
ROLE OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The globalization of the economy and of higher education as one industry within it; increasing international competition and rapid technological change are transforming the context in which Universities operate locally, nationally and globally. These three intersecting trends are impacting upon the nature of work and working conditions within them. Universities face the double challenge of responding to these challenges both as organizations per se and also in terms of the implications. In response to this rapidly changing context much faster decision making and the ability to synthesize, evaluate & integrate information at a similar pace is required. Educational organizations need to foster what is referred to as “relational capital” as the foundation for network alliances, partnership, joint ventures and integration of ideas and efforts which will be pivotal for future organizational development and success. The new and emergent communication technology demands communication skills of a particular and new kind and also protean managers flexible and adaptable enough to thrive in constantly changing environment. The new leadership skills demanded by new and global economy include the ability to transform organizational culture by a willingness to question the status quo. New leadership skills are demanded by the new & global economy which includes the ability to transform organizational cultures and see issues from a variety of viewpoints. Leaders require conceptual skills which include understanding the complexities of the other cultures, values and priorities, the ability to manage through dialogue and interpersonal negotiation rather than through power and control and the capacity to recognize that learning is an on-going process involving the need to continuously rethink what we are doing and how we are doing it.. Therefore, in this scenario, becoming a strategic leader is a daunting challenge.

Key words: *Leadership, Organizational development, EALP (Extension Administrative Leadership Program), Higher Education, Relational Capital, Competence.*

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INTRODUCTION

The desire to understand, define, and explain the essence of leadership has interested researchers and scholars for most of the twentieth century. In their efforts to find an "accurate and precise" definition of leadership, thousands of studies have been published in the last several decades alone. Most of these explanations have focused on a single person and his or her personal qualities and skills. Social scientists have tried to identify what abilities, traits, behaviors, sources of power or aspects of the situation determine how effective a leader will be able to influence others.

The birth and evolution of the idea of "leadership" focuses on a much more complex concept that reaches beyond the single leader. In fact, contemporary definitions most often reject the idea that leadership revolves around the leader's ability, behaviors, styles or charisma. Today, scholars discuss the basic nature of leadership in terms of the "interaction" among the people involved in the process: both leaders and followers. Thus, leadership is not the work of a single person, rather it can be explained and defined as a "collaborative endeavor" among group members. Therefore, the essence of leadership is not the leader, but the relationship

Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes.

This contemporary definition is composed of four basic components, each of which is essential and must be present if a particular relationship is to be called leadership. (1) The relationship is based on influence. This influence is multidirectional, meaning that influence can go any which way (not necessarily top-down), and the influence attempts must not be coercive. Therefore, the relationship is not based on authority, but rather persuasion. (2) Leaders and followers are the people in this relationship. If leadership is defined as a relationship, then both leaders and followers are doing leadership. It does not mean that all players in this relationship are equal, but does say all active players practice influence. Typically there is more than one follower and more than one leader in this arrangement. (3) Leaders and followers intend real changes. Intend means that the leaders and followers promote and purposefully seek changes. Real means that the changes intended by the leaders and followers must be substantial. (4) The changes the leaders and followers intend reflect their mutual purposes. The key is that the desired changes must not only reflect the wishes of the leader but also the desires of the followers.

OBJECTIVES

The study is concerned with the following :

- 1) To define leadership objectives in the context of education.
- 2) To study the challenges of leadership.
- 3) To study the developmental models of leadership (EALP) with a vision of higher education.
- 4) To make suggestions for improving Leadership Development Programs.

LEADERSHIP

Leadership is not what leaders do. Rather, leadership is what leaders and followers do together for the collective good. In today's society, leaders operate in a shared-powered environment with followers. No longer does a single leader have all the answers and the power to make substantial changes. Instead, today we live in world where many people participate in leadership, some as leaders and others as followers. Only when we all work together can we bring about successful changes for our mutual purposes.

An increasing number of institutions of higher learning are offering programs that prepare students for leadership. Nearly 600 colleges and universities now provide their students with leadership training opportunities ranging from short one and two hour workshops to full bachelor and master degree options. Although leadership educators see this growth as encouraging, research from the Center for Creative Leadership (1996) tells us that many of these programs are teaching the "old way" of leadership. While there are a few exceptions, many of the leadership development programs have failed to change their educational approach to reflect the new view of leadership and organizational behavior. Leadership development programs that are synonymous with the development of leaders are no longer appropriate. We know that today leaders are not the only people involved in the leadership process. Therefore, our developmental models (including both content and pedagogy) must accommodate the changing post-industrial paradigm of leadership. This means that leader development is no longer sufficient for the 21st century. If leadership is what leaders and followers do together, then it is logical that our educational environments reflect this collaborative perspective.

Challenges of Leadership

The leader has to visualize not just how a new programme or practice would work, but how whole new sets of expectations, relationships, accountability structures etc. would fit together

into a coherent whole. The difference in teachers' and administrators' perspective is a big challenge. Sometimes the involvement of critical individuals also presents challenge. Another major challenge may be changes in the economical, social, political and technological arenas that impact an institution.

Some key challenges for leaders are :-

- To establish a standard of excellence;
- Bridging the present to the future;
- Commitment & energizing people.
- Creating meaningful work.
- A complete system vision & its understanding.

Vision of Higher Education

The vision of higher education developed collaboratively or initiated by the leader and agreed by the followers, becomes the common ground for a shared vision. . A shared vision compels all involved in the process to realize the vision. Vision comes alive only when it is shared. Visionary educational leaders provide purpose, meaning and significance to the work of institute and enable them to motivate and empower the staff to contribute to the realization of vision. It is clear that vision is more than an image of the future. The strategic leadership environment in the educational institutions challenges even the best leaders. This calls for individual with unique performance ability who can navigate the volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity inherent in the nature of important decisions taken in the process.

Some leadership skills are essential for this transformation, for example:

1. Vision makes leaders proactive in the strategic environment rather than reactive.
2. Leader should be transformational in order to inspire people towards common goals and shared values.
3. Leader must be able to anticipate change, lead change and foster a mindset of change.
4. Vision is a hunger to see improvement.

Today Educators are being challenged to meet the present needs of students as well as prepare the students for the 21st century. They must meet this challenge first with a vision, a picture of the future for which students, teachers, administrators, parents & community members are willing to work.

Some of the specific questions that educators/visionary leaders should consider are :-

- 1) What are possible future trends of students' needs.
- 2) What are possible future trends of parents' needs or requirements that will impact the students.
- 3) What are possible future expectations or requirements of the students from employers or post-secondary Institutions.
- 4) What possible changes in social, economic, political or technical areas will impact our organizations.

Visionary leaders should collaboratively manage and develop suitable plan of action for bringing about any change in higher education. Some of the key points are :

- 1) The most important is writing a clear and concise vision statement.
- 2) All the relevant information should be gathered and discussed.
- 3) Forecasts the future development and trends that will impact higher education.
- 4) Clarify the nature and purpose of the objective.
- 5) Involve critical and dynamic individuals.
- 6) Explore the possibilities.
- 7) Put the plan of action in writing.

Leadership Development Programme

Higher education faces an unprecedented period of accelerating change that is driven by shifts in public attitudes, reductions in the level of public support, questions regarding higher education's priorities, and demands for greater accountability. To respond effectively to the complex educational, social, political and economic concerns of society, higher education must develop a cadre of academic leaders who Can engage the institution and its faculty/staff in change and transformation processes. One way to develop this potential is to create institutional leadership development opportunities in which faculty/staff can develop multi-dimensional perspectives, competence to meet the challenges of a constantly changing environment, the ability to think strategically and act collaboratively.

Extension Administrative Leadership Program (EALP), is a model leadership development program for faculty and staff in a variety of university extension settings including: Broadcasting and Media Innovations; Business and Manufacturing Education; Continuing Education; and,

Cooperative Extension. This model integrates theoretical and applied knowledge about leadership into the curriculum along with the development of specific leadership competencies and abilities

In 1992, the original design of EALP was based on developing knowledge about the institution and the context in which it operates, as well as certain technical and managerial skills (e.g., hiring, budgeting, etc.). Gradually however, a paradigmatic shift occurred, and the program began to emphasize the development of specific leadership competencies in the context of the unique political, social, and economic realities of higher education today. Thus, EALP was redesigned to develop the knowledge, abilities and attitudes essential for effective leadership performance in higher education settings.

To effectively integrate the development of leadership skills, it is essential to identify those competencies necessary for effective leadership in higher education. The term ‘competence’ implies an ability or characteristic of the person that can be transferred to and demonstrated in a variety of situations. Competence is a generic knowledge, skill, trait, or motive of a person that is causally related to effective behavior, and must be manifested in a variety of ways in a number of situations. The term ‘causally related’ means that there is evidence which indicates or suggests that possession of the characteristic (e.g., knowledge, skill, trait, or motive) precedes and leads to effective performance. That is to say, competence precedes effective performance.

Higher Education Leadership Competencies and Related Abilities

The higher education leadership competencies and the related abilities that are required by the leaders today are Development of a Core Set of Values and Vision.

- The ability to clearly identify the values and beliefs upon which one’s actions are based
- The ability and willingness to act on one’s beliefs
- The ability to develop a clear direction for the future and strategies for bringing about necessary changes

Effective Communication

a. Listening

- The ability to identify the unspoken problem that lies beneath the surface of verbal communication.
- The ability to consider multiple perspectives

b. Speaking and Writing

- The ability to use language which is clear, direct, honest, and respectful
- The ability to depersonalize the problem/situation to state it in objective terms
- The ability and willingness to provide an explanation for decisions made
- The ability to utilize appropriate metaphors and analogies
- The ability to communicate in multiple forums (memos, newsletters, interpersonal interactions, formal meetings)

Reflection and Analysis

- The ability to step back, observe the situation, identify the multiplicity of issues, and interpret the underlying dynamics
- The ability to assimilate and accommodate new information

Creating a Positive Climate

- The ability to interact comfortably with a diverse variety of people, including gender, age, ethnicity, etc.
- The ability to establish a high-trust environment
- The ability to develop a sense of empathy
- The ability to motivate and inspire others

Facilitation and Collaboration

- The ability to share responsibility and authority with others
- The ability to identify potential relevant common interests
- The ability to create opportunities for people to form partnerships through shared knowledge.
- The ability to form teams that understand the vision and strategies

Problem Solving and Risk Taking

- The ability to examine situations from a variety of perspective
- The ability to encourage people to both generate and share new ideas, and to explore potential solutions and their consequences
- The ability to involve people in making critical decisions
- The ability to demonstrate a willingness to propose direction and action

Perseverance

- The ability to carry on despite ambiguity, frustration and chaos
- The ability to continue steadily on course in spite of barriers.

These seven competencies and related abilities form a competence model for effective leadership in higher education. Leadership programs should integrate the following components:

1. Knowledge about the structure and culture of the organization; a study of different theories of leadership;
2. The opportunity for participants to develop and demonstrate key leadership competencies;
3. The development of a personal philosophy of leadership which requires individuals to reflect on their core values, assumptions, and beliefs regarding leadership;
4. A variety of active learning experiences including small group discussions and presentations, interviews, simulations, role playing, in-basket exercises, and nominal group activities.

It is the responsibility of the leaders not only to visualize a new change but also create a complete system with concrete understanding and knowledge.

Recommendations for those who are responsible for the operations of collegiate leadership development programs.

(1) Stop concentrating on the leader. Leadership programs that only attempt to produce leader qualities among students are less useful. Programs must reach well beyond emphasizing leader traits, behaviors, and personal characteristics.

(2) Prepare students to use influence within non-coersive relationships. Program activities should train students to use persuasive and rational strategies of influence. Students should be encouraged to work in leadership relationships that are based on mutual influence and that seek mutually beneficial outcomes.

(3) Help students understand the nature of transformational change. Leadership development programs should illustrate the key role organizational change plays in the post-industrial view of leadership. As change agents, our graduates should learn to challenge the status quo, create new visions, and sustain the movement.

(4) Reconstruct students' basic view toward a collaboration orientation. Encourage students to challenge the basic assumptions about life that are based on self-interest and competition. Leadership in the new millennium will be much more collaborative, and therefore, our leadership program should encourage consensus, cooperation, and collaboration rather than competition and conflict.

CONCLUSION

If our goal is to prepare young people for leadership in the next century, it is imperative that our leadership development programs reflect this new paradigm. Our students will need the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful in the post-industrial view of the 21st century, not the leadership skills that served the 20th century. Thus, our programs should emphasize leadership development learning activities that truly foster the collaborative spirit.

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