Educational leadership

Educational leadership Educational Leadership is recognised as a significant factor in providing quality education. Developing countries are focusingthe significance of the factor and are implementing development programs and systematic training for educational leaders. Modern educational policies strive to decentralise the management of education which has resulted in advantages and disadvantages in several countries.

The initiative of nations to restructure education management is distant from the expectations because educational reform will be successful only if there is an evolution of specialised training and development process together with an evolution of institutional structures for educational professionals. School Based Management (SBM) is a model of instructional leadership which sets out clear guidelines for decentralised school administration and is successfully introduced in several countries (Dr. Pushpanadham 2006 p. 41). Decentralised educational planning requires organised participation to substantiate the efforts of educational reforms. Past entities that functioned towards decentralised education such as Parents Teachers Association, Village Planning Committees and School Development Committees did not have an organised plan or statutory recognition that clearly pointer out powers and responsibilities.

Community participation is considered as the central facilitating criteria to ensure quality education that is par with the principal's initiative, professionalism of teachers, organisational flexibility, teacher collegiality, accountability and pedagogical flexibility.

Similarly the cycle of disempowerment prevalent in marginal communities can be broken only if there is a criteria for evaluating and monitoring school performance that includes accountability to local administration in the

region.

Research indicates that effective decentralisation of management depends on an effective leadership. In school management an effective principal must offer leadership in promulgating change in school policies and programs. An effective leader can successfully resolve disciplinary issues and advice and direct teachers to abide by policies that can create a positive impact on the performance of the school and institutional climate. There is also a positive correlation between teacher's job satisfaction and school climate.

However, it is found that there is lack of encouragement and awareness among school leaders to utilise modern management techniques to achieve educational goals (Dr. Pushpanadham 2006 p. 42).

School Based Model encourages principals, students, teachers and parents to exhibit more control over the educational policies by offering the responsibility to decide about the personnel, budget and the curriculum. By involving parents, teachers and community members in key decision making processes, School Based Management facilitates the creation of more effective learning circumstances for students. The main factor of SBM is the decentralisation of administration by encouraging the participation of parents, staff and community in the school, thereby making schools gain a competitive edge and implement action research to turn school to be more effective. Another significant factor of School Based Management model is the delegation of authority and power that reassures trust, commitment and a sense of belonging.

In SBM, the school leadership is encouraged to administrate the school as a system by accelerating its process, structure and personnel to create a learning organisation that considers learning as a value. The leadership of

the school must aim to establish outstanding academic standards, develop a sense of ownership, maintain positive human relations and foster reputation in the society by adopting change and innovation as the key features.

SCHOOL BASED MANAGEMENT

Financial Management

School Governance

Curriculum Management

Human Resource Management

*Learning Culture *High Academic Performance *Positive Human Relationship

*Sense of Ownership *High Reputation *Innovation and Change

The above chart describes the concept of SBM that emphasises strong instructional leadership, environment supportive of collaboration and professional growth, long term academic betterment, positive attitude and support for collective responsibility for school administration shared by students, staff, community and the parents that enables the school to meet its goals (Dr. Pushpanadham 2006 p. 43).

Principals demonstrate instructional leadership when they spend time and energy to improve the quality of learning and teaching with the participation of parents, students and teachers. It is necessary for principals to understand the significance of providing feedback to encourage all concerned in the education process. Successful principals engage the whole school with continuous communication of the good work of teacher and the quality of performance expected from students. The effectiveness or success of instructional leadership is measured by the extent of gains exhibited by students in learning. Instructional leaders can achieve the goal of collective

participation of teachers, students and parents by providing guidance and

support and by spending adequate time in the classroom by participating in

the teaching process (Educational Leadership).

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