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The Most Essential Leadership Quality in the 21st Century for Higher Educators to be effective

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Lead 701 Foundations of Leadership

Abstract

There has been major controversy on how important and effective leadership is among Higher Educators. Yukl (2013) determined the influence of task-oriented and relations-oriented behavior on indicators of leadership effectiveness such as subordinate satisfaction, subordinate performance, and overall results. The Essential Quality of Leadership in the 21st century is a function of a number of variables including leadership training, culture and environment and quality of the relationship between educators and students and educators and superior administrators'. There is an emerging theme in the discourse of quality/effective leadership in the 21st century which affirms that the performance of the university/college and it's educators is dependent on the essential quality of leadership. This review seeks to focus on the leadership training, the quality of leadership as it relates to interpersonal relationships, and performance of students and staff/faculty in Higher Education.

Keywords: relation-oriented behavior, leadership effectiveness, leadership, leadership development, leadership training. Educator administrator relationship

Statement of Problem

It is a determinant factor that leadership is a key component in college/university performance and graduation of students. Many students select which college to attend based on graduation rate and completion/performance of each student while in the field of study. Performance is based on the leadership. The essential quality of leadership is based on the effectiveness and role the leader of leaders has on it's staff/faculty providing the service to the students. The question at hand is who is really responsible for the performance of students at a college/university level? Are staff/faculty lacking quality leadership training? Is the president of the University the most essential leader and it is his/her relationship that determines how effective the outcome will be? Thompson (2017) in his research states, there are fairly well-defined and emerging perspectives that leadership is a critical factor in the performance of schools. This writer will examine the essential quality of leadership within the 21st century as it relates to leadership training, leadership relationships, and performance in Higher Education.

Role of Leadership

Yukl, (2013) in his textbook , *Leadership in Organizations*, identifies leadership effectiveness is the extent to which the performance of the team or organization is enhanced and the attainment of goals is facilitated. In this writer's review articles of research evaluating performance of students based on the quality of leadership in the 21st century and the relationships leaders have with the students and superior administrators' are being assessed. Yukl (2013) raises questions of does the leader enhance group cohesiveness, member cooperation, member commitment, and member confidence that the group can achieve its objectives? Does

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the leader enhance problem solving and decision making by the group, and help to resolve disagreements and conflicts in a constructive way? (p.9) Each question will help one to better see how effective the leader is in the positioning; as well as the essential quality of the leader.

Concerns of Quality, Leadership training and Relationships in the 21st century are correlating issues that play a major role in the effectiveness within Higher Education.

Thompson(2017) concludes in his findings,

Leaders operating in today's school must also be mindful that he or she is dealing with a new generation of professionals some whom not only come from sociocultural backgrounds that are different from the principal, but more importantly possess a wider and sometimes different set of skills and competencies than the traditional skills and competencies which may have been typical of an earlier generation and about which literature on leadership speaks. The leader/principal in this context must therefore be curious in seeking to find out about the wide range of differing skills that his or her staff members possess and be prepared to facilitate their development in the affairs of the school. (p. 15)

It is evident that leaders in the 21st century are required to navigate an increasingly complex arising field in higher education. Technology and various sociocultural backgrounds plus current issues and new arising Psychological meaning for behavior makes for an advantage in leadership and higher education. Hemsall (2014) notes in this environment, higher education institutions (HEI) can, perhaps should be at the forefront of leading change, and where better to start than by demonstrating exemplary leadership within our walls. (p.383). This leads back to the question at hand of who needs to have the quality training the leader of leaders or the leadership staff that work closely with the students. Next, this writer examined the necessity of leadership training and effectiveness on performance of both students and staff/faculty with the leading changes in the 21st century.

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Hempsall (2014) prompted concern that leadership in HEI was, in the main, not yet demonstrating the level of readiness or capability to effectively respond to the challenges embodied in the transition of the knowledge era (p.384). Lack of knowledge and preparation can impact quality of leadership making it an essential to have in the 21st century. Therefore, making it a necessity for leaders to adhere to training programs that will allow them to not only focus on performance of the students but the changes and awareness of new discoveries such as cultural competency to better build effective relationships with both staff/faculty and students to aid in the effectiveness of performance. Study programs such as Beulah Heights University PhD in Leadership program is a program that combines Educational Leadership and Organizational Psychology are newly developed post graduate programs striving to understand the correlation of cultural competence and leadership.

The need for Transformational leadership and relationship building are concepts to enhance leadership quality and effectiveness. The focus on long term vision and feeling comfortable talking to leadership showed continuous favor in the selected articles. An emphasis on leadership training being relationship focus showed an improvement in performance. Hempsall (2014) concluded in their research, what makes a good leader, a person needs to ‘engage the heart (relationships), the hand (monitoring and doing) and the head (planning) to lead well.’ The predominant view across the interviews was that good relationship management (engaging the heart) is key to good leadership. (p.387). One of the noted challenges to improving the quality of leadership is recognizing barriers that prohibit effectiveness and increased performance in the college/university among students and staff/faculty. Hempsall (2014) noted in reference to today’s leaders they often go with what is explicitly expected of them in preference to going down the more difficult route of developing the relationships and building the

commitment to facilitate lasting change and transform both the organization and culture. (p.388).

This is imperative for leading change in the 21st century.

Effective results with Quality Leadership

Having quality leadership is a critical component for effective leaders, student achievement and strong performance from both the students and staff/faculty. Anderson (2017) offers that educational leaders may benefit from training and development in transformational leadership styles proven to enhance performance in business organizations and educational settings. (p.3). The most essential leadership quality within the 21st century identified the strength of having a transformational leader. Anderson (2017) defines, Transformational leadership is characterized by a leader who works with subordinates to identify needed change, create a vision to guide the change through inspiration, and execute the change in unison with committed members of a group. (p.1). Having the transformational leader that is culturally competent whose focus is on strengthening the relationship and creating change leads to a high performing staff/faculty and student achievement.

One scholar identified school as a “business and school as a social organization.” Focus has left the improvement of character, relationship with student/staff to concerns with testing scores, hiring teachers, and school rating. In order to improve the quality of schools and leadership, Anderson (2017) suggests that implementing transformational leadership positively influences schools’ leadership’s ability to facilitate change in school restructuring initiatives, and is best suited for coping with demands of the schools in twenty-first century. (p.4).

Transformational leadership also will aid in individualized support for other leaders allowing for

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a genuine concern for leaders personal needs. This will lead to leaders having a confidence in themselves and student performance. Shifting the focus off of school ratings, and need for hiring and onto the overall vision of the person and their needs in order to meet that vision.

Conclusion

Changing employee's ways of thinking and doing things is centered in the transformational establishment of a "shared vision" and being the core of the principal's role as transformational leaders. (Anderson, 2017, pg.6). Ensuring leadership is open to the changing world will aid in the quality of the leadership. From technology training to cultural competency conferences, it is a necessity with the growing 21st century. Scandura and Mourino (2017) encourages leadership development to constantly be something leaders thrive to do due to, being a key to understanding how to relate to this growing demographic segment. (pg.4). With a transformational leadership approach and leadership development schools can be effective. In, addition, the increasingly important need of organizations and its leadership development will continue to be a strategic need and imperative for organizations. (p.5). Lastly, the author suggest the connection between the individual and the organization is key. Scandura and et.al (2017) says High Quality Connections reflect positive scholarship because they explain how and why leaders may influence the well-being, positive work attitudes, and the ability of followers to thrive. (p.6). The offered combination provides a framework for developing a new paradigm for quality leadership in the 21st century.

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