The Impacts of Leadership Styles on the Overall Performance of the Educational Establishments

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This paper explores profoundly the ramifications of leadership styles on the whole of performance of educational organizations. First of all, it defines the concepts of leadership and management from different perspectives and points out the differences between them to highlight their impacts on the educational organizations performance and achievement. As well, it presents a plethora of leadership theories as they are the bases for leadership styles as each style is built on a certain theory. Furthermore, this paper states certain principles that lay out the practicalities of shaping a successful leader. Besides, it debates the decisive roles of leadership styles in creating a practical positive culture that provides the educational process with a clear vision and mission for guiding its teaching and administrative staffs to achieve their objectives and improve their potentials and capabilities. Moreover, the paper discusses the effects of leadership on the teaching and learning process in terms of creativity and development. Additionally, it points out leadership role in the teaching staff’s productivity, job satisfaction, loyalty, and profession development. Simultaneously, this paper discusses the influences of leadership styles students’ attainments and management in the educational process. Furthermore, the research paper investigates the flaws of leadership and their repercussions on educational process and the ways of readdressing them.

Keywords: leadership, management, trait theory, soft skills, sustainability, derailment

Introduction

Leadership styles play a vital role in the success and failure of all educational institutions and at all levels. To initiate, they affect schools and universities, visions and missions that pave the road for their staffs to design a clear roadmap enabling them to set their different levels of objectives and the appropriate strategies for achieving them. Likewise, leadership styles touch the educational staff in terms of classroom management, productivity, job satisfaction and relatedness to the educational organization as well as their relations with their students. Also, leadership styles are influential factors on students’ achievements, conducts, and studying strategies. From another perspective, leadership styles mark the professionalism of the educational organization in engaging the local community and creative a supportive educational environment that enables them to accomplish their goals effectively and efficiently. In the same vein, Bass and Avolio (1994) defined leadership as a combination of characteristics that enables a person to move a group of people to achieve certain goals or tasks.
What Are the Discrepancies Between Leadership and Management?

In fact, leadership and management are two complementary that are not identical as it is commonly thought. In other words, leadership and management are not the same as they have different functions despite the fact that they are highly interconnected. Bolam in Bush (2008, p. 23) defined management as “an executive function for carrying out agreed policy” while his concept of leadership is “at its core the responsibility for policy formulation and, where appropriate, organisational transformation”. Moreover, Bush avows that management does not have any goals as its main function is to utilize the available resources to achieve the schools objectives and goals which their formation is the core function of leadership. This state clearly the different functions of leadership as it designs the overall policy whereas management is responsible for finding the appropriate tools to implement them. Thus, the relationship between leadership and management is reciprocal as any successful leadership entails an effective management to carry out its promising talented vision. However, any management cannot be innovative or productive without being guided by an aspiring brave and fathomable leadership that plan for the present while foresighting the future.
Leadership Theories

Due to the prominence of leadership theories and their lasting impacts on the efficacy and the performance of educational organizations, there is a myriad of studies that present and explain the leadership theories and their pivotal functions. These theories have two major bases of the personality-based which relies on the leader’s personality and the situational theory which argues that the type of leadership is decided by the requirements of the situation. These two pillars result in three concepts of leadership as process, a mixed perspective of personality or traits theory as well as skilled leadership of eight major types.

The Classical Management Theory. This theory can be one of the first theories as it appeared in 1930s and it had different names as Evers and Lakomski (2001) named it “naïve empiricism” while English labeled it as “pseudoscience”. It has a crucial effect on education as it presents three major reforms in terms of standardized teaching, leadership development, and turnaround schools. This leads to a dramatic change in the schools’ principals’ characteristics as Beverly et al. in Bush and Crawford (2012, p.54) stipulated that “The preparation of educational leaders particularly principles, has taken a decided turn toward the acquisition of technical skills”. Furthermore, they confirm that schools principals should be educated and trained to carry out more complicated tasks of using data, observing teachers and assuming more technocrat roles.

The Great Man Theory. This is merely a traditional leadership theory which argues leaders have certain inner unique qualities by birth and those leaders’ capabilities are acquired by birth no by training or education. This theory presumes heroic, mythical characteristics for the leader that enables him to lead when needed while limiting leadership to the male gender.

The Trait Theory. This theory hypothesizes that leaders are endowed with special traits that make them fit for leadership, thus it has some similarities with the Great Man Theory as both of them depend on the leader’s personalities and behaviors. It also confirms that leaders share similar characteristics of personality and

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**Figure 3.** Personal traits create leaders.
psychology that form them; however, this theory is questioned as there are many people who have the same traits without being leaders. In addition, Northouse (2018) suggested major leadership traits that produce effective supportive leaders, such as intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity, and sociability. Furthermore, Saucier and Goldberg (1996) tackled the big personality factors that make a leader as he confirms that neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness are the key factors for a successful leader, thus he approves Northouse’ suggestion of sociability as pillar of leadership. Furthermore, Mann in Northouse (2018, p. 17) supported the importance of the Trait theory as he argues that “…traits could be used to distinguish leaders from nonleaders”.

**Contingency Theories**

These theories investigate leadership from another perspective as they argue that environment determines the appropriate leadership style as there is suitable leadership style for all circumstances. They claim that the success of any educational organization depends on leadership style, followers’ culture and motivations as well as the situation. Thus, they highlight the contingency factor in deciding the type of leadership style to be implemented. Gaudine and Lamb (2013) confirmed that the efficacy of any leadership is actualized by the degree of coincidence among the leaders’ qualities, leadership style and their convenience to targeted situation. According to this theory, leadership styles can be either task-motivated where leaders focus on achieving their goals or relationship style where stress having close relationship with their followers.

**The Situational Theory.** It was developed by Hersey and Blanchard in Goodson, McGee, and Cashman (1989) based on the 3D management theory which confirms that leadership consists of a directive and supportive dimensions which should be variable as followers abilities can be changed from time to time. It states that leaders shortlist the leadership style that conforms to the circumstances and the conditions imposed by a certain situation as they affirm that no leadership style is a panacea for all situations. Namely, if a leader is highly qualified, knowledgeable, and experienced in a certain situation and his team is not aware of the criticality of making an immediate decision, the autocratic style is the best one in order to exploit the chance and to save time and efforts. On the other hand, if the leader deals with a technical issue and he has a skilled team in this field, it more reasonable to adopt the participatory leadership style as it facilitates leaders to form more comprehensive and successful decisions. Northouse (2108, p. 91) recapped the function of the situational theory by stating “What is needed in a certain situation, a leader must evaluate her or his employees and assess how competent and committed they are to perform a given task”.

**The Behavioral Theory.** This theory postulates that a leader is made not born through training and education; accordingly it focuses on the leaders’ actions not traits or natural characteristics. This theory produces two contrary types of leaders. The autocratic leader guides and directs his group without giving them any role in deciding the group’s scheme of work, so this type of leadership is characterized by hostility as members of the groups do not have any positive feeling towards the leader and the work runs smoothly as long as the leader is present. On the other hand, the democratic leadership envisages the same degree as the autocratic one, yet there is more enrichment and engagement as subordinates have a say in the operating system and there is no enmity between the leader and his subordinates. Furthermore, work does not depend completely on the leader as it may continue in the leader’s absence.

**The Participatory Theory.** It argues for engaging all the participants in the decision-making or improving any organization, the exemplary leadership should consider and respect their inputs. Accordingly,
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Participatory leaders usually invite their subordinates to express their views on a certain issue in order to reinforce the quality of the decision and the organization team loyalty, commitment and support.

The Transactional Theory

The Transactional Theory. This theory depends on the reward and punishment principle as managers or leaders state clearly the required tasks that other participants should carry out as well as their rewards. This theory stipulates that if an employee performs his duties according to the required standards, he will be rewarded. However, he must be punished or degraded in accordance with the failure that he committed. This creates a kind of a utilitarian working environment as leaders play the role of supervisors estimating the achieved work without trying to create any sense of commitment or relatedness to the organization. Furthermore, the parties of the equation do not have much loyalty to the organization, so they do the least level of work in order to satisfy solely job requirements. This exchange results in low quality work and less engagement which affects the teaching and learning process as well as students’ attainment.

The Relationship Transformational Theory.

This kind of theory is based on establishing a reciprocal relationship between leaders and followers that reinforces motivations and loyalty to the foundation. It aims at changing the followers’ behaviors and engages them in the organizations. According to the transformational theory, leaders motivate followers to carry out a certain task by inspiring them to see and understand its importance. Charismatic leaders depend heavily on this style as they engage their followers by not only focusing on group work but also improving individual potentials.

The Path-Goal Theory.

This theory depends on the expectancy theory that requires enabling followers to execute certain tasks through training, professional support, and guidance. However, leaders should adapt their leadership styles to suit their subordinates and motivate them to work more. Simultaneously, followers perform the required task professionally and completely if they are convinced that is rewarding in terms of financial support in Wofford and Liska (1993). They point out clearly the four stages of leadership as defining the goal, clarifying the path, removing the obstacles and providing support.

The Skills Theory.

This theory is based on learning and education as the two key cornerstones for creating an enlightened effective leader because they will supply him with the required knowledge and developed skills for dealing with emerging situations and human potentials. From another standpoint, the skill theory rejects the Great Man and the Trait theories claims that leaders are made not born and that no natural gifts alone can make leaders. However, this theory is costly as it stipulates allocating huge amounts of money for educating and training leaders as well as refining and enriching their experiences via travelling, professional development courses and attending international conferences.

What Are the Principles of Leadership?

This is a very pivotal question as there must be certain characteristics for a person to be a leader. These attributes weaken the Great Man and the Trait theories as they hypothesize that most of leadership attributes cannot be innate. These are some properties that a successful leader should have.

Technically Knowledgeable

Technology is one of the most pillars of leadership as it enables leaders to lead, guide, support his team professionally especially in the world of education. Firstly, technology keeps leaders acquainted with the most up-to-date knowledge as the use of technical tools enables leaders to follow up all innovative equipment that
enhance the educational process. Furthermore, it provides leaders with the latest trends of management and leadership as well as human psychology; therefore, he will be more skilled in adapting his leadership style and in dealing with multi-cultured people.

**Having a Strong Sense of Responsibility**

Responsibility is the most vital principle of leadership as it determines the success or the total failure of any leadership since it determines the scope of the loyalty, engagement and the quality of work as well as achievement. When a leader has a high sense of responsibility, he engages, supports, guides, and directs his team to the right path and fosters in them the sense of responsibility even when having the autocratic or the authoritarian style. However, if the leader lacks the sense of responsibility, he relinquishes his duties and disseminates carelessness all over the organization.

**Soft Skills**

A leader should have the essential soft skills of communication, social traits, and human attributes that empower him to communicate with his followers and convey all strategies clearly. He should also have certain the insights and the emotions to deal with his team and support it (Doyle, 2018).

**Hard Skills**

From another dimension, a leader should keep the hard skills and be qualified to have a professional standard in his field in order to be able to serve as a resource for his team. In other words, the hard skills are the necessary skills and knowledge that help a person to perform a job professionally. As Doyle (2018) confirmed, these skills are acquired through education, training, and professional development. Both hard skills and soft skills are vivacious for the success of any leader as missing one of them will undermine his accountability.

**Professional Development**

Leaders should always try to improve their own potentials in order to be able to lead, guide, and direct; therefore, he should be aware of their academic, administrative, and personal attributes. They can improve themselves by joining training courses, formal education sessions, and attending conferences.

**Decision Maker**

Leaders should be able to make sound decision based on solid knowledge and experience in order to affect their organizations positively. Decision-making strategies should observe time requirements as they are decisive in the success and the failure of implementing these decisions. If a leader at an educational organization decides to plan remedial sessions just before the final decision, they will not get a constructive success as students will only pass the exams without having integrated the subject matter in their permanent memory.

**Exemplary**

A successful leader should be an example of responsibility, loyalty, and engagement as well as relatedness. A leader should not only tell his team the requirements of their jobs such being punctual, skillful and related to his organization, but they should also embody them through personal commitments. At educational foundations, being exemplary is far more vital as a leader influences the whole society by affecting the teaching staffs who in their term affect their students and their families as well.
Sustainability

It is a vital principle of leaders as they must be committed to support their teams and make this support as a culture and a system. However, if leaders are moody in their backing of their teaching staff members by underpinning certain members and denying that right for others, they will harm staff’s loyalty and relatedness which will affect their productivity and the overall school’s performance. Furthermore, a sustainable leader makes a wise use of the materialistic and human resources as constant support leads to professional planning and economy in the use of these resources which have highly positive impacts on the teaching and learning process.

Leadership Styles

Leadership styles can be defined as the way that a leader guides or directs his organization. It should also be noted that adopting a certain leadership style should depend on certain situations, such as the organization’s work field and environment, size as well as the teams’ social and cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, leaders’ education and training in addition to the decision-making level is a crucial factor for choosing the style of leadership.

The Autocratic Leadership Style

This style is based on the transactional theory and it confirms the leaders’ full power over their power. Accordingly, subordinates do not have any right to suggest or discuss any decisions taken by their leaders. The advantages of this style is immediacy and efficacy as decisions are implemented instantly and highly efficiently, so it is effective when dealing with crises. By contrast, it results in grave consequences as it destabilizes creativity and relatedness as the followers do not present counter innovative ideas and do not feel related to their organizations.

The Bureaucratic Leadership Style

This style calls for following the rules and regulations assiduously as leaders follow sets pre-assigned regulations and dictate their followers to stick to them meticulously. However, this style is beneficial when managing risky and costly tasks that require following certain painstaking measures. Nevertheless, this leadership style does not foster team-work or creative implementation of new techniques.

The Directive Leadership Style

According to this style, leaders give directions to their juniors explaining the required task, how to do them and the time limit for completing them. This style is characterized by clarity and practicality as leaders follow certain rules and regulations that facilitate and improve performance.

The Charismatic Leadership Style

The charismatic leadership style is grounded on the transformational theory a leader can change his followers by arousing their emotions. It is characterized by having more actions as followers perform the required tasks with amazing rapidity and effectiveness. Yet, organizations are deemed to have a total failure or even collapse in the leaders’ absence as followers believe that they are the core of their success. Moreover, mostly, leaders feel overconfident and they do not consider any margin of committing errors; therefore, they do not accept any advice or counter suggestion which can steer their organizations to destruction.
The Supportive Leadership Style

This type of leadership is characterized by having friendly and approachable leaders who use consider the well-being of their subordinates as well as their human needs. Equally important, the style asserts the importance of respecting subordinates and treating them as equals.

The Achievement-Oriented Leadership Style

It is a highly challenging style as leaders dictate their subordinates to achieve their tasks at the highest possible level by challenging their abilities. Leaders assign high standards of excellence and ask their followers to work accordingly which needs more improvement in addition to confidence. These leaders derive his power from any leadership theory as they change their goals according to the existent situation.

The Democratic Leadership Style

It is derived from the participative theory as leaders invite their subordinates to take part in the decision-making process in order to explore the issue profoundly, although they make the final decisions. This style increases creativity and loyalty as team members feel respected and engaged and leaders find more alternatives to shortlist from. Still, the democratic leadership style oscillates or delays the decision-making process due to the suggestions and counter suggestion procedures which can harm addressing certain urgent issues.

The Laissez-Faire Leadership Style

It is a double-edged theory as it can be the most motivating theory since leaders allow their teams to carry out their tasks in accordance to their concepts and strategies, which causes more productivity and engagement in work. Furthermore, some proponents of the laissez-faire style delegate their employees’ some power which creates a sense of autonomy and decentralization that accelerate decision-making process and ameliorate achievements. On the other, the laissez-faire style can enfeeble or cripple all organizations if leaders adopt this style to abdicate their responsibilities when they do not monitor or control their teams’ work. It is also a common style for the leaders who do not have enough control over their team. Consequently, this style can be successfully adopted, when leaders control and observe their subordinates’ works and achievements closely and professionally.

The Transactional Leadership Style

This leadership style follows the reward and punishment theory as leaders reward their subordinates when achieving the required tasks; however, they have the right to punish them when the fail to comply with the requirements of these tasks. This creates a utilitarian relationship as the followers will not feel related to the organization or engaged to it, while the leaders will play the roles of supervisors as they watch carefully their staff’s work and evaluate it for the transaction of reward or punishment.

Leadership Roles in Improving Schools

Law and Glover (2000) discussed the roles of leadership in improving schools performance and the whole educational process by pointing out that there are internal and external challenges cripple schools’ improvement. They remark that certain external factors delay or even inhibit schools improvement such insufficient resources and the lack of financial support, highly levels of national standards and meeting the local community expectations. On the other hand, the internal factors just as motivating staff, marinating educational and
professional development, retaining students planning and utilizing resources effectively as well as developing students’ leveled curricula act as decisive deterrents for improving schools.

Hargreaves and Hopkins in Law and Glover (2000) ensured that enhancing schools’ effectiveness can be achieved according to the dimensions of improving the organization which requires external and internal efforts. Next, leaders should improve the process of achieving the educational objectives, namely developing and diversifying the teaching techniques and observing the learning styles. Additionally, leaders can improve their schools by raising the standards of their students’ learning outcomes as shallow ones result in low achievements because of plateau effect. Consequently, students will be satisfied with their average attainment which causes many classroom misconducts and lack of engagement since students will be bored due to the negative repetition of the mere average knowledge.

Wallace and Poulson (2003) agreed with Hargreaves and Hopkins on the decisive roles of leaders in improving students’ attainment as they assert that without leaders’ effective support there will be no constructive educational process. They confirm that leaders should provide all the necessary resource, such as vast well-equipped classrooms, libraries, labs, and sports clubs. Leaders should also support teachers by allotting respecting their financial and psychological needs, such as convenient salaries, professional development, and moral support when encountering any classroom management. Furthermore, leaders should guarantee a welcoming teaching and learning atmosphere that engages students, retains them and estimating their opinions and aspirations. Moreover, leaders are supposed to engage technology in their schools at it is the broad gate for the 21st century age.

Haynes, Emmons, and Ben-Avie (1997) expounded different criteria that leaders should consider for having effective schools. To begin with, they highlight that an effective school should have a set of ethos that act as a path-way for the whole staff, thus their work will be systematic and stable. On the same tracks, leaders should confirm having an effective classroom management and setting high expectations for their teachers which present them as a positive model. Additionally, leaders should inspire their teachers to provide their students with constructive feedback as a remedial work for their students and they should foster in them the highest sense of responsibility. Besides, leaders should secure safe and encouraging working conditions for teachers and students that confirm more progress, higher attainment, more productivity, and higher performance.

In the same vein, leadership plays a vital role in leading and improving schools in the hard times such the dramatic time of carrying out certain changes because it requires taking decisive decisions. Some leaders depend on their staff as they shortlist highly experienced members and delegate them to execute certain duties
in order to engage them in the leading process and achieve the pre-set goals professionally. Others rely on external bodies as they seek the support of outsider experts in order to help them carry pivotal changes in their schools. Accordingly, the leadership in the time of change imposes serious tension on leaders like carrying on development with its dangers, costs, and responsibility on the one hand and improvement, creativity, high standards of competition on the other hand. The other part of the equation is maintenance of the status quo of its economy, relative security and stability while facing the danger of rigidity, narrow-mindedness and stagnant performance. Another challenge that leaders face in the stage of change is the challenge of contradiction between personal values and institutional requirements. Some leaders believe in supporting their staff and improving their abilities; however, some personnels do not accept or cope with the essential changes which necessitate their dismissal according to the institutional rules. Thus, leaders get into the trap of considering their personal beliefs or implementing the organizational regulations which shows the sensitivity of the leadership roles (Day, Harris, Tolley, & Beresford, 2000).

From another perspective, Grint (1997, p. 293) argued that leaders should activate the concept of the educational organization by effectuating the verb instead of the noun in order to engage all the parties of the educational process. It implies that leaders should organize all the parties of the educational process. Firstly, they should remove their leadership style from rigid hierarchical to more active and skillful style in order to be open-minded when encountering a new trend in their work. Furthermore, they should organize their objectives by prioritizing them in order to be systematic in achieving their tasks which be rewarding as they will improve their productivity and the overall performance of their schools. Accordingly, he defines the concept of leadership as “leadership can be seen as a certain kind of organizing activity: for this reason, leadership is essential to the dynamics of organizations”. This type of leadership engages not only the teachers but also the students and the administrative body as well.

Additionally, leaders create a special culture for their educational foundations by setting up certain principles and values that state the rights and the responsibilities of each person according to his career requirements. This culture will create an engaging and highly systematic working environment owing to the absence of the negative rivalry where the members of the organization are competing to get selfish ambition while sacrificing the organizations’ well-fare. Moreover, social integration is another positive culture where leaders engage their schools in the local community by inviting students’ parents to be a part of the educational environment and by participating in the local community’s social activities. Consequently, leaders are accountable for crafting a profitable culture that fosters in their members collaboration, support and positivity (Martin, 2009).

**Leadership Flaws or Derailment**

From another angle, leadership flaws at educational establishment are really very destructive as they not only harm the educational establishments but also destroy the whole society. These flaws lead to poor teaching and learning which provides the society with illiterate graduates who when occupying key positions will destroy the whole society. Moreover, leadership’s derailment at schools marks more students’ infiltration and less retention; subsequently, young people may be drifted by choosing the wrong way and become threatening undermining danger as they must be criminals. Leaders derail out when they behave stubbornly and act autocratically by refusing or not allowing constructive suggestions or ingenious ideas. Furthermore, they may commit terrible flaws when they grasp all the powers and decisions in their hands without empowering their
subordinates while blaming them for every failure. Additionally leaders can mislead the organization when they are biased as they delegate or recruit certain employees for racial and personal reasons which will distress the performance of the whole organization. Another terrible fault is the lack of vision and mission that results in taking reckless irresponsible decision or a state of crippling indecisiveness. Moreover, leaders can destabilize their organization if they cannot walk the talk that is embodying the adopted values and culture as leaders actions are the bright embodiments of their beliefs and principles. Shirandi (2018, p. 60) summed up the actions that a professional leader should do to deal with these flaws as he argues “One of the true tests of leadership is how a leader plans to overcome the leadership weaknesses, and how he displays his disposition in dealing with them”.

Conclusion

To recapitulate, leadership is the core of success for educational organizations because it directs and guides all the efforts of creating appropriate objectives and establishing the convenient strategies for achieving them. Moreover, leadership plays a critical role by erecting a constructive sharing and caring working environment as leadership styles determine engaging all the parties of the educational process, enhancing their loyalty, sustaining their productivity and their overall performance. However, inconvenient leadership style can creative a negative teaching and learning environment resulting in grave consequences that certainly affects the organizations’ sustainability and the whole nation as education creates or destroys nations. Accordingly, leaders should be highly educated, aquatinted with the educational theories, open-minded and participative as well as experienced in order to direct and guide educational process and improvement.

References


