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## **Educational Leadership**

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### **Abstract**

*The profession of educational leadership has improved significantly. Educators have a better understanding on how and in what ways, educational leadership has contributed in student achievement. An increasing base of knowledge from research and practice has depicted that the primary job of the educational leaders is to put emphasis upon student achievement by formulation of challenging, caring and supporting environmental conditions that are conducive to student learning. They develop and support teachers, create constructive working conditions, allocate the resources in an efficient manner, formulate appropriate organizational policies and systems and get involved in other kinds of in depth and meaningful work, outside the classroom setting. The meaningful work that educational leaders are involved in outside of the classroom and educational institution, has emphasis upon the activities and tasks that are implemented within the institution. The educational leaders need new directions to guide their practice and carry out their work effectually.*

### **Keywords:**

*Educational Leadership, Education, Leaders, Students, Values, Standards, Job Duties*

## **Introduction**

Educational leadership is built on the premise of constructing and applying knowledge in ways that make a positive difference. Through collaboration and communication, professionals in educational leadership work with diverse communities and build partnerships to promote positive outcomes by setting and meeting transformative goals.

Educational leadership has become a priority in education policy programs worldwide. It plays a crucial role in refining school outcomes by influencing the motivations and capabilities of the teachers, as well as the school climate and environment. Operative educational leadership is vital to improve the efficiency and pertinence of education. Educational leadership responsibilities should be adequately defined through an understanding of the practices that are required to make an improvement in teaching and learning. In many countries, the school administrators and the principals have heavy work-loads, they are overburdened with work. Most of these individuals are reaching the retirement age and it is difficult to find leaders with capabilities and competencies. Educational leadership functions can contribute in making provision of guidance on the main

characteristics, tasks and responsibilities of proficient leaders in the education field.

While many educational leadership professionals have advanced degrees and can work in academic settings, they are practitioners who work in applied positions. By connecting theory to real-world projects and contexts, educational leaders take a comprehensive, evidence-based, relational approach to problem-solving.

### **Important of Educational leadership**

The impact of educational leadership is felt throughout schools, nonprofits, and private sector organizations.

### **School Principals**

A recent study by The Wallace Foundation reported that effective school leaders make both a stronger and broader positive impact on the schools they lead than research had previously shown. The study:

- Estimates that replacing a school principal in the 25th percentile of effectiveness with one in the 75th percentile of effectiveness would result in approximately three months of additional math and reading learning gains each year for students in that school
- Suggests that the impact of an effective principal on student learning is

nearly as great as the impact of an effective teacher

- Finds that the way school principals approach educational leadership has a direct relationship with school outcomes and test scores.

### **Higher Education Administrators**

Leaders of educational institutions stand to influence everything from curricular decisions to public perception of their campus. Studies have found that the approach higher educational leaders take in making various decisions can have a powerful ripple effect throughout their faculty members, students, and even the broader community. For example:

- Higher education leaders' positive attitudes toward diversity and inclusion efforts cultivate greater awareness of bias among employees who are less likely to experience the negative impacts of bias, thereby increasing the likelihood of those employees endorsing inclusion efforts.

- Leadership was found to be the most crucial enabler of agility in higher education institutions.

- Higher education institutions whose leaders have implemented disability-related supports see significantly higher rates of student persistence among students with disabilities.

### **Non-profit Leaders**

Studies show that non-profit organizations with poor leadership negatively affect the staff working with them, the clientele they serve, and even the public at-large. Poor leadership in the non-profit sector erodes public trust.

Conversely, non-profit executives who receive relevant training in the knowledge and skills they need in order to effectively lead an organization experience positive personal outcomes (such as their mindsets) and improve their organization's practices. Likewise, non-profit leaders who guide their organizations in accountability, communication, and advocacy can help bring about more positive public perceptions of non-profit organizations.

### **Human Resources Directors**

HR professionals with a post-grad education degree are especially skilled at strategic collaboration with diverse audiences and stakeholders and promoting change across diverse organizational settings. Those abilities can promote meaningful change in human resources roles.

Effective human resources directors can make a noticeable difference in company culture, employee morale, and even the bottom line. Check out just a few statistics from McKinsey on the benefit of good human resources professionals:

- Organizations with human resources departments that facilitate a positive employee experience are 1.3 times more likely to report that they outperformed their organizational goals.

- Companies with cultures that rank in the top-quartile of the McKinsey Organization Health Index post a return to shareholders that is 60 percent higher than median companies and a staggering 200 percent higher than companies that rank in the bottom quartile.

### **Educational leadership qualities**

While anyone can strive to become a successful educational leader, there are some common qualities that are found in professionals who tend to gravitate toward educational leadership: compassion, vision, and perseverance.

#### **Compassion**

The role of an educational leader is, at its core, a role that seeks to meet the needs of others. Rachael George, an elementary school principal, spoke to the role of compassion in educational leadership in “Leading with Compassion,” a blog post for the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) in which she discusses the impact of two colleagues in leadership roles:

“Creating bonds and intentionally fostering relationships with your

community is the foundation for academic achievement. As three educational leaders, we strive to show genuine love for those in our community. That deep care is likely one of the reasons why our students have been successful, with each of our schools blasting through average scores on state assessments.”

Leadership roles involve goals and metrics, but they’re also about culture, creating a sense of belonging, and empowering people through connection. People who naturally come by compassion and seek to cultivate it in their lives have one of the key qualities of educational leaders—and, as George’s example shows, an emphasis on compassionate care for others often leads to positive outcomes and impressive metrics, as well.

#### **Vision**

Successful educational leaders tend to be people who can evaluate past challenges and policies where they work and develop a better way forward. Not only that—they can see, or collaborate in seeing, what it will take to get to that future place. Their ability to imagine and creatively plan, for example, can directly correlate to student success.

Take a look at a few examples of visionary leadership in an academic setting, non-profit organization, and the private sector:

- A 2020 study found a positive relationship between visionary leadership in school principals and teacher performance.

- Non-profit leaders report that visionary leadership improves raising of funds as well as recruitment of volunteers.

- Visionary leadership is identified as one of five leadership styles that are components of an optimistic leadership style that can determine successful, future-driven leadership.

### **Perseverance**

Educational leaders are faced with many challenges. They are often called upon when social and cultural issues arise, when injustice dominates current events, and when individuals and communities are suffering. Attempting to develop long-term fixes for systemic problems while responding to immediate, pressing needs can be a tightrope to walk.

That's why perseverance matters so much for educational leaders. For example, Donor Box ranks "resilience and stamina" as the number one quality of a successful non-profit founder:

Hardship is a daily reality for most non-profit leaders. The Greater Good Science Centre defines resilience skills as being able to minimize the impact of stress, which in turn helps us avoid burnout. Non-

profit founders need to be flexible, willing to adapt, and able to move forward despite setbacks—demonstrating persistence.

### **Educational leadership skills**

Professionals who are trained in educational leadership are equipped with many of the top skills that employers are looking for in the modern workplace. Some of the most important educational leadership skills, which correlate with some of the most-wanted skills among recruiters, schools, and companies, are analytical thinking, collaboration, and leadership.

### **Analytical Thinking**

The World Economic Forum named "analytical thinking and innovation" as the number one skill for 2025 in "The Future of Jobs Report 2020." As more and more data becomes available in every sector, from education to the corporate world, leaders with strong analytical thinking skills are more necessary than ever when it comes to asking the right questions of the data set before them.

Consider just a few examples of how analytical thinking has made a positive difference in organizations led by educational leaders:

- School administrators are applying analytical thinking to student data to improve their return on investment for

technology purchases and to highlight best practices that lead to better student outcomes. For example, a charter school administrator analysed data and discovered that one biology teacher specifically outperformed the other biology teachers in the school. So the leader designated that teacher as the biology mentor for all charter schools in their system.

- Human resources directors are cutting through their cognitive biases and experiencing new insights in existing company cultures as they apply analytical thinking in minimizing bias and increasing fairness.

- Community college administrators find that good data analysis helps them to make more informed decisions and present compelling evidence to key stakeholders.

### **Collaboration**

Educational leaders often spend a great deal of time speaking to others—whether those they are serving, those who work within their organizations, or community partners. By collaborating with diverse audiences and stakeholders about organizational research, practices, and theories, educational leaders can make collaborative strategic plans that lead to positive outcomes.

Here are some examples of how educational leaders have fostered collaboration to create positive effects:

- Ten liberal arts colleges in Pennsylvania partner to facilitate faculty development, study abroad programs, and compliance and risk management.

- Community organizations in rural north central Wisconsin collaborated to serve over 1000 immigrant families and provide them with information about the COVID-19 pandemic in their preferred language.

- A school district, a pair of agencies serving homeless youth, and a group of local philanthropists in Texas repurposed an abandoned school into a shelter that serves approximately 4,000 unhoused students.

### **The top considerations of an educational leader**

Professionals in educational leadership roles will perform a multitude of tasks based on their specific positions, which is to say that a superintendent's day may look quite different from a human resource director's day. But, if we peel back the layers just a bit, we'll see that many of their decisions and approaches are likely shaped in similar ways and based in similar issues faced by educational leaders, including:



- How to answer questions of equity, ethics, and social justice
- What it looks like to bring about solutions to complex problems
- The way to make a positive difference in a community or culture
- How to make and measure a positive impact in a given setting, person, or group

### **Equity and educational leadership**

One of the highest callings of educational leaders is fostering diversity, inclusion, and equity among the people they lead. As a practitioner, the role of the educational leadership professional is not one of theory or distance from real communities. As people who work with people, educational leadership professionals are embedded every day in real-world circumstances that deal with questions of social justice, ethics, and equity.

Educational leaders may pursue greater equity for the people they serve through community partnerships, advocacy, or educational opportunities.

### **Educational leadership Jobs**

Careers in educational leadership range from small schools to huge corporations. Educational leadership often refers to administrative positions in schools, school districts, and universities.

Many educational leadership professionals work as principals or assistant principals, instructional coordinators, and academic deans. These individuals help to meet the needs of students, families, and teachers so that each person has the opportunity to reach their goals and experience positive outcomes.

But, as we've discussed, school settings are not the only place where educational leadership is important. Educational leadership is also put into practice in the corporate setting, such as in the case of human resources directors, chief learning officers, and trainers. In the non-profit sector, educational leadership professionals work as program directors, executive directors, and community organizers. Educational leadership professionals who are interested in policy may work as education policy analysts for school systems, in think tanks, or for lobbying organizations.

### **Leadership Effects on Student Learning**

Within educational institutions, the primary objective is to improve student learning. For the purpose of improving student learning, the individuals are required to introduce well-organized curriculum and the instructional strategies. The teaching-learning methods should be appropriate and in accordance to the needs



and requirements of the students. Effective communication between the teachers and the students, proper counselling and guidance should be made available to the students, for the purpose of helping them in providing solutions to their problems. The approaches to school reforms are entirely dependent upon the success for the motivations and capacities for school leadership. The leaders within the educational institutions should also be able to provide assistance to the colleagues in helping them perform their job duties in an adequate manner. It is vital for the leaders to obtain co-operation and support from the parents in order to facilitate student learning. The support from the parents can only be obtained by establishing support, understanding and co-operation (Leith wood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004)

The students within educational institutions are different from each other in various perspectives. These are, they possess different learning abilities, skills, viewpoints, natures and way of communication. There are students who perform very well in class and do not need much training and guidance from their teachers. They are able to understand the concepts in just one class and practice makes them perform well and enhance their

scores. On the other hand, there are students, who do not take much interest in studies, they find difficult to pay attention and focus upon their work. These students need counselling and guidance to help them perform well. For this purpose, the role of educational leaders is considered imperative. Proper guidance, counselling and training methods will contribute in improving the performance of these students. Widespread emphasis in improving educational leadership is the key to the successful implementation of the large-scale reform (Leith wood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004).

The effects of educational leadership are considered the largest where they are mostly needed. For instance, within the educational institutions, besides the education, growth and development of the students, the implementation of managerial functions is also necessary. These functions are planning, organizing, leading, controlling, directing, and staffing. These functions should be put into operation in an adequate manner. The leaders should possess sufficient knowledge of how to solve the problems and difficulties. When the leaders possess appropriate knowledge and skills regarding how to solve the problems and implement proper functioning, this would lead to

productivity and well-being. On the other hand, when the leaders are not able to bring about solutions to the problems, when they are not able to properly guide or direct students and other members of the organization and when they experience problems in effective decision making, then impediments would take place within the course of achievement of the desired goals and objectives. Therefore, the effects of leadership upon student learning would be positive through their capabilities, qualities, creativeness, resourcefulness and ingenuity.

### **Measures for Supporting Educational Leadership**

Measures for supporting educational leadership within the institutions have been stated as follows: (Educational Leadership, 2015). In educational institutions, there is a need to prepare, train and develop leaders. Effective leadership development is implemented in two areas, educational institutions and organizations. In both these areas, educational leaders need to work and practice to enhance their performance. However, the functions of the leaders should be accompanied by the activities that are organized out of the school. These include increasing a person's knowledge and awareness of a range of leadership

approaches, theories, reading, reflection, and interaction with the peers in other schools and areas.

Mentoring and coaching can prove to be advantageous to the leaders who are newly recruited. The leaders who are appointed may possess the necessary qualifications, capabilities and experience. In spite of these areas, it is crucial to mentor and train them about the jobs and functions, they are introduced to the personnel and the other staff members, and gradually they become skilled and proficient in the implementation of their tasks and functions. When the person is at the topmost position, then authority and control is vested within him, he has the power to make decisions and exercise influence on carrying out of all kinds of tasks and functions. In spite of having power and authority, mentoring and coaching from other experienced and proficient individuals certainly contributes in development of capabilities amongst the educational leaders. The leaders may too come across problems and difficulties for which they need assistance and support.

Making use of the skills and expertise of the leaders. The previous experience of the individuals who have served as leaders can make them skilled enough to render effective job duties in other institutions. The leaders, who are

largely proficient in their tasks and performances do not always make good mentors or coaches. It is vital for the leaders to perform their job duties in a moderate way. They should not overload themselves with work, as too much work at a time do not generate the desired outcomes.

Identification of the leadership skills and potential. These should be observed as a part of the principal's responsibilities in every educational institution. In leadership, individual obtains the opportunities to make use of their skills, and abilities to lead to the welfare of the community. There are personnel within the institutions which do not possess the knowledge and information regarding making best use of the skills and knowledge. The leaders are required to make sure, their skills and abilities are made use of to generate welfare of the community.

Development of leadership teams is important. Distribution of leadership is considered important. Educational institutions need not just one leader, but there are numerous leaders, heads of the departments, chairpersons, deans, directors and principals. All the individuals have their own responsibilities, job duties and functions. They organize meetings, implement rules and policies and carry out

numerous tasks for the effective functioning of the educational institutions. The distribution of leadership is required to get co-ordinated in an appropriate manner.

Consideration of student leadership programs is significant for the progress of the students. In educational institutions, students too are provided with the opportunities to assume leadership roles. They assume roles of class monitors, heads of groups, teams involved in some kind of project work, teaching assistants and so forth. The student leadership programs generate capabilities amongst the students and they learn how to exercise tasks and functions in an appropriate manner. In this manner they put in more confidence within themselves and put in more efforts to improve.

### **Conclusion**

Educational leadership is primarily associated with enhancement of student learning and their growth and development. The other areas that educational leaders have to take into consideration are, mission, vision, values and standards of the educational institutions, ethics and professional norms, equity and cultural responsiveness, curriculum and the instructional systems, teaching-learning methods, usage of technology, performance appraisal systems, creation of the

community that may work in co-operation towards the care and support of the students, building up of the professional capacity and skills of the school personnel, building up of the professional community of the teachers and the staff members, promoting meaningful engagement of the families and the community, supervising the administrative, technical, clerical, and managerial functions in an effective manner with the support and assistance from the other people and formulation of measures that would lead to improvement of the school.

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