ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Leadership Styles and Conflict Resolution: An Exploratory Study of School Principals in Delhi

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INTRODUCTION

Leadership of Principal is a critical factor in the success of any programme in school. Knowledge of leadership is a prime pre-requisite if an individual is to fulfill the principal ship role effectively. According to Keith Davis "Leadership is the ability to persuade others to seek defined objectives enthusiastically. It is the human factor, which binds a group together and motivates it towards goals."

Conflict is a fact of life. Human beings are forced with it in all walks of life in politics and business. Principals of schools confront conflicting situation of various kinds like conflict between his/her and head of department and between him/her and subordinate teachers. Conflict is a process in which an effort is purposefully made by one person or unit to block another that results in frustrating the attainment of the other's goals or furthering of his or her interests.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

(1) To ascertain the leadership styles in Government schools adopted by the Principals.

(2) To study self-perception of Principals and compare it with the perception of teachers regarding the leadership styles of Principals.

(3) To determine the levels of conflict among teachers and Principals of Government schools in Delhi.

(4) To investigate the conflict resolution techniques used by the Principals of Government schools in Delhi.

(5) To determine the relationship between leadership styles and conflict resolution techniques adopted by the Principals in Government schools in Delhi

(6) To identify a suitable leadership style for conflict resolution by the Principals in Government schools.

HYPOTHESES

(1) (1 (1) There is no significant difference between the self-perception of Principals and perception of teachers regarding the leadership styles of Principals.

(2) There is no significant relationship between leadership styles and conflict resolution

techniques.

(1) Leadership Description Questionnaire LDQ (self) and LDQ (Others) have been developed by the investigator. The questionnaire measures five different styles viz. Democratic, Autocratic, Laissez-Faire, Practical and Team management. This questionnaire consists 64 items. These items have been divided in two dimensions at first i.e. 'Concern for Production' and 'Concern for People'.

The classification of leadership styles is based on Blakes and Mounton's Managerial grid who set out managerial styles of dimensions of Concern for Production and Concern for People in a framework, i.e. the grid, composed of horizontal and vertical axes. The grid shows the two dimensions are related, and establishes a uniform languages and frame for communication about behavioural issues.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. 1. Teachers feel that Principals 'oftenly' have 'Concern for Production' and 'Concern for People' in the schools. They are task oriented, apply pressure for productive output and maintain performance standards. They also show mutual trust, respect and warmth in the relationship with the teachers.

2. Mostly Principals are applying 'Practical' style of leadership. No one is applying democratic and absolutely autocratic style of leadership. This has been perceived by the teachers.

3. Principals consider themselves task oriented and people oriented, as they have been rated high on both the dimensions of leadership.

4. There is significant difference between the perception of Principals and teachers regarding the 'Concern for Production' and 'Concern for People' dimension of leadership.

5. Teachers feel that intra-personal and inter-personal conflict occur 'oftenly' while intra-group conflict occurs 'occasionally'. Again inter-group and intra organizational conflict occur 'oftenly' in the school.

6. Principals feel that intra-personal, inter-personal and inter-group conflict occur 'oftenly' and intra-group 'occasionally'. But intra-organizational conflict 'always' arises in the school.

7. Teachers feel that the Principals apply 'Accommodation', 'Compromising', 'Competitive' and 'Collaboration' techniques of conflict resolution 'oftenly' while the 'Avoidance' technique is 'occasionally' applied.

8. Principals feel that they are 'always' applying 'Accommodation' and 'Compromising' techniques while Competitive and Collaboration are 'oftenly' applied. 'Avoidance' may be applied when there is scope for it.

9. There is significant relationship between the 'Concern for Production' dimension of leadership and four techniques of conflict resolution viz. Accommodation, Compromising, Competitive and Collaboration while negligible relationship with 'Avoidance' as perceived by the teachers. The same situation is with the 'Concern for People' dimension of leadership.

lO. 10. The 'Practical' or 'Middle-of-the-road' technique of leadership is found as the best technique to resolve conflict as most of the Principals are coming in this category or around it in both the cases i.e. as perceived by the teachers and by the Principals themselves.

IMPLICATION AND USEFULNESS OF STUDY

1. 1. The findings of the study may be used by the Principals to improve their managerial and administrative skills particularly in the context of leadership styles.

    2. Accommodation, Compromising, Competitive and Collaboration techniques of resolving conflict may be applied by the Principals to resolve conflicts.

    3. Avoidance' technique should not be used by the Principals to resolve conflict as avoidance of conflict may lead a Principal to run the risk of reducing the total creativity of his staff.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

1. 1. Studies may be conducted on the critical areas like how to develop leaders, how to help them to become effective, and how to change the style if they are not conducive to the effectiveness of the school.

    2. A study on the functionality and dysfunctionality of leadership styles of Principals may be conducted at school level.

    3. To derive a more comprehensive and systematic frame of organizational behavior, studies are needed along with leadership, organizational clime, conflict related issues, decision-making and group dynamics.

    4. Some more studies may be conducted on conflict resolution, levels of conflict and sources of conflict.

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