**TRENDS AND ISSUES IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP**

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**Trends And Issues In Educational Leadership**

 **Introduction**

Trends in educational leadership (Daniels, et al, 2019) refer to the current and emerging patterns, practices, and developments that are shaping the field of educational leadership. These trends can include changes in educational policies, advancements in technology, shifts in teaching and learning practices, and evolving expectations for school leaders. According to Litz (2011). Principals have a considerable potential in creating learning environments for teachers and students, in enhancing student-learning outcomes through their influence on teachers, and in organisational policy and processes (Hallinger, Bickman, & Davis, 1996; Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Hitt & Tucker, 2016). For decades, leadership in education has been subject to research and resulted in numerous approaches of leadership e.g. instructional leadership, situational leadership, transformational leadership and distributed leadership.

Educational leadership is under control of school or institutional administration. Educational administration has an important role in showing the direction and effectiveness of educational institutions. It involves organizing and coordinating various aspects within the education system starting from developing the policy leading to resource allocation, personnel management and curriculum development. Since education is long term journey, it is important to adapt to societal changes inorder to examine the key trends and issues in educational administration that currently the landscape of education.

**Positive trends in educational leadership**

There are several trends that are emerging in the field of educational administration, enhancing the way schools operate as well as improving students learning.

Technology integration is one of the trends which is being adopted in most schools in order to enhance teaching and learning experience (“technology and infrastructure,” 2013,). These include the use of interactive whiteboard, educational apps and multimedia resources. This is also demonstrated through blended learning as well as conducing of classes through google meet, zoom as well as conferencing by use of technological devices such as phones, computers as well as internet.

The hiring and assignment of teachers is another trend in educational administration. The employers conduct recruitment process of teachers by ensuring highly qualified teachers are placed in the classroom. Highly qualified teachers provide the students with instructions and support by creating a positive learning environment leading to improvement of performance.

According to Arora 2021, A significant issue in educational leadership is teacher retention and professional development(Arora, 2021,) Many schools struggle to retain qualified and experienced teachers due to factors such as high workloads, low salaries, lack of support, and challenging working conditions. Educational leaders must address this issue by developing strategies to attract and retain talented educators, such as offering competitive salaries, providing ongoing professional development opportunities, creating supportive school cultures, and recognizing teachers' contributions.

There is trend of online learning and digital resources. The covid- 19 pandemic has led to adoption of online learning and digital resources in educational administration since there was no face-to-face resources (Kafa, n.d.,). The was to ensure continuations of education process despite the condition. Digital resources such as e-books, educational videos and interactive learning platforms were also available to provide educational materials beyond the physical classroom.

Culturally responsive leadership has also emerged. This is the way of creating a positive relationship between the school administrators and the sorrounding community. They also respect the cultural identifies of individuals within the education community. There is also change in assessment and evaluation practices where new methods of assessing students has been emerged. This is through performance-based assessment and authentic assessment. Formative assessment is also increasing aiming to provide real -time feedback to guide instructions and support students’ growth.

Another emerging trend in education administration is the adoption of collaborative leadership models. Educational leaders are moving away from traditional hierarchical structures towards more collaborative and distributed leadership approaches that involve shared decision making, team-based problem-solving, and collective responsibility. This trend emphasizes building strong relationships and fostering a culture of collaboration among administrators, teachers, staff, students, parents, and community members

There is emphasis on data-driven decision making. Educational leaders are leveraging data analytics and assessment tools to gather and analyse information about student performance, teacher effectiveness, school climate, and other key metrics. By using data to inform their decisions, administrators can identify trends, track progress, and make evidence-based changes to improve student outcomes

**Negative trends in educational leadership**

However, there is some emerging issues in educational administration that have various challenges that affect the delivery of quality education and students’ success. These issues arise from various factors. One of the ongoing challenges is issues of funding and budget constraint (Bush et al., 2019,). Many schools face financial constraints which in turn interfere with provision of quality education and necessary resources for students. Insufficient fundings can result in inadequate staffing outdated infrastructure, limited access to technology and lack of extracurricular opportunities. financial constraints limit the administrators in managing resources effectively and ensuring equitable access to education.

There has been overemphasis on standardized testing as the primary measure of student achievement and school success. This trend can lead to a narrowing of the curriculum, teaching to the test, and increased pressure on students, teachers, and schools to perform well on high-stakes assessments. As a result, there may be a focus on rote memorization and test-taking skills at the expense of critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving, and other important 21st-century skills

Shortage of qualified teachers and high turnover rates presents a pressing issue in educational administration (darling – Hammond et al.,2023) Many areas face the challenges of getting highly qualified teachers due to low salaries and situations of work conditions. High turnover affects the student’s performance and disrupt continuity in schools. Admistrators must avoid these challenges by implementing strategies to recruit and retain talented educators.

**Conclusion**

In summary, the emerging trends in education administration, such as the overemphasis on standardized testing and the privatization and commercialization of education, pose significant challenges to the goal of providing high-quality, equitable education for all students. These trends can have detrimental effects on student learning, teacher morale, and the overall effectiveness of our education system. It is crucial for education administrators, policymakers, and stakeholders to critically examine these trends and their potential impacts on students and schools. By prioritizing a well-rounded, holistic approach to education that values creativity, critical thinking, and equity, we can work towards creating a more inclusive and effective educational system.

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