

Chapter 48

Educational Management Leadership: High School Principal's Management Style and Parental Involvement in School Management in Israel

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ABSTRACT

This chapter examines new directions in educational management leadership theory and practice. Relevant literature is synthesized to provide a holistic picture of current knowledge of the topic, highlighting meanings, principles, prerequisites, process and consequences. The major aim of the research is to investigate the interrelation between high school principal's management style and parental involvement in school management in Israel. The chapter illustrates recent educational reforms in Israel as the context for introducing a specific style of managing school organizations and staff in a goal-oriented forward-thinking manner. Educational leadership moves the principal beyond upholding the status quo and towards setting an individual vision towards which to lead the school organization. Properly applied, it should help school principals forge a vision of educational success that can anticipate and adapt to the demands of the overall state requirements as well as the localized needs of school staff, the local community, the students, and their parents.

INTRODUCTION

Over the last few decades, the consensus of educational and managerial theories reevaluated the role of the school principal, from that of an educational administrator – a stolid mid-tier manager facilitating an education process directed from above by experts at the ministry level - to that of a dynamic and visionary educational leader. The difference between a leader and a manager (as an administrator) can

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be summarized as the difference between forging a new individual path based on a personal vision and localized needs, and maintaining a status quo based on past traditions (Cuban, 2008).

The new emphasis on leadership is currently being tested in Israel, with educational leadership being a possible bold new step that may revolutionize the management of school organizations by allowing for a combination of individual initiative, adaptability to the needs of the organization and the community, and an emphasis on goal-oriented parameters that take into account the specific need of the organization and locale (Bush & Middlewood, 2013).

An important role in establishing modern educational leadership plays parental involvement. “Parental involvement” is a term that includes many possible activities the parent may perform to help their child’s education. Attendance of parent-teacher meetings, communication with the teachers via phone calls or emails, attending school events, volunteering to provide help at said events, a parent’s signature on the pupil’s test or helping the pupil at home are all a part of parcel of the overall parental involvement package. It has been defined by more than a few studies in various ways following the investigator theme accordingly (Pumerantz, Moormn, & Litwack, 2007; Wing, 2013).

The closer the parent is involved in their child’s education, the greater the impact on child development and educational achievements, as the research in this field agrees (Fullen, 2007). There can be no over estimation of the importance of parental involvement when it comes to the child’s educational success (Warren, Hong, Leung, & Sychitkokhong, 2009; Boliver & Chrispeels, 2011; Barr & Saltmarsh, 2014), mental and emotional health and social functioning (Pumerantz et al., 2007).

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The specific objective of this chapter is to introduce and succinctly describe educational leadership as a management style, from its inception and rationale to detailed examples of the style in action, and explore the possibilities of an emphasis on educational leadership in the Israel school system, focusing on the styles interaction with the local community – specifically, the students’ parents.

BACKGROUND

Educational leadership theory has its roots in general leadership theory. Three circumstances differentiate the work of educational leaders from that of their colleagues in non-school environments: the exceptionally moral character of schools; highly educated, autonomous, and permanent employees; and regular and unpredictable threats to organizational stability (Greenfield, 1995).

Researchers in the field of educational administration have tried to examine how leadership determines school organizations. Leadership is therefore often perceived as an organizational quality (Ogawa & Bossert, 1995). The knowledge base about educational leadership is constantly increasing and has produced a plethora of alternative and competing models (Bush & Glover, 2003). The most popular of those alternative models include instructional leadership, transactional leadership and distributed leadership. All of those models have gained support in the literature, and have been recommended as models of leadership for school principals (Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan, & Lee, 1982; Leithwood, 1994; Harris, 2004).

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