and other related studies reviewed in this field, the recommendations are addressed first of all to the policymakers at the central institutions, to local governments and school principals. It is important that these recommendations be taken into consideration because they are applicable and quite effective.

Given that leadership is important for the school performance, students' achievement and establishment of an open collaborative climate, we recommend that the leader be seen as a key person who can initiate and kick-start the improvement of the school in terms of behavior and attitudes of both teachers and students for school and work. It is clear that the involvement of teachers increases their willingness to work which indirectly helps build up students' character, enhances their performance and instill in them the virtue of work. In this context it is necessary to increase the professional development of leaders and encourage leaders to pursue specialized training. They should also be encouraged to provide suggestions concerning solution to existing problems by using their past experiences.

In view of the fact that styles vary depending on the nature of leaders, their ways and manners, their decision-making process, it is recommended that teachers and directors be informed that the leader should adjust his leadership style to the situation and to the capacity of teachers for this given situation. In general, our schools need transformational leaders to improve the situation. Managers should attend trainings on leadership styles that they must follow through in certain situations as well as in professional networks of leaders in order to share their experiences.

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