

UDC 316.46

4. THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF LEADERSHIP IN CHINESE HIGHER EDUCATION ESTABLISHMENTS

Liu Xingyao¹, Wu Jiasi¹, Master Degree Students

*Belarusian State University¹
Minsk, Republic of Belarus*

Knyazkova V.S. – PhD in Economics

Annotation. The problem of leadership today is addressed in various fields, not only in sports, business or politics. Noticeable interest in leadership has emerged in the field of education. Leadership problems are engaged in philosophy, psychology, sociology, political science and other scientific fields. In management leadership is studied in the aspect of its application as organization management tool. The aim of this paper is to reveal the peculiarities of leadership in Chinese universities as well as specify the policies and measures to strengthen the leadership of Chinese higher education.

Keywords. Leadership, educational leadership, education establishments, Chinese universities, university management.

The connotation and extension of China's educational leadership. Modern changes taking place in society, the state, and the world cover all aspects of life, placing great demands on each person as well as his knowledge, personal traits, and above all, to his professional training. The teacher at school as well as the professor at a university face more acute challenges than ever before. Today's task is not just to constantly replenish and deepen one's knowledge, to master the latest achievements of science and technology, but become a competitive specialist who has not only necessary professional skills, but also having such leadership qualities such as self-confidence, ambition, purposefulness, activity, initiative, etc.

One can define leadership is a type of management interaction between leaders and followers, based on what is most effective for given situation, a combination of various sources of power and direction to encourage people to achieve common goals. A leader is a person who is the most competent of the team in the matter which everyone is focused on.

Owing to increasing globalization and internationalization, the Chinese government issued reforms to improve the quality of Chinese higher education as well as to enhance the international influence of Chinese universities. The main idea of these reforms has been to produce efficient and competitive universities, and thus build China into an international player in the new knowledge-based economy.

In October 2015, the China State Council promulgated the Overall Plan for Coordinating and Promoting the Construction of World-Class Universities and First-Class Disciplines, in which the overall requirements, basic principles, construction and reform tasks, support measures, and organization and implementation of the construction of world-class universities and first-class disciplines (hereinafter referred to as the construction of the "double-class") were clearly stipulated.

After that, the state has issued a series of policies and documents to stipulate the measures and requirements for the promotion of the construction of "two first-class".

The construction of "double first-class" is a major strategic decision of China to promote the reform and development of university education, which is of great significance to improve the level and quality of higher education development and enhance the core competitiveness of the country.

Under the background of China's administrative-led university management system, with the in-depth promotion of the construction of "two first-class", the center of gravity of the internal management power of the university is also gradually shifting downward. The success of a first-class university depends entirely on the internal governance model of the university. In the macro environment where the external problems restricting the development of universities have not been fundamentally solved, universities need to enhance the competitiveness of universities in running and governing schools and educating people through the improvement of internal leadership.

Promoting the high-quality development of education is the primary goal of colleges and universities, and it is also a complex system engineering, involving many important fields and key links. Universities and colleges are important resources of the country and undertake the important task of cultivating talents and promoting social development.

A good leadership team can effectively promote the growth and development of colleges and universities. First of all, such a team can provide comprehensive guidance for teaching, research and social service in universities and universities. In addition, the leadership team's motivation and management of people within the organization is also crucial. A good leadership team can make people within the organization more actively engaged in their work, which can improve the overall effectiveness of the organization.

Educational leadership is concerned with leadership effectiveness, and its essence is influence, that is, it requires educational leaders to expand ways and means to consolidate and expand their creativity, cohesion, traction, motivation and development. Educational leadership is a key force for educational organizations to survive and thrive.

China has a history of 5,000 years of civilization, and the industrious and intelligent children of China have created a splendid and colorful Chinese culture. Traditional Chinese culture is the source of the culture of the East, especially East Asian countries. At the same time, as one of the earliest culturally developed countries in the world, China has a long tradition of education. In the rich cultural atmosphere and rich cultural heritage, China's educational management practice activities have gradually formed an educational management model with a strong Chinese style, and nurtured a unique and charming Chinese educational leadership.

Under the guidance of China's excellent traditional culture, China's educational leadership is based on the comprehensive influence of education leaders in leadership and management activities based on their job roles and their own qualities, and is an influence that insists on valuing harmony, people-oriented, and morality first. At the macro level, China's educational leadership refers to the ability of the government or education authorities to deepen the comprehensive reform in the field of education, serve and guide the development of education, so as to provide sufficient and high-quality educational resources to meet people's growing and personalized learning needs. The organic coupling of personality and other aspects to change the cognition and attitude of the object of education, and promote its ability to adopt or abandon certain behaviors.

Top level design of leadership and governance in Chinese universities. The main leaders of universities are responsible for the top-level design of school governance. Therefore, on the basis of deeply grasping the historical traditions and academic advantages of the school, and comprehensively grasping the new requirements of the current era for universities, there is a strong need in job planning and design.

The top-level design of university governance must possess three characteristics.

The first goal should be lofty. Only with lofty goals can we examine the problems of the school from a broader perspective, mobilize the enthusiasm of teachers, students, and staff to the greatest extent, and solve our own problems while moving forward.

The second goal should be precise. Each school has different historical traditions, academic advantages, and regional characteristics. General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out: "There will not be a second Harvard, Oxford, Stanford, MIT, Cambridge in the world, but there will be the first Peking University, Tsinghua University, Zhejiang University, Fudan University, Nanjing University and other famous Chinese universities" [1].

In Chinese universities managers conscientiously absorb the world's advanced experience in running and administering schools, and more importantly, follow the laws of education and take root in the land of China to run universities. Indeed, for the top designers of universities, having ambitious goals does not necessarily mean unrealistic pursuit of excellence. It is not about blindly replicating the model of world-class universities, but about delving into the positioning of the school in regional, national, and even global development, strengthening its strengths, filling its weaknesses, and putting in effort at a distinctive and high-level level.

The third goal is to be sustainable. The goal design is to connect the past, present, and future. On the basis of listening to opinions from various parties both inside and outside the school, the strategic plan formed must be resolutely implemented, and must not be changed day and night. Society is constantly changing, which also determines that academic disciplines must be constantly adjusted with social changes to make them more beneficial for connecting with society and the market.

One can specify the following policies and measures to strengthen the leadership of Chinese higher education.

1. Strengthen curriculum leadership and creatively construct a school curriculum education system.

The curriculum has a decisive impact on the high-quality development of the school. China's national policy proposes that universities should implement the national education policy and cultivate all-round talents with ideals, skills and responsibilities. This task must be supported by a corresponding curriculum system. Leaders of colleges and universities should strengthen their awareness of curriculum leadership, show excellent curriculum leadership, and creatively construct a curriculum education system that reflects the characteristics of running a school based on the national curriculum plan and the actual situation of the school.

2. Strengthen teaching leadership and promote the occurrence of deep learning.

The high-quality development of education requires support from changes in teaching methods, which can be better achieved through deep learning of students.

To achieve deep learning, universities must strengthen instructional leadership and deepen the transformation of teaching methods. In the early days, people believed that teaching leadership was a complex process that involved defining school teaching objectives, managing curriculum and teaching, creating a positive school culture, and multiple work areas and functions [2]. The analysis, improvement, and enhancement of the principal's teaching leadership also require systematic thinking. With the continuous

deepening of education reform in various countries, deep learning for students and high-quality development of education have begun to receive widespread attention.

Some scholars have proposed that teaching leadership should strengthen the student-centered orientation, advocating student-centered learning, and analyzing teaching leadership from the two dimensions of "key links" and "core content" of leadership behavior. Even renamed teaching leadership as learning centered leadership [3]. This viewpoint links teaching leadership with student learning and development, reflecting a clear result orientation and quality awareness.

Based on the actual situation in our country, the analysis of teaching leadership can further focus on the transformation of teaching or learning methods. The transformation of learning methods determines the effectiveness of cultivating students' core competencies, is an important aspect that hinders the high-quality development of basic education in China, and is also a key area that tests the teaching leadership of principals. The principal should work with teachers to delve deeply into learning theories, analyze the learning process, improve the design of teaching activities, exercises, assignments, and test tasks, so that learning truly occurs in the classroom and students can experience deep learning. Recently, some scholars have pointed out that principal's teaching leadership not only involves leading students in learning, but also should focus on how to lead teachers in learning [4]. Only by establishing a lifelong learning awareness and transforming their own learning methods through professional development activities can teachers truly transform their teaching methods in their own classrooms.

3. Enhance digital leadership and assist students in personalized learning.

Higher education is aimed at the comprehensive development of all students, and should enable every student to have a pleasant experience, a sense of achievement, and a sense of gain in the learning process. However, there are widespread differences among students, especially in contemporary times where we respect differences and advocate individuality. Personalized learning has become an important demand for high-quality education. The idea of personalized learning can be traced back to individualized teaching, which emphasizes breaking the unity of student learning in content, progress, starting point, goals, evaluation, and other aspects. It allows students to freely choose learning content, resources, and methods according to their own characteristics and needs, and arrange their own learning progress.

We have entered a new era of informatization and digitization, and personalized learning is no longer limited to theoretical level, but has entered a substantive exploration stage [5]. Recently, as an emerging form of knowledge supply, Artificial Intelligence Generated Content (AIGC) represented by ChatGPT has attracted widespread attention. The application of these new technologies provides students with a wider range of self-directed learning paths, further promoting research and practice of personalized learning.

To this end, the principal needs to improve their mental model, embrace technological change with an open mindset, and rapidly enhance digital leadership. On the one hand, schools should increase investment in education, improve hardware facilities, build management systems, software platforms, and social interaction platforms, and promote the construction of digital campuses [6].

Based on big data and utilizing various learning analysis technologies, the value of digital platforms for personalized learning can be reflected in the following five aspects: improving personalized learner profiles, analyzing and predicting personalized learning behaviors, optimizing personalized educational decisions, improving personalized learning evaluations, and providing personalized learning feedback and suggestions.

4. Enhance relationship leadership and stimulate the vitality of the teaching staff.

The high-quality development of education cannot be achieved without a dynamic teaching team. However, the heavy workload, high pressure, and prominent occupational burnout of teachers have always been troubling the development of school education in China. The heavy burden on teachers and the resulting decrease in job satisfaction and work enthusiasm still exist to varying degrees. Motivating the enthusiasm of teachers and revitalizing the teaching staff has become an important task for principals.

It is necessary to clarify the necessary empowerment of the various levels of authority for school governance and the main responsibilities of the college, which cannot exceed each other's authority or be completely separated. In fact, the smooth process of school governance requires the cooperation of relevant functional departments and colleges in practice to form a joint force. Due to inadequate policy reforms and other reasons, there has been a phenomenon in universities where teachers are unwilling to become professors and are willing to become directors. This indicates that school governance is solidified, and many issues that should be solved by colleges and academic committees are taken over by relevant functional departments of the school, resulting in power imbalance and limiting the enthusiasm, initiative, and creativity of teachers.

To stimulate the enthusiasm of teachers for work, in addition to increasing their income and reducing their workload, principals should also increase humanistic care and enhance relationship leadership in the practice of teacher team construction.

Relationship leadership, also known as relationship oriented leadership, emphasizes the importance of good relationships between leaders and team members for organizational success.

This kind of leadership originated from the research of the interpersonal relationship school in the early 20th century, and later integrated the ideas of leadership member exchange theory, situational leadership theory, and emotional leadership theory. Relationship oriented leaders focus on communication, recognition, humanistic care, and employee development support, committed to creating an open and inclusive work atmosphere, stimulating individual employee enthusiasm and initiative, and promoting teamwork and creativity among employees. This leadership style not only focuses on task completion, but also emphasizes the emotional needs and individual differences of employees, emphasizing the common growth of leaders and teams through effective interpersonal interaction. Working in a positive social relationship and interpersonal atmosphere, teachers will have more energy, more open thinking, more active thinking, and improved work performance.

The key is that the relationship leadership of the principal can enhance communication and cooperation between teachers and cadres, build the school into a collaborative and shared learning organization, and enable the high-quality development of the school as a whole to enter a virtuous cycle.

5. Utilize collaborative leadership to build an educational community.

Collaborative leadership also emphasizes the establishment and maintenance of relationships, but unlike relationship leadership, which aims to promote the relationship between leaders and employees, its focus is on establishing collaborative relationships among people across functions, roles, and organizational boundaries, promoting the achievement of common outcomes among all parties.

The term collaborative leadership first appeared in 1992 when the Collaborative Leadership Institute, a non-profit organization serving the public sector in the United States, was established, symbolizing the collaboration between the public sector and private companies to solve previously difficult problems. In the late 1990s, with the growth of strategic alliances between private companies and the increase of long-term contracts for public-private partnerships, collaborative leadership gradually became a specialized concept entering management practice and academic perspectives.

Collaborative leadership is of particular significance for university presidents. Schools cannot operate behind closed doors. They must have their own unique characteristics and be highly aligned with international standards.

To achieve high-quality development, it is necessary to attach importance to communication and cooperation between schools, as well as to handle public relations with education administrative authorities, teaching support institutions, and other departments.

To promote the high-quality development of education, the leadership of principals is endowed with richer contemporary connotations and higher expectations. University presidents need to possess and be able to integrate multiple leadership styles, methods, and skills to better adapt to and respond to different situations and challenges.

Based on the management principle of prioritizing important matters, the construction of the principal team in the new era should not only focus on promoting the diversified development of principal leadership, but also grasp the key points.

In the future, to serve the construction of a strong country and the high-quality development of education, the improvement of principal leadership should be combined with the practice of the spirit of educators. In his letter to outstanding teachers on the 39th Teacher's Day in China, General Secretary Xi Jinping clarified the six connotations of the spirit of educators.

In the six educator spirits, ideal beliefs, moral sentiments, benevolence, and the pursuit of righteousness are the foundation and prerequisite for enhancing the leadership of principals. On the other hand, the wisdom of education and the attitude of dedication are more closely related to leadership behavior and practice, and are the decisive factors for enhancing the leadership of principals. Therefore, rooted in management practice and enhancing leadership wisdom should become the focus of principals in practicing the spirit of educators.

Essentially, school leadership and management are a practice that cannot be empty or false.

To promote high-quality development of education and improve the quality of school operations, principals need to keep up with the situation, explore effective solutions for key and difficult issues in curriculum, teaching, learning, digitalization, teacher development, and other fields, create the best leadership practices, and summarize these leadership wisdom into benchmark experiences that can be extended, driving more principals to grow together and continuously improve their leadership level.

References:

1. Xi Jinping. *Youth should consciously practice the core socialist values - Speech at the Symposium of Teachers and Students at Peking University* [Electronic resource]. – Mode of access: http://en.qstheory.cn/2020-11/18/c_607604.htm. – Date of access: 01.03.2024.
2. Hallinger, P. *Assessing the Instructional Management Behavior of Principals*. *Elementary School Journal* / P. Hallinger, M. Joseph // *Elementary School Journal*, 1985. – Vol. 86, No. 2, pp. 217-247.
3. *Vanderbilt Educational Leadership Assessment: A Learning Centered Assessment Approach* / J. Murphy [et al.] // *East China Normal University Journal*, 2007.

*60-я Юбилейная Научная Конференция Аспирантов, Магистрантов и Студентов БГУИР,
Минск 2024*

4. Hui, D. The Conceptualization and Model Building of Instructional Leadership: Based on the Interview with Philip Hallinger / Dong Hui, Li Lulu, Zhang Jie // Journal of East China Normal University (Educational Sciences), 2020 [Electronic resource]. – Mode of access: <https://hdsfdxjkb.xml-journal.net/en/article/doi/10.16382/j.cnki.1000-5560.2020.07.007>. – Date of access: 01.03.2024.

5. Beliatskaya, T. Intellectual capital in digital economy: education dimension / T. Beliatskaya, V. Knyazkova // Mechanisms of interaction between competitiveness and innovation in modern international economic relations : collective monograph : in 4 Vol. / ISMA University ; ed. by M. Bezpartochnyi. – Riga : Landmark SIA, 2017. – Vol. 1. – 232 p. – P. 84 – 93.

6. Jincheng, W. A Review of the Development of the Integration Strategy of Information Technology and Education in the Four Countries of the United States, Britain, China, and Singapore / W. Jincheng [Electronic resource]. – Mode of access: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1314579.pdf>. – Date of access: 01.03.2024.