

An Analysis of the Factors that Affect the Effective Implementation of Educational Leadership Practices at the Northern Border University in Saudi Arabia

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ABSTRACT Educational leadership styles are effective in the education sector as they enhance student learning. The main aim of this study is to therefore analyse the factors that affect the effective implementation of educational leadership practices at the Northern Border University. In accordance with the aims of the research, various objectives have been developed to analyse the importance of educational leadership practices in higher education, and to identify the educational leadership style that is followed at the Northern Border University in Saudi Arabia. Another objective is to analyse the factors that affect the effective implementation of educational leadership practices at the Northern Border University. In order to conduct this research, data is gathered using the survey questionnaire method, from 80 Deans, Vice Deans, and Head of Departments of the university. From the analysis, it was observed that the vision and goals of the university are not clear, and the performance of the non-academic staff members measures as 'satisfactory'.

INTRODUCTION

Papa and Saiti (2017) state that the effective implementation of educational leadership practices is essential, as leadership practices help teaching staff to become more involved in the educational sector, and enhance the students' learning experience. It is found that, in the current scenario, schools and other educational organisations are competing in order to attract higher numbers of students to their organisation, which in turn forces the student to face cultural issues (Nikolaros 2015). Therefore, it can be said that in order to resolve such issues of students, effective leaders are required.

As per Shinsky and Stevens (2011), there are various factors that affect the effective implementation of educational leadership styles in the higher education sector. It is found that the teachers of the 21st century need to be trained as per their new requirements, as well as the changing technology, in order to implement educational leadership styles in the education sector (Shinsky and Stevens 2011). The education system needs to train teachers as per the developing technologies, and provide them with courses to attend in order to learn the technology effectively. The introduction of these technological

aspects can help teaching staff in providing better learning to the teachers, which will eventually affect the performance of the education sector in a positive manner. The education sector must provide training to teaching staff so that they can make better use of these technologies and provide improved learning (Sirisooksip et al. 2015).

In the view of Waldron and Mcleskey (2010), one of the factors that affect the effective implementation of educational leadership styles in the higher education sector is not using a collaborative cultural environment in the schools. It is important that schools have a collaborative cultural environment and comprehensive school reforms to improve educational practices (Waldron and Mcleskey 2010; CIE 2015). A team should be developed in schools for the proper monitoring of the performance of teaching staff, and its impact on student learning. The team would help to improve the performance of students by means of conducting activities in the school that are beneficial to the students. Moreover, the team should focus on the students that want to achieve success in their academic career. With the help of a collaborative cultural environment, schools can motivate collaborative culture that will be useful in the future (Waldron and Mcleskey 2010).

Furthermore, as per the views of Fitzgerald et al. (2012), employee engagement practices should be involved as they act as a factor that affects the effective implementation of educational leadership styles in the higher education sector. With the help of employee engagement, the teaching staff feel as though they are part of the organisation, which will keep them motivated. It is the duty of the leaders to motivate the teaching staff of the organisation in order to improve student learning, which affects the overall performance of the school (Fitzgerald et al. 2012). The engagement of students is required in the organisation in order for them to become responsible citizens in the 21st century. Therefore, the education sector must focus on both the teaching staff and students in order to engage them in the organisation, and consider their views on a regular basis for the improvement of the system (Fitzgerald et al. 2012).

In this essence, the primary aim of this research study is to analyse the factors that affect the effective implementation of educational leadership practices at the Northern Border University. The development of the research aim is essential as it helps the researcher to conduct the study correct, and to successfully draw a conclusion.

Objectives

The research aims and objectives have been developed for conducting the research in the correct manner, and to help with future studies. In this study, the objectives have been developed in alignment with the research aims in order for the researcher to accomplish these aims. The initial objective of this study is to analyse the importance of educational leadership practices in higher education. Secondly, the researcher will identify the educational leadership style that is followed at the Northern Border University in Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, the research will focus on analysing factors that affect the effective implementation of educational leadership practices at the Northern Border University.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology section helps the researcher to gain knowledge about the research topic, and answers the question of the research study. The framework of research methodology

helps to provide the correct means of researching the study, and helps to address the main problem of the research in a logical manner (Kuada 2012; Levers 2013).

In this research study, the quantitative method of research is used in order to collect the data regarding the research topic. The quantitative method is used in a research study where statistical data is required for data analysis. In this study, primary data collection is used under the quantitative method in order to gain a conclusion. The primary method for data collection is the surveyed questionnaire method (Wetcher-Hendricks 2011). The survey was conducted with the Deans, Vice Deans and Heads of Departments at the Northern Border University, with the sample size being 107, out of which 80 respondents participated in the survey questionnaire method. The data was collected through the survey questionnaire method, and the survey was distributed to the participants through email. It took 25 days to collect the data from the respondents, from the 7th November 2016 to 6th December 2016. Closed-ended questions were used for the survey questionnaire.

RESULTS

In the data analysis, 80 participants responded to the survey questionnaire that was distributed to them. The participants were Deans, Vice Deans and Heads of Departments of the Northern Border University. It was observed that out of the total participants, fifty-six percent were male and the remaining forty-four percent were female, and it can therefore be stated that the majority of the participants were male. The participants were asked about their years of experience, and it was analysed that nineteen percent of the respondents had 0-5 years of working experience. Furthermore, twenty-seven percent had 5-10 years of experience, thirty-five percent had 10-15 years of experience, and the remaining nineteen percent of the respondents had more than 15 years of experience. It can therefore be said that the majority of the respondents who participated in the research had more than 5 years of experience.

The respondents were asked if educational leadership was effective in the educational sector. It was observed that sixty-two percent of the respondents 'strongly agreed' that leadership styles are effective in the education sector.

Another nineteen percent of the respondents 'agreed' that leadership styles are effective in the education sector, six percent of the respondents were 'neutral' on the question, eight percent 'disagreed' about the fact that leadership styles are effective, and five percent of the respondents 'strongly disagreed' that leadership is effective in the education sector. It was observed that ninety percent of the participants 'agreed' that leadership practices used in the education sector are useful in effective communication between the staff members of the organisation. Only ten percent of the total respondents 'disagreed' that leadership styles can help in effective communication between the staff members. Therefore, it can be said from the analysis that effective leadership is required in the educational sector, as it can also help to enhance communication between staff members.

It was analysed through the survey that only twelve percent of the respondents 'agree' that language acts as a barrier at the Northern Border University, and another thirteen percent 'agreed' that language is a barrier at the Northern Border University. Another three percent of the respondents were neutral on the question, fifty-six percent clearly disagreed that language is a barrier at the Northern Border University and a remaining sixteen percent strongly disagreed that language is a barrier at the Northern Border University. Therefore, it can be said that language is not a barrier that is faced by the Northern Border University staff members while communicating. As per nineteen percent of the respondents', an authoritative educational leadership style is followed at the Northern Border University, another nineteen percent said that an affiliative leadership style is followed, and twelve percent said that a visionary leadership style is followed. Further, as per twenty-five percent of the respondents, a coaching leadership style is followed, and another twenty-five percent replied that a democratic leadership style is followed. Therefore, it can be said that democratic and coaching leadership styles are mainly followed at the Northern Border University.

In the survey, it was observed that the vision and goals of the Northern Border University are not clearly defined to the staff members of the organisation, as thirty-eight percent of the respondents were 'against' the fact, and another six percent are 'strongly against' the fact. Out of the total participants, twenty-five percent were

'neutral' on the question, six percent 'strongly agreed' with the question, and twenty-five percent agreed to the fact that goals and visions are clear to the staff members. It can be observed that the goals and visions of the university are not clear to the majority of the staff members. According to seventy-five percent of the participants, it was found that unclear goals and visions of the university can lead to the decrease of the performance of the university. Therefore, it can be said that the Northern Border University needs to clearly specify their goals and vision to all staff members.

It was analysed that, according to the respondents, the performance of the academic staff members is good, and the performance of the non-academic members is 'satisfactory'. Further, the respondents were asked about the infrastructure of the university, and it was observed that, as per eighty-five percent of the respondents, the infrastructure of the university is as per the requirements of the teaching staff and only fifteen percent 'disagreed' that the infrastructure is not as per the requirement. Out of the total respondents, sixty-three percent said that the leadership system at the Northern Border University is not centralised, with thirty-seven percent of the respondents feeling that, the leadership system is centralised. Therefore, it is felt that the leadership system of the university is not centralised.

DISCUSSION

In the data analysis, it was observed that the majority of the respondents were male, and had 10 to 15 years of working experience. It was analysed that leadership styles are required in the education sector as they provide an effective way in which to manage the educational practices. It was further analysed that the leadership styles that are followed in the education sector provide an effective way to enhance communication between the staff members of the organisation. In accordance with effective communication, as an important part of the education sector, the respondents were asked if language acts as a barrier at the Northern Border University, and it was analysed that language is not a barrier that is faced by the Northern Border University in their educational practices followed.

Furthermore, the respondents were asked about the leadership style that is followed at the

Northern Border University, and it was observed that there are two main leadership styles that are followed, which are coaching educational leadership and democratic education leadership. It was analysed that the vision and goals of the university are not clearly defined to the majority of staff members. It can be said that not defining the visions and goals clearly can decrease performance of the organisation, as the respondents were further questioned about decrease in performance due to the unclear goals and visions of the university. Therefore, it can be considered as one of the factors affects the effective implementation of educational leadership practices at the Northern Border University. It is found that educational leadership practices are essential in the educational sector, because they can help to resolve the issues of students, which is required to enhance their performance in school (Papa and Saiti 2017).

The respondents were asked about the performance of academic and non-academic staff members at the Northern Border University, and it was observed that the performance of academic staff members is good, and the performance of non-academic staff members is satisfactory. Therefore, this can be considered as another factor that affects the effective implementation of educational leadership practices at the Northern Border University. In the literature review, it was identified that training, according to the latest technology, is important for improving the learning of the students. The introduction of these technological aspects can help teaching staff in providing better learning to the teachers who will eventually affect the performance of the education sector in a positive manner (Shinsky and Stevens 2011; Ahmed 2016).

Not using a collaborative cultural environment in schools is a factor that has been identified in the literature review. It is important that the schools have a collaborative cultural environment and comprehensive school reforms in respect of improving the educational practices, which can help teaching staff to make a difference by enhancing the learning of the students (Tomlinson and Murphy 2015). Therefore, a team should be developed in schools for proper monitoring, which can be conducted regarding the performance of the teaching staff and its impact on student learning (Black 2015). Moreover, the respondents were asked about the infrastructure of the university, and it was identified that the infrastructure of the university is as per the requirement of the teaching staff. The respon-

dents were lastly asked about the centralised leadership system at the Northern Border University, and it was analysed that the leadership system of the university is not centralised. In the literature review, it was identified that the lack of employee engagement practices in the education sector is a factor affecting the effective implementation of educational leadership styles in the higher education sector. Also, that for effective implementation it is essential that proper monitoring and supervision is carried out in the educational sector (Johnson 2016; Tomal 2015).

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that educational leadership practices are essential in the education sector. Therefore, an analysis should be completed in order to identify the factors that affect the effective implementation of educational leadership practices at the Northern Border University, which is the aim of this research study. In accordance with the primary aim of the research study, objectives are developed, which identify the importance of educational leadership styles in the education sector. Furthermore, the research will identify the educational leadership style that is followed at the Northern Border University. Another objective is to analyse the factors that affect the effective implementation of educational leadership practices in Northern Border University.

In the analysis, it was observed that the majority of participants were male, and also the majority of the participants were experienced. Educational leadership styles are essential in the education sector to effectively manage educational practices. It was further analysed that the leadership styles that are followed in the education sector provide an effective way to enhance communication between the staff members of the organisation. It was seen that language does not act as a barrier at the Northern Border University. The leadership styles that are followed at the Northern Border University are: coaching educational leadership and democratic education leadership. Moreover, it was seen that the vision and goals of the university are not clearly defined to the majority of staff members. Therefore, it can be said that not defining the visions and goals clearly can decrease the performance of the organisation; that is the Northern Border University in Saudi Arabia.

Further, in the analysis of the performance of academic and non-academic staff members at

the Northern Border University, it was seen that the performance of academic staff members is good, and the performance of non-academic staff members is satisfactory. The infrastructure of the university is as per the teaching staff which helps them to provide a better and improved way of learning to the students. Furthermore, it was analysed that the leadership system of the university is not centralised, as democratic and coaching leadership styles are followed by the University. In the literature, it was seen that the educational sector must provide a collaborative cultural environment in order to improve the teaching practices in schools. The education sector must provide training related to the latest technology in order to improve the learning practices in schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to improve student learning at the Northern Border University, certain recommendations are given that can be used by the university. One of the recommendation is that the vision and goals of the university should be clearly defined by the university to their staff members. The visions and goals of an organisation help in understanding the long-term goals that motivate employees in working according to the goals. These goals and vision can only be achieved if they are clearly and correctly understood by the employees. Therefore, there is a need for the organisation to clearly lay out and communicate the vision and goals of the organisation to their employees in order to improve their performance. Organisations should also provide training to their employees when they join in order to enable them to fully understand the long-term objectives. Thus, it can be said that the Northern Border University should clearly mention the goals and vision of the university to all staff members in order to improve overall performance.

Another recommendation is that the organisations should regularly monitor the performance of their academic and non-academic staff members, as this impacts the overall performance of the organisation in the education sector. Employee performance can be improved by motivating them to work hard and improve student learning. Employees can be motivated by organisations providing them with incentives, and engaging them in the organisational decisions. Pro-

viding incentives is an effective method to motivate employees, as incentives can be provided in a financial form as well as in a non-financial form. Training is another method that can be used by organisations in order to motivate employees and engage them in the organisation.

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