Educational leadership essay examples

Literature, Russian Literature

Leadership skills have been used in the recent past to tell the difference between performing and non-performing school administrators. Rayner & Gunter, (2005) explained the key to success in educational leadership is a balanced scorecard that fits the needs of both tutors and students in an educational institution. This is not without influence from the external outside world that affect any academic institutions regardless of its geographical location. Religious beliefs for example affect the leaders work in a community positively or negatively. In a way also success educational leadership relies heavily on teamwork especially between the leader and the staff.

Educational leadership in most of the contexts refers to the social and psychological settings where groups of people are led in terms of ideologies and philosophical concepts. Stewart, (2006) supports the fact that leadership is diverse par the context but no matter the model applied, leadership is still about behavior control of the leaders themselves and their subjects. When behavior is controlled in educational leadership the leader enjoys a smooth run of activities without giving the exact orders.

Where fields outside sociology have leadership, confusion arises in differentiating between managing and leading. Educational leadership is much of influential leadership than managerial. The problem arises when school management tries to implement the model leadership as in the corporate world situation; they become toothless. The orders from the management in the educational institutional have to be taken as instructions always for the institution to run smoothly. Due to the many issues that are associated with educational leadership, studies have recommended the need

for distributed and transformational leadership among other approaches. Distributed leadership which is new to the education sector, tries linking school performance and good leadership. Educational leadership seeks to improve tutors participation in the institution environment and equipping them with skills that allow for fair decision making. The model of leadership tries to move away from the top down hierarchical school management to a distributed form where decisions are influenced by both students and staffs no matter their place in the educational institution. These have been observed to be helpful as the principal or the institutional CEO is not left in the middle trying to implement the mission and vision of the school alone. With good leadership, democracy in the institutions can be achieved which is characterized with self governance and good resource utilization. Separating the educational leaders' figure and the school vision has proved a challenge in most scenarios. It is not that easy to reduce the power of the principal through distributed without meeting resistance. However, it has been observed that models of distributed educational leadership have to take a similar approach to be successful. An example of such distribution is the presence of many principals or deans within the institution faculties that have a near sovereign authority over their parts. Other institutional have branches that allow for this leadership. The model works heavily on good team relations where it has been observed to accomplish much than singular central leadership.

Recent occurrences have proved that distributed educational leadership is a much social occurrence that does not work by structural institutional implementation but rather a social move from within that is initiated by the

existing leadership (Lindahl, 2008). Principal support is crucial in implementation of this model. Apart from distributing powers to students through students groups for example and teachers, the model also strives to include other stakeholders where their input is important in decision making. Financial stakeholders involvement in distributed educational leadership allows for backup in terms of the resources that the institution needs to implement its budgets. Sadly, even with its much praise this form of educational leadership still lacks enough evidence to support its credibility when it comes to improvement in performance or success in the institution. Thomson & Blackmore (2006), notes of the heavy correlation between the school principals relations with the staff as the key to success of most educational institutions. Having healthy relations between the principal and members of staff allows for full presentations of all the issues each sector of the organization has with immediate response (Gunter & Fitzgerald, 2007) Cognitive and classical theories of education have slowly been changed into transformational and inspirational leadership (Gunter, 2004). Than just being concerned with the mind or using medical psychological theories, current theories of educational leadership address feelings and emotional needs of the student or staff. The approach focuses on transforming the mind of the learner first before giving the orders or instructions. Transformative educational leadership focuses on singular students and staffs before addressing the overall needs of the organization. The theory believes that by transforming one employee the organization gains tremendously by the informed output. However, transformation leadership has been observed to be more people centered than organization centered.

Transformational leadership in the education sector splits into several approaches as Owens, (2004) observes. Transformation to the stakeholders starts with building a visionary map that stimulates them into action. In another dimension, the leadership model believes in inspiring its workers and students to find new ways of doing things or rather invent new approaches of doing things. Staff motivation through seminars and workshops with a common theme of commitment and achievement does similar work. In the event of active educational institutions where teachers interact directly with the students, transformational leadership advocates for mentorship that makes those students work hard.

Barker, (2001), explains the role of transformational leadership as that which that spurs stakeholders into action. The leaders in this case are supposed to offer a platform for the promotion of learning by adopting and supporting such a culture. In a field of abstract items, transformational leaders are supposed to encourage their fellow colleagues and their students towards achieving high goals in terms of innovation and inventiveness. The transformational leader in the organization should be the shock absorber of foreseeable associated risks that are linked with creativity. However without them, most educational institutional would remain dormant due to rigid managements that fear implementation of new ideas.

Owens, (2004) notes several other models of educational leadership which can be fit within distributed and transformational leadership. Among such models include those allow for active involvement on part of the student or staff, those that address the moral being and those that are purely psychological. The kind of educational leadership here is not based on the

principal or CEO position in the academic institution but rather their qualities and skills that help them organize the two teams of staffs and students into achievement of the set goals.

In recent times, there has been considerable similarity between educational leader emotional behavior and their relation with the students and the academic staff. The social relations skills in terms of temperaments would determine the position of the leaders in relation to the trust they have earned from those they lead. In event of good relations that are understood from a personal interaction, orders from the principal are likely to be taken with more seriousness as he is not just a manager. The staff or student would perform the task as requested as a duty above the fear of straining the good relations in the event of not doing the same (Gunter, 2004).

Performance in several of the educational institutions has been directly proportional to the relations between the top management, staff and the students.

Good educational leadership stems from the ability of self evaluation. School principals ought to understand need for good self esteem when in the organization as they have a role to all the students and staffs of making sure they have the right attitude towards the organization mission in order for them to achieve their goals (Mulcahy, 2003).

Successful leadership in academic institutions does not only rely on academic qualification but also interpersonal skills that may not be learnt in schools. Educational leaders ought to understand that their position in the post modern world is much on representation and guidance than management (Rayner & Gunter, 2005). Good leaders in these sectors need

to acknowledge their areas of weaknesses and call for help from colleagues hence the distributed leadership. Being supportive on the other hand is much important in order for research work to be accomplished as Thomson & Blackmore, (2005) notes of the strong link between good institutional leadership and novelty.

A combination of distributed and transformational educational leadership enables the development of involved staff cognitively and even socially. Unlike the managerial rigid approach to institutional management that considers paper qualifications mainly, these forms check several other factors that a good educational leader ought to have a successful school that has all stakeholders satisfied.

Democracy in academic institutions was unheard off as most institution decisions were done by the principals who never made consultations (Sinclair, 2007). The school heads were purely administrative and not leaders; a situation which is changing in today's world. The reasons behind these moves are due to the occurrences that have cornered the principles who never consulted for advice (Strike et. al, 2005) Today most school heads are required to be forbearing and to be considerate of others opinions or ideas. Being flexible as opposed to being rigid and respecting the majority are some of the approaches that principles have to accept to be successful in the academic institutions.

Woods (2005), notes that the school institution represents the larger society where if the latter has democracy, the former should follow suit. Educational Leadership should only work to implement decided policies and not one person's decision.

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