
QUALITIES AND STYLE OF THE PRINCIPAL OF SECONDARY SCHOOL (SS)

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Abstract: The quality and style of the Principal of secondary schools is of great importance for the effectiveness of school management. A number of studies have shown that school management is second only to teaching in the classroom in respect to the impact on student education. The knowledge, abilities and competence of the principal are crucial to establishing schools that promote quality teaching and learning by all students.

Different researches have shown that effective school leaders influence achievements of the pupils by influencing other people or organizational elements and impacting on school processes. This requires specific qualities and style. Director of secondary schools manage every day with different situations as a part of his management and this makes his work very dynamic and challenging. Eventually, we can summarize that managing impact is ultimately a synthetic concept.

It includes the management culture, style, the complex of personal qualities, the specificity of the system in which it operates, the organizational structure, the specificity of the impact of the regulatory mechanisms and many others.

There are also a number of important factors influencing management impact - such as the level of the management body, the level of organization of the internal environment, the degree of uncertainty of the external environment, etc.

The optimal version of the educational institutions in such a way that each decision is linked to the final outcome of the school activities. This fact affects effectiveness as well as satisfaction of the staff needs. This would achieve a unity between the objectives of the school and the aims of the individual individuals working in it. In order to carry out his/her various professional tasks, the Principal of an educational institution enters a variety of interactions. It has been proven that the personality of the Principal influences significantly the establishment and maintenance of the organizational climate in the school.

The management style of the director is very important for the effectiveness of school management. In a study on the dominant style characteristic according to the principals' self-assessment, priority is given to the fulfillment of the tasks, the direction of the changes and the solving of the problems of the people.

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The school management process is built on the general principles of social management theory but also has strictly distinct features connected to the specificity of the subject of management and the factors that affect it. Today, education and school have their pedagogical and management methodology that unifies them and standardizes them. Different harmonization and unification mechanisms are used for this purpose - laws, curricula, syllabi, state educational requirements, evaluation criteria, methods and technologies for teaching and educating students, etc. The structure, organization and management of the education system are determined by a law passed by the highest legislative body in the country - the National Assembly. The management of a SS is a substructure of the educational system. The general management theory can not ensure the normal functioning of this subsystem without specific methods and organizational and management means accommodated to the object and the subject of management which the managers take into consideration. In research, the role of the Principal is usually defined as a relatively constant, stable and unified internal system of conduct. In order to carry out his/her various professional tasks, the Principal of a SS enters a variety of interactions. It has been proven that the qualities and style of the Principal have a significant influence on the establishment and maintenance of the organizational climate in a school.

Management style is a complex concept. It includes convictions, conduct, words, deeds, authority, position, attitudes, impacts, and interactions. Attitude towards people and attitudes towards work most often are considered as its main variables (1). On this basis, the following behavioral styles stand out:

- Having a strong attitude towards both people and work - the ideal harmonic style;
- Open to the people, with a strong positive attitude towards people, but careless about work - extreme democratic style, liberalism;
- Turned to work, but careless for the problems of the people - ultimate authoritarian style;
- Critical style, average performance concerning attitudes towards work as well as attitudes towards people;

- Disinterested in neither work nor people - the most ineffective style; irresponsible type of manager.

These five management styles are extreme, rarely found pure in managerial practice, but they are within a framework where each manager looks for and rediscovers his/her personal style.

Kurt Lewin introduces three basic styles (2):

1. Autocratic - characterized by centralization of power, single-mindedness, self-resolving solution to questions, maintaining limited contacts with people, thirst to overpower people.

2. Democratic - giving the associates autonomy, their participation in solving important issues; respect for the associate, encouragement of initiative and creativity, openness, goodwill to others.

3. Liberal style (non-interference in private initiatives) – lack of scope and of initiative of the manager, influence by random circumstances, giving way to circumstances, unable to assert his/her position, courtesy, kindness, affection of others.

According to Reddin (Back there, 10) there are four types of management style, a function of two variables – orientation towards social connections and task orientation – connecting, integrating, differentiating and initiating. According to him, the conditions that have the greatest influence on the choice of style and its development include: technology, values, qualities of managers and associates.

The model of behaviour of Farris (15, 13) uses two output dimensions - influence of the group and influence of the manager. They form four characteristics (dimensions) of the management style - delegation, non-interference, dominance, cooperation.

Fiedler (Back there, 17) characterizes management style from three points of view:

- The extent to which subordinates trust the management;
- Degree of structurality of the task;
- Power position of the management.

In order to evaluate the style of management, different approaches are used, such as one of them being the assessment (characteristic) given by the manager of the least favoured associate.

According to Fiedler, the style of the manager is a constant behavioral quality. This suggests either looking for a manager with a style appropriate to the situation or looking for a change of situation so that it better suits the style of the manager. This model is known as the “Alternative Theory”.

In the scientific literature, the management style of the Principal of a SS is of great importance for the effectiveness of school management. A number of studies have shown that school leadership is second only to teaching in the classroom in respect to the impact on student education. The Principal’s knowledge, abilities and competencies are crucial to establishing schools that promote quality teaching and learning by all students. Research has shown that effective school leaders influence pupils’ achievements by influencing other people or organizational elements and through impact on school processes. Leithwood Louis, Anderson and Waltermann (15, 57) highlight three main types of management practices:

1. Encourage people - enable teachers and other personnel to do their jobs effectively, give incentives and intellectual support to improve work, and provide a model of practice and support.

2. Identify the organization’s development direction - formulate common goals, monitor the organization’s functions, and promote effective communication.

3. Premodulate the organization – create productive school culture, change organizational structures that interfere with work, build collaborative processes.

In order to carry out his/her various professional tasks, the Principal of a SS enters a variety of interactions. It has been proven that the personality of the Principal influences significantly the establishment and maintenance of the organizational climate in the school. What do Bulgarian studies aimed at identifying the personal qualities and forms of behaviour characterizing the Principals show? At the centre of his/her professional-personal profile are three tendencies that form its core. These are:

1. Sociability, which is expressed in the need for social contacts, a tendency to trust, responsiveness, benevolence, self-giving.

2. Balance between the pursuit of supremacy and dependence.

3. Behaviour that fully adheres to the socially acceptable.

The positions outlined above are at the core of any management culture and good management style. The management style also determines the role of the manager in a meaningful way. Along with this, the management style is dependent on the management culture. Management culture and management style are also defined as qualities of the organization (i.e. the efficiency of the SS). That is why we can colligate that the contemporary principal should command two basic management styles:

Style oriented towards the interpersonal relationships in the team, the professional and personal interests of the teachers in the school, in order for the director to create an atmosphere of meeting the needs of a high culture of interpersonal and professional relationships.

Style oriented primarily towards tasks, outlining, planning, and evaluating the activity.

The management style of the principal is very important for the effectiveness of school management. In a study on the dominant style characteristic according to the principals' self-assessment, priority is given to the fulfillment of the tasks, the direction of the changes and the solving of the problems of the people. The teachers in the study appreciate the organizing style; engagement in work; dynamic, motivating and unifying style of behaviour the most.

A scientific study of Bulgarian principals and teachers shows that the most valued qualities of the principal are (104):

- Ethics;
- Fairness;
- Professionalism;
- Readiness to take risks;
- Intelligence.

According to K. Madzhirova, the current profile of the school principal covers competences in six important areas (88):

- Administrative;
- Pedagogical;
- Socio-psychological;
- Legal;
- Economic;
- Interaction with the social environment.

Each one requires specific competencies, qualities, abilities and skills. The various situations that the Principal of the SS manages daily in the school management make his/her work extremely varied and dynamic. This is why we can conclude that managerial impact is ultimately a synthetic concept. It includes the management culture, style, the complex of personal qualities, the specificity of the system in which it operates, its organizational structure, the specificity of the impact of the regulatory mechanisms, etc. There are also a number of important factors influencing the managerial impact - such as the level of the management subject, the level of organization of the internal environment, the degree of uncertainty of the external environment, etc. The optimal version of the managerial impact of the principal in the contemporary dynamic reality is the solution of all issues in the SS in such a way that each decision is linked to the final outcome of the school's activity, which affects both its effectiveness and the satisfaction of the needs of staff. This would achieve a unity between the objectives of the school and the aims of the individuals working in it.

LITERATURE

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