

Institute for Christian Teaching
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**LEADERSHIP STYLE AND LEARNER OUTCOME
IN ADVENTIST SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

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INTRODUCTION

The current search for excellence in education has ignited much pupil interest as well as parental concern and put in motion a revolution to improve schooling. Two critical factors supported by practically all major educational research on school excellence are the instructional leadership of the principal and an on-going school based staff development that will lead to desired student outcomes.

To become a productive instructional leader the Adventist principal must translate the wealth of research on school excellence into an on-going school based staff development program that will help teachers deliver classroom instruction that increases student academic achievement, create social balance, and foster moral and spiritual fortitude. White (1948) considered this type of education as the harmonious development of the total person, body, mind, and soul, an experience that testifies to the active integration of faith and leaning. In order to make this dream a reality, the instructional ability of the teacher must be brought into focus.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to show, through the use of relevant and appropriate literature, that the principal's leadership style in Adventist Secondary Schools affect learner outcomes.

1.2 Scope

This paper intends to explore various leadership styles with the aim of selecting the one most appropriate for the Christian mind. The effect of leadership style on teacher motivation and performance will be explored. Finally, the paper will examine the effect the teacher's instructional procedures are most likely to have on the students as a result of the principal's leadership style.

2. LEADERSHIP

In any enterprise business, educational institution, hospital, political organization, or even family there is a need for a dynamic leader to emerge. This leader is expected to give quality leadership. Some persons who have been aroused by ideas can use these ideas practically to others resulting in inspiring others to follow. This will either prove to be of great benefit or most detrimental to humanity. Lall and Lall (1988) states:

"True leadership must lead, not dominate. It must inspire and encourage, not force and bully. True leadership must arouse in others an emergent leadership."

White (1962) concludes:

"No one man should feel that he must do the whole work. However experienced or qualified he may be, there is need of other talents to unite with his."

What then is leadership?

2.1 Defining Leadership

The following are the views of different authors on leadership:

Dubin (1952) says

"Leadership is the exercise of authority and the making of decision."

Hemphill (1954) saw leadership as

"The initiation of acts that result in a constant pattern of group interaction directed toward the solution of mutual problems."

According to Stogdill (1948)

"Leadership is the process of influencing group activities toward goal setting and achievement."

Weber (1961) understands leadership to be

"A moral function best known by the person it enriches and not necessarily by the smoothness of operation or the number of persons it captivates."

Pigors (1935) saw leadership as

"the process of mutual stimulation which controls human energy in the pursuit of common cause."

Hemphill (1949) concludes,

"Leadership is the behavior of an individual who is involved in directing group activities."

For the purposes of this paper Hemphill's (1994) definition of leadership has been chosen as the simplest and most appropriate. In this one sentence he summed up the basic definition and dynamics of all leadership--the directing of group activities.

The implication of leadership suggests that there exists a dichotomy between the leader as superordinate and the follower as subordinate as far as roles and functions are concerned. However, regardless of the obvious, the effective leader must offer dynamic leadership to facilitate the instructional process.

It is undoubtedly clear that different types of situations call for different types of behaviors. There is no guarantee that any one leadership behavior will always be effective. But it should be understood that any leadership behavior utilized by the leader while administering the affairs of his office is likely to have an effect on organization performance, be it positive or negative.

3. LEADERSHIP STYLES

The study of leadership styles take into consideration what a leader does, says, and how he acts. It has to do with the study of the leader's approach to the use of authority and the resultant participation of others in decision-making. A closer examination of some selected leadership styles reveal the magnitude of the leader's responsibility those with whom he works. Lall and Lall (1979) listed these five styles of leadership with their definitions as follows:

3.1 Autocratic Leadership

The autocratic leader gets vested authority through the office more than from personal attributes. He seeks little group participation in decision-making.

Advantage: The leader generally gets things done.

Disadvantage: The follower becomes dependent on the leader and his personal development is jeopardized.

3. 2 Bureaucratic Leadership

This style f leadership is based on the utilization of a system of files to solve problems. It can be styled as leadership by centralization.

Advantage: There is a ready system on hand to embark upon the solution of problems.

Disadvantage: It is too well organized and tends to depersonalize the organization.

3.3 Charismatic Leadership

Here the leader focuses attention on himself. He appears to possess a certain charisma and followers are converted to and are champions of the cause.

Advantage: The leader gets a lot of individuals to accept his views and defend his cause.

Disadvantage: These leaders tend to lean towards authoritarian or bureaucratic styles of leadership.

3.4 Laissez-Faire Leadership

Complete permissiveness is allowed in this style of leadership. The group lacks direction because the leader does not help in making-decision.

Advantage: Every follower has the opportunity to make decisions.

Disadvantage: This style can easily lead to anarchy if allowed to function for a long period of time.

3.5 Democratic Leadership

In this style of leadership most policies derive from group decision. The leader is involved in policy formation but does not dominate group action.

Advantage: Individual growth is enhancing through participation in the organization's operations.

Disadvantage: The possibility of the sidelining of leadership initiative as a result of majority group decision.

One of the first and most famous studies of leadership style was conducted by Lewin, Lippit, and White (1939) where they placed selected individuals into various groups with different leadership styles. The styles chosen were democratic, in which group decisions were made by majority vote, equal participation was encouraged and criticism and punishment were minimal; autocratic, in which all decisions were made by the leader and participants were required to follow prescribed procedures under strict discipline; and laissez-faire, in which the actual leadership activity of the group leader was kept at a minimum, allowing the participants to work and play essentially without supervision.

The groups with democratic style of leadership were the most satisfied and functional in the most orderly and positive manner. The number and degree of aggressive acts were greatest in the autocratically led groups.

From the review of leadership theories, it is obvious that there is no one best leadership style. Hein and Nicholson (1968) argue that leaders are rarely totally people--or task-oriented; leader, followers, situation all influence leadership effectiveness and therefore an integrating of leadership theories seems appropriate. This type of approach reflects an escapist mentality that will settle for anything as long as he gets out of the present dilemma.

Is there a more excellent style of leadership? There must be another style of leadership that can provide for the upward mobility of followers void of the superordinate-subordinate syndrome; facilitatory leadership with vision. In my own search for a leadership style that makes a difference, I have discovered another model, which has broadened my vision of ministry: servanthood.

4. SERVANT LEADERSHIP

The greatest leader that ever walked this earth was Jesus, the Son of God. Though equal with the Father "... made himself nothing taking the very nature of servant" (Phil 2:7 NIV). Of Himself Jesus declared, "The Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve (Matt 20:28 NIV).

The servant leader cannot serve as lord over those in his charge nor should he exercise undue authority over them. Of servant leaders Jesus said, "...Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant." (Mark 10:43 NIV)

The servant leader must first be a servant before he becomes a leader. Greenleaf (1977) says: "It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first."

The difference between the leader who is servant first and the one who is leader first manifest itself in the care taken to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being

served. The servant leader will always be experimenting with new ideas, new methods, and hypothesize as he seeks to empower the privileged as well as the least privileged in society.

The servant leader recognizes each person as a potential candidate for the kingdom of God and therefore functions in an atmosphere governed by humility. This being so because every decision taken by such a leader should be Christ-centered, goal oriented and Kingdom driven. We are obligated. According to Sire (1990) "We are obligated to God in every possible way were it not for his decision to have made us we would not be. Everything we are is his...from the fact of our creation derives the necessity for humility."

5. CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP

According to Richman and Farmer (1974)

Effective leadership, especially in relatively democratic organizations often depends on much more than formal authority and official power, although these, too, are very important. It also depends on providing an environment and structure that adequately satisfy important human needs, on various personality factors, on mutual respect; trust and confidence, on knowledge, information and wisdom, and more.

This is the viewpoint of a secularist that appears to be so all-inclusive. But something is still lacking. The Christian leader is called upon to add the 'more' alluded to by Richman and Farmer. Pierson (1978) spoke about this 'more' when he said that:

"A Seventh-day Adventist leader must possess certain qualifications not always present in the leadership quotient of the world. The Seventh-day Adventist leader must possess spiritual qualifications as well as managerial expertise and business acumen."

This type of all-inclusive ministry can only be realized through the active integration of faith and learning embraced by the Christian Principal's worldview.

5.1 Marks of the Christian Mind

The Christian mind sees everything about people, their lives and history, all held in the hands of God and everything in the entire universe is held and sustained by His define power and love. It cultivates the eternal perspective as it looks beyond this life to the next. Blamires (1978), in speaking of the Christian mind says,

"It sees this life as an inconclusive experience, preparing us for another, this world as a temporary place of refuge, not our true and final home."

The Christian mind takes into sharp focus the reality of heaven and hell and is very conscious of the universe being a war zone of the forces of good and evil. We are expected by Adventist parents to provide a first class education in the conventional secular sense, while at the same time ensuring a thorough religious training. This calls for the careful integration of faith and learning. On this account Akers (1994) states

"There is no either or choice in Adventist education, academic versus religious training. We must have them both, and at their best."

Subsequently, the Christian principal should not only focus on academic leadership but should take very seriously the redemptive and transforming, responsibility enjoined to him by God. Holmes (1994) emphasized this point when he said,

"In principle Christian perspectives are all redeeming and all transforming, and it is this which gives rise to the idea of integrating faith with learning."

6. DYNAMICS OF PRINCIPAL-TEACHER INTERACTION

The way the principal works with people and sets the stage for human relationships will make the difference in what type of school he directs (Espinosa, 1976). As a staff developer, the principal must possess skills, knowledge, and creativity to set up with the staff high but attainable standards and help them to achieve them (Doggett, 1987).

The Christian principal should be very concerned about the long-term developmental needs of teachers. This can be enhanced by the principal establishing a good working relationship with the teachers and making sure the avenues or effective communication are available and utilized. For the school to be effective both the principal and each teacher must realize they need each other in mutual partnership to plan and implement strategies for the effective leadership of the school at their respective levels.

The principal's leadership roles (responder, manager, and initiator) contribute to teachers' morale either by fostering a rough atmosphere or by supporting and collaborating with them (Hall, 1987). Research on organizational psychology demonstrates the relationship between leadership effectiveness and subordinates' confidence. More recent research has integrated the relationship between the perceived leadership style of principals and the acceptance of teachers in professional matter (Thomas, 1986). These researches have clearly established the fact that the principal's leadership style has an effect on the teacher and subsequently the instructional process.

6.1 Teacher Empowerment

Teachers want and expect good leadership, leadership that will help them examine, evaluate, change and develop roles and purposes (Weber, 1961). Recent research studies in

education indicate that teachers welcome professional suggestions from their supervisors about improving teaching but they rarely receive them (Sullivan and Wircenski, 1988).

The principal as a servant leader will seize every opportunity to improve his teachers in the planning, decision-making and implementation processes of the school. Good leader delegates responsibilities, which makes his load, become much lighter, and definitely easier to administer. With this delegation comes the responsibility and accountability of the teacher.

Leadership should be shared at all cost to reduce animosity. The advantages of shared leadership responsibilities with the teacher promote better instruction and improve student morale (Weber, 1987). This sharing known as teacher empowerment, has its roots in the literature on teacher dissatisfaction, autonomy, professionalization, and shared decision-making. It is quite clear, according to Garland (1987), that personality traits and leader behavior taken together gives leadership style which contributes significantly to the prediction of performance.

The Christian principal must take into consideration his teacher's interest both in and out of school. This will definitely have long reaching effect on the teacher as well as the school.

While the teacher should make deliberate effort to satisfy the needs of his teachers and at the same time delegate certain responsibilities to them, much care needs to be taken by the principal in the exercising of authority with the staff. Research has shown that while many may welcome dialogue and feedback from the principal, others will resent his (Oliva, 1989). Other research has shown that most principals do not have the time to provide detailed feedback to all teachers (Sayforth and Nowinski, 1987), which inhibits and destroys teacher morale. The effective principals will seek to have audience with each teacher to establish confidence in his supervision and evaluation procedures and give reassurance of his intended purposes.

Since the evidence shows there exists a direct relationship between leadership style and teacher behavior and performance, is there any relationship between teacher personality and pupil behavior? If a relationship do exists, what kind of personality should the teacher possess? Here the teacher as servant leader must be brought into focus.

7. TEACHER PERSONALITIES AND PUPIL BEHAVIOR

Teaching carries with it great responsibilities. Flanders (1965) studies the effect of teacher behavior on pupil behavior and achievement and found superiority in many ways for what he called "indirect" behaviors of teachers. Indirect influence means that teachers accept pupil's feelings, praise them, use pupil's ideas, and ask them questions. Direct influence consists of lecturing, giving instructions and criticizing. Others have made follow-ups of Flander's analyses, and lead and reported much of the same result. Pupils of indirect teachers made better achievement scores, produced higher levels of critical thinking, and gave more active manifestations of curiosity than did pupils of direct teachers. Thus student outcome is a direct result of the personality and processes utilized by the teacher during the students schooling.

Grams (1960) found that teachers play a critical role in the degree to which pupils reveal discrimination towards an acceptance of pupil differences in race, religion, color, and behavior. Whatsoever pupils learn, whether it be academic knowledge, social behavior, or personality traits, is a matter of slow accumulation. In many cases, the impact of teacher personality persists for years (Bernard, 1972).

It has been said that child behavior reflects parental handling. This being so because of the quality time spent by the parents in child rearing. When we consider the number of waking hours the child spends with teachers, it can also safely be said that pupil behavior reflects teacher personality.

The fact that the teacher affects the child outcome in one way or the other is quite a sobering one. The Christian teacher therefore has a duty to make sure he guides and teaches each child carefully, in the fear of God. White (1923) understood this clearly when she wrote that teachers must carefully weed out from their course of study all that is unnecessary to allow for more room in the students minds to plant the seeds of righteousness which will bear fruit unto eternal life. Akers (1994) amplified this when he stated

"The most adept, technically skillful integration of the religions perspective into leaning will fall flat without a genuinely caring teacher.

Some teachers exhibit a lot of patience and understanding with their students, which serve to motivate them constructively. Others reject some students on the other hand, which prompts the students to leave school either physically by truancy or dropouts or psychologically by daydreaming or under achievement. According to Akers (1994),

"A cold, exacting attitude towards students can be lethal--completely neutralizing or even reversing the effect of Christian education."

Learning is stimulated by mutuality and cooperation. The Christian teacher must set the pattern for social relationships. In this context, teachers must have confidence in themselves and in those students, which will result in students developing in themselves.

8. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The Christian principal's worldview of man and the redemption process, will see him serving the institution in his charge, not only as a Christian administrator, but also as a Christian manager and Christina facilitator. He will seek to enhance good teacher morale and motivation a he fully understands that his style of leadership will definitely impact whether positively or negatively. Subsequently he will delegate responsibilities to his teachers and have them join him in the decision-making and implementation processes. This type of participarory involvement of the teacher enhances teacher motivation and broadens commitment resulting in the enhancement of instruction. This is leadership by example, the true art of servanthood.

The positive working atmosphere that exists between the principal and the teacher will see the latter attending more earnestly to the needs of the students. This will be so because both principal and teacher now have a common objective: to see the school excel in all the areas of student realize their God-given potentials. Students definitely should benefit from such experiences.

It becomes convincingly clear that, even though the principal may not relate directly with the students in the classroom with regards to instruction, his leadership style, as he related to the teacher, definitely will have an impact on student outcome.

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