Chapter 54
Leadership Development in Kazakhstan

Judith Parker
Columbia University, USA

Gainiya Tazhina
University of International Business, Kazakhstan

ABSTRACT

Kazakhstan's recent history has transitioned from that of nomadic clans to domination by Russia to today's independent nation. During these 20 years of independence, universities often educate leaders by translating and adapting traditionally Western models and research instruments. This article will report the findings of three such instruments on leadership, career management, and stress tolerance that were administered to graduate students at the University of International Business in Kazakhstan within the past year and consider their importance for the future of leadership development that is rich with technology.

INTRODUCTION

Within the past century, Kazakhstan has seen the suppression of its long history of nomadic clans by the Russians, then emerged as an independent nation after the fall of the U.S.S.R. Globalization has created a conflict between the infiltrating western thought and traditional mentalities. Within the past twenty years of independence, this nation of

rich and complex histories has begun to develop models within its universities to educate leaders for all areas of government and industry in a world of rapid change and technology integration. This is consistent with the transitions of countries around the world as they have gained independence and emerged with their own identities. They follow a pattern of building infrastructures, capacity and skills with leadership development the most important for sustainable growth. But the psychological foundation demanded of leaders in a

USSR dominated country is very different than that required of leaders in an independent nation. As a transitional activity, they have translated and adapted the traditionally Western models for human resource development and leadership. Today, technology has facilitated access to these models. These models and the research instruments associated with them are used to educate emerging leaders

The article is co-authored by Dr. Parker and Dr. Tazhina. Dr. Tazhina has been a visiting scholar at Teachers College/Columbia University during the Spring semesters of 2009 and 2010. During this time, she participated in Dr. Parker's classes and began discussions about research collaboration in areas of common interest. This was the beginning of the work which is the foundation of this article.

BACKGROUND

The Culture of Kazakhstan

In order to understand the issues facing leadership development in Kazakhstan, it is important to understand the political changes within the country and the corresponding psychological issues for its people. The development of Kazakhstan will be discussed in terms of its growth as a nation and its emergence in global importance. The development of its people will be discussed in terms of the changes in the field of applied psychology as a foundation for leadership development.

Tazhina (2010) presents the historical context for this research. Traditional Kazakh society has historically been divided into three "zhuz" which are further divided into tribal groups and each tribe into smaller clans. This structure developed from the nomadic lifestyle and harsh living conditions of this vast territory and became a regulatory mechanism for daily life. Clan membership, a clear age hierarchy and inter-familial relationships were a priority. Elders were at the top of the hierarchy and the family was in charge of resolving social and

psychological conflicts. This traditional culture secretly thrived during the Soviet era.

As evidence of Kazakhstan's emergence into importance within globalization, Socor (2010) reports that in 2010, "on July 16-17, in Almaty, an informal meeting of 56 Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) countries' foreign affairs ministers decided to hold a summit of the organization this year in Kazakhstan's capital Astana. This will be the OSCE's first meeting at the level of heads of state since Istanbul in 1999" (http://www.jamestown.org).

Socor (2010) continues to explain that "Kazakhstan is the first non-European, Muslim-majority, post-Soviet state to chair the OSCE. It is also a state recently created and built from scratch. Nineteen years ago, the Kazakh leadership had taken charge of a mere territory that lacked all the attributes or experience of statehood; a zone of Soviet economic and ecological disaster, in which the Kazakh element had been reduced to a minority, and where no political nation or civil society had existed. The selection of Kazakhstan to chair the OSCE rewards the country's performance since 1991 in terms of state development, civil consensus building, economic modernization, and effective management of its natural resources. Meanwhile, Kazakhstan is generally regarded in the West as an authoritarian state. Its features include a single-party parliament, a presidential vertical power system, and its President, Nursultan Nazarbayev, has been in office since 1991 with a potentially lifetime tenure" (http://www.jamestown.org).

During the country's history, the field of psychology has developed as well. Illeris (2004) notes that within this geographical region, the cultural historical tradition in psychology was developed in Russia by Lev Vygotsky and tested by Aleksander Luria in Uzbekistan between the two world wars. Cultural historical refers to the idea that "psychological factors can only be understood in a historical perspective and based on interaction with the cultural environment" (p. 48). These interactions are characterized by the

11 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/leadership-development-kazakhstan/58476

Related Content

Preliminary Study on Exploring Students' Perceptions of Instant Response Systems in Pre-Service Teacher Courses: University Level in Taiwan
Hsin-Tzu Tommy Chen (2023). *International Journal of Online Pedagogy and Course Design (pp. 1-13).*
www.irma-international.org/article/preliminary-study-on-exploring-students-perceptions-of-instant-response-systems-in-pre-service-teacher-courses/322781

Minority College Students and Digital Agency: Exploring the Relationship Between Technology Awareness and the Development of the Digital Self
Charlotte Bakerand Rebecca J. Blankenship (2019). *Critical Essays on the New Moral Imperative for Supporting Marginalized Students in PK-20 Education (pp. 103-135).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/minority-college-students-and-digital-agency/227500

Enhancing the 21st Century Learning Experience: Enabling Learners
Fay Patel, Fadhliyansah Saipuland Regina Chan (2017). *Student-Driven Learning Strategies for the 21st Century Classroom (pp. 160-168).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/enhancing-the-21st-century-learning-experience/171576

Language Learning Through Zoom: The Need for Pedagogical-Technological Knowledge
Jonathan R. White (2024). *International Journal of Online Pedagogy and Course Design (pp. 1-16).*
www.irma-international.org/article/language-learning-through-zoom/356273

Enacting Care-Ful Engagement in the (Post)Pandemic Care-Less University
Deanna Grant-Smithand Ryan Payne (2021). *Handbook of Research on Emerging Pedagogies for the Future of Education: Trauma-Informed, Care, and Pandemic Pedagogy (pp. 169-190).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/enacting-care-ful-engagement-in-the-postpandemic-care-less-university/276965