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MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS IN SCHOOLS

Daniela Koceva ¹, Nikola Projkov ²

Associate professor, PhD Faculty of Educational Science, Goce Delcev University, Stip,
R.N. Macedonia daniela.koceva@ugd.edu.mk ¹,
Student, Faculty of Educational Science, Goce Delcev University, Stip,
R.N. Macedonia b_nikola.214338@student.ugd.edu.mk ²,

Abstract. The style of school leadership greatly affects the positive climate and atmosphere between school employees, which in turn affects the efficiency in the implementation of organizational goals and the ways that contribute to their achievement. In this paper we will examine the role of the principal in the management of human resources and school leadership style as a requirement for a work environment in which everyone contributes.

Many management theorists emphasize the human side of the organization (school), the relationships between employees at all levels, how individuals and groups react and act in the organization, the nature of informal ties between employees, etc.

The participative management system, one of the systems established by Likert, contributes to the establishment of a democratic style of school management, which offers the potential to overcome the weaknesses that tend to develop in other systems (primarily authoritative ones).

A democratic school leader ensures that all members of the school community are involved in the decision-making process – but participation will vary, depending on the context. Leadership and responsibility are shared, and frequently there are leaders of subgroups, as well as decentralization of authority. Such school culture, with an open and friendly atmosphere, contributes to teachers and professional associates being more motivated and dedicated, formal and informal communication will develop, and the school will achieve higher academic results.

Key words: participative system, democratic school leader, styles of school leadership.

1. Introduction

The management systems, that is, the styles of the school leadership contribute a lot to the atmosphere and the work of all school employees, teachers and professional associates, involved in the educational work with the students. In this paper we will consider the styles of school leadership and the role of the director in establishing the system, which contributes the most to a positive and friendly atmosphere between school employees (principal, teachers and professional associates), the role of the director in the management of human resources and the style of school management, as a condition for a working environment in which everyone contributes, i.e. a management system that promotes real participation in decision-making and setting the organization's goals, in order to promote a workplace where everyone shares information equally.

1. Likert's management systems

Likert's management systems are management styles developed by Rensis Likert, an American organizational and social psychologist, in the 1960s (Modaff, Butler, DeWine, 2008). He outlined four systems of management to describe the relationship, involvement, and roles of managers and subordinates in industrial/organizational settings. He based the systems on studies of highly productive supervisors and their team members of an American Insurance Company. Later, he and Jane G. Likert revised the systems to apply to educational settings. They initially intended to spell out the roles of principals, students, and

teachers; eventually others such as superintendents, administrators, and parents were included (Hall, 1972). The management systems, established by Likert, include "Exploitative Authoritative (System I), Benevolent Authoritative (System II), Consultative (System III), and Participative (System IV)."

1.1. Exploitative authoritative (I)

In the exploitative authoritative system, leaders have a low concern for people and use methods such as threats and other fear-based methods to obey their orders and carry them out unconditionally. As a result of these methods, employees immediately have excellent performance upon entering the organization. Oftentimes negative feelings are to follow once they settle in (Mousavi, 2011). Communication is entirely downwards and psychological concerns of people are ignored. Lateral interaction or teamwork between subordinates lacks in this system based on managerial interactions (Morris & Pavett, 1992). Employees are expected to exceed their specified work hours, creating negative work environments in organizations. Upper management forces a large work load on employees; however, wages, monetary benefits and work satisfaction do not accompany the work. Workers are often found highly demotivated due to exploitation by management. Management does not trust employees, therefore they are not part of decision-making processes. (Mousavi, 2011).

1.2. Benevolent authoritative (II)

The benevolent authoritative system uses less control over employees than the exploitative authoritative system; however, this system motivates employees through potential punishment and rewards. Lower-level employees are more involved in the decision-making processes, but are still limited by upper management. Employees in this system are involved in policy-making and group problem solving. Major policy decisions are left to those at the top, who have awareness of the problems that occur at both upper and lower levels throughout the organization. This results in mostly downward communication from supervisors to employees. Little upward communication occurs, causing subordinates to be somewhat suspicious of communication coming from the top. The upper management tends to control the way employees can communicate to others and how they make decisions (Morris & Pavett, 1992). This contrast in feelings toward responsibility can result in conflict, which can create negative attitudes within the organization. Subordinates in this system can become hostile towards each other because of the competition that is created between them. Satisfaction among workers is low to moderately-low and productivity is measured at fair to good.

1.3. Consultative system (III)

The consultative system is very closely related to the human-relations theory. Subordinates gain motivation through rewards, occasional punishments, and little involvement in making decisions and setting goals. When compared to the first two systems, employees have more freedom to communicate and to make company decisions. Lower-level employees have the freedom to make specific decisions that will affect their work. Upper-management still has control over policies and general decisions that affect an organization. Managers talk to their subordinates about problems and action plans before they set organizational goals. Communication in this system flows both downward and upward, though upward is more limited. This promotes a more positive effect on employee relationships and allows for more cooperation. As a result, upper-level managers make company decisions with consideration for input from subordinates (Morris & Pavett, 1992). Lower-level employees are seen as consultants to previous decisions and are more willing to accept change because of their involvement in major decisions. Satisfaction in this system improves from benevolent authoritative as does productivity.

1.4. Participative system (IV)

The participative system promotes genuine participation in decision-making and goal setting in order to promote a workplace where all members equally share information. Likert argues that the participative system is the most effective form of management within the systems. This system also coincides with human-resources theory based on the level of lateral interaction between employees and managers. Managers recognize problems that occur when there is little cohesiveness between members of an organization. Free-flowing lateral communication and the use of creativity and skills allows workers to become more involved within the organization (Morris & Pavett, 1992). Organizational goals are accepted universally in this system because all individuals are actively involved in their creation. All employees have a high level of responsibility and accountability for these goals. Managers motivate employees through a system that produces monetary awards, participation in goal setting, and trust from management. Management also encourages employees to get involved outside of their occupational role and create relationships with employees of all levels in the organization (Mousavi 2011).

As Fayol wrote "in order for the staff to be induced to perform his duties with all the devotion and loyalty of which he is capable, he must be treated with respect for his sense of integrity, and the just results of combining respect and equity" (Fayol, 1984: 89)

2. Styles of school leadership

In terms of education, in the context of school leadership, what applies to society, also applies to schools.¹ If democracy is the best way to respond to the challenges facing contemporary society and if we advocate democratic school leadership, it is necessary to consider the alternatives.

“Autocratic leaders tend to make all decisions by themselves. They will argue that this is the most effective style to complete a lot of tasks in a short period of time. That is indeed the strength of autocratic leadership, but its weakness is that the decisions may be opposed or questioned, which in turn increases the likeliness of conflict and the refusal to cooperate. Autocratic leaders underestimate to what extent they depend on others. School rules that are imposed without discussion are disobeyed more frequently, which is counterproductive in dealing with misconduct and bullying. Autocratic leadership often follows the status quo and given conventions, offering little in terms of innovation and development. Academic results are poor in autocratically led schools.

Laissez-faire leadership is characterized by the lack of clearly defined procedures for decision-making and little involvement by the leader in decision-making processes. Time for discussions is not clearly limited, so the efficiency of decision-making and school management is poor. On the other hand, the strength of this type of leadership is a low level of aggression and conflicts in the school community.

Paternalistic leaders act as parental figures by taking care of their subordinates as a parent would, without giving them any responsibility or freedom of choice. In this type of leadership, the leader shows concern and cares for his staff. In return, he expects trust, loyalty, and obedience. Teachers are expected to be totally committed to what the leader believes in and to refrain from making their own choices or working independently. The teachers are expected to remain employed in the same school for a longer time to strengthen loyalty and trust. Paternalistic leadership tends to divide the staff, as the school leader will reward his favorite teachers for their loyalty with special treatment and opportunities like projects, trips, training, etc.

A democratic style of leadership offers the potential to overcome the weaknesses that the other types of leadership tend to develop. A democratic school leader ensures that all members of the school community are involved the decision-making process – but participation will vary, depending on the context. The leader may not always have the last

¹ " Styles of school leadership " available at <https://www.living-democracy.com/principals/leadership/a-democratic-style-of-school-leadership/styles-of-school-leadership/>

word. In some cases, he may confine himself to facilitating an agreement among the staff or the whole school community, or accept a decision he does not support himself.

Leadership and responsibility are shared, and frequently there are leaders of subgroups. The strength of democratic school leadership lies in its potential to produce decisions and solutions that are widely accepted and supported, provided all interests and queries have been taken into account. The school community can develop a democratic school culture with an open and friendly atmosphere. Its members will be more motivated and committed, formal and informal communication will thrive, both involving the school leader and the school community. So, the school will achieve higher academic results” (Krapf, P., Gollob, R., Vallianatos, A., Stysavska, O., EDC/HRE for Principals, Leadership. Zurich University of Teacher Education, Council of Europe, p.4 Styles of school leadership - Living Democracy (living-democracy.com).

3. 5 Effective Leadership Styles in Education

Using effective leadership practices in schools is crucial to providing an appropriate learning environment for students (Mathias, 2023). She notes “There is no ‘best’ leadership style in education — leaders can apply different leadership methods based on needs” Leadership Styles in Education | ThoughtExchange and states that “Leadership styles may vary”. And from instructional to democratic to transformative, not all educational leadership styles are equal.”

Mathias gives some of the most effective styles:

“Instructional leadership focuses on teaching quality. Schools focus on developing teachers to ensure that their students get the best possible learning experience.

Coaching is effective for long-term development. It encourages teachers and students to experiment with new ways to develop their strengths and be more aware of their weaknesses. This increases self-awareness and helps individuals focus on their strengths.

Democratic leadership encourages peers to discuss their problems and collaborate to find a solution. School administrators use it to solve problems, make curriculum decisions, or work out issues with how the school is functioning. Teachers use democratic leadership to foster collaboration, communication, and teamwork in their students — all of which help them succeed in their future lives.

Constructivism allows students (also and teachers in their work) to deepen their understanding of what they’re learning (or working) by interacting with one another and exploring their perspectives on a particular topic or issue. It empowers and builds confidence, encourages sharing ideas, and collaborating to solve problems together. Leadership Styles in Education | ThoughtExchange

When principals give teachers opportunities to explore, discover, and create, teachers develop skills that will help them succeed in their careers, and students in college and beyond.

Transformational leadership is an effective way to teach and run a school. Following this model, educators—deans, principals, professors, and teachers—lead by example. This style focuses on role-modeling, where leaders influence, inspire, and encourage employees to deliver positive change.

A transformational leader will work with teams beyond their immediate self-interests to identify needed change and create a vision to guide it.

Leaders create an innovative culture in the school by inspiring others. As a result, people running the education institute share a sense of purpose and are also given a chance to have their voices heard during the decision-making process”².

²Mathias, S., 2023, 5 Effective Leadership Styles in Education—How to Make Them Work for You

Conclusion

Managers (principals) of schools should recognize problems that arise when there is little cohesion between members of the organization (the school), promote real participation in decision-making and setting the goals of the organization with other members, talk with their subordinates (teachers and professional associates) on problems and action plans, before the organization's goals are set, and promote and require a high level of collaboration.

They should perceive the importance of common values and norms in the promotion of high levels of cooperation and cohesiveness, necessary for building a culture, in an open and friendly atmosphere, where employees (teachers and professional associates) are more motivated and dedicated, formal and informal communication will develop, and, analogously, in that way, achieve higher results. Because of such an atmosphere between the employees themselves, the teachers will transfer it to the classroom, in their daily work with the students, as socially integrated individuals, will contribute to their growth and development and the development of society as a whole. In fact, that is ultimate school's goal.

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