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Special Education Teachers' Gifted Guidance and the role of Digital Technologies

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Abstract: The empowerment of followers' personal vision and the quality of their work are both significantly associated with leadership. Additionally, the respect that a group of followers have for a leader is a criterion for labeling the leader as "charismatic - emotionally intelligent." The eventual goal and the chosen techniques are therefore crucial components of good leadership. In this way, a high-level work environment can be guaranteed, safeguarding employees against the effects of job burnout. The effects of job burnout on Special Education teachers appear to be extremely serious both for the teacher's well-being and for the effectiveness of their work. Teachers who experience job burnout tend to be mentally and physically exhausted, despondent, and constantly anxious, keeping themselves to themselves and hard to reach. In order to safeguard teachers from the threat of job burnout, this study will look at the relationship between the emotional intelligence of school administrators and the presence of a supportive work environment.

Key words- leadership, emotionally intelligence, empowerment, special education

1. Introduction

A charismatic leader cares about motivating their followers to reach their individual objectives that are founded on their own unique vision. It's possible that charismatic leadership has nothing to do with someone having a beautiful personality or being well-liked by their peers. As a result of their empowerment and motivation, the followers' performance grew to the highest level imaginable. The personal vision of the employees frequently aligns with the organizations, which has been communicated to the followers by the leader (Lodge, 2006). A leader has the ability to enthuse, inspire, and generally activate the greatest performance in their followers. Leaders can typically be identified by their personal ideals as well as by their strategy, tactics, and managerial abilities. Aristoteles said that they were able to comprehend and assist the feelings of their adherents (Weber, 2009).

The inspirational influence, the expression of clear and persuasive organizational goals, the group mentoring and guidance, the innovative mentality, the conflict management as well as the building of the appropriate working environment which facilitates the cooperation towards the organization's goals accomplishment, are only a few credentials of a charismatic leadership (Goleman, 2014).

2. The School Director as a Charismatic Leader

Many teachers may encounter and work with a school leader at some point in their careers who can motivate them, help them establish their own goals, and greatly aid in connecting those with the goals of the school as a whole (Maxwell, 1998). The role of the school leader might also be emphasized as a vital link between teachers and those in higher Educational Management units. The specific and unique objectives of each school unity should also be in line with the broad directives of the Education Ministry. As a result, each School Principal should conform to them in all plans and actions. More specifically, each School Director can effectively use the available tools to accomplish the expectations stated by the relevant Ministry.

Generally speaking, the School Leader is in charge of organizing the human resources of a school unity to achieve the goals (Saitis, 2007). A school leader is actually the coordinator who takes the lead, engages in communication and interaction with teachers as well as the entire school community (parents, students, and staff, for example), all in the interest of securing and establishing a balanced and supportive working environment that is supportive of cognitive development and academic outcomes (Brinia, 2008). Additionally, the Leader makes clear the social and educational needs of the school community and encourages the teachers to use the right strategies to meet these needs (Saitis, 2007).

Nowadays, schools shall serve a multidimensional role and for this very reason it is crucial to seek for School Leaders than School Principals. A charismatic school Leader has a vision shared with the team. He/she allocates the educational staff, according to personalized interests, temper, and abilities so that, the vision can be converted into strategy. The difference between the Leader and the Director is that the former promotes his/her ability to inspire and motivate the team, in order to become as much innovative and creative as possible, with the result of a supportive working environment. On the contrary, the latter facilitates his/her power to fulfil the organization goals (Blush & Middlewood, 2005).

3. Job Burnout in Special Education Teachers

International studies have found a strong correlation between emotional weariness and teacher job burnout. More precisely, educators who are at risk for job burnout syndrome frequently describe their sense of exhaustion or inadequacy over the effectiveness of their work and their low levels of energy in the classroom. Job satisfaction is a significant component in determining the quality of a teacher's professional life. Since they frequently feel ineffective, teachers who have low levels of job satisfaction are more likely to experience job burnout (Guglielmi & Tatrow, 1998; Maslach & Leiter, 2008).

It has been discovered that a teacher who is emotionally worn out and whose professional health is considerably harmed is generally less effective at their job. (2006) Hakanen, Bakker, and Schaufeli. At the same time, emotional exhaustion in teachers appears to be a reliable sign of job burnout, which, at extreme levels, may lead to the eventual abandonment of one's career (Leung & Lee, 2006). For the educator personally as well as for his or her professional life, the effects of teacher burnout are very serious.

Teachers who keep on working under the shadow of Job Burnout are emotionally exhausted, physically fatigued, depressed, continually anxious, cynical, and distant, without interest. Teachers' Job Burnout syndrome affects not only the educator him/herself, as well as, the entire school unity. Teachers facing Job Burnout are not able to contribute properly at their teaching duties and consequently, students' academic results are usually negatively affected (Friedman & Farber,1992).

According to resent studies, teachers who work in Special Education schools field present higher anxiety level and emotionally exhaustion compared to their colleagues who work in mainstream schools (Billingsley et al, 2004; Boe et al, 1997; Fore et al, 2002; Wisniewski & Gargiulo, 1997).

A research, conducted in Greece, in 2000, in a sample of 110 teachers working either in Special Education schools or in Special Education classrooms, appeared a medium to high emotionally exhaustion (Antoniou, Polychroni & Walters 2000). Kokkinos and Devazoglou (2006) analysed data, collected from a sample of 745 primary school teachers, 430 of whom were occupied in General Education schools (in the areas of East Makedonia and Thrace) and 315 worked in Special Education field in several areas of Greece. According to the findings, Special Education teachers need to deal with a greater amount of emotionally exhaustion compared to General Education teachers.

Job Burnout syndrome is rather common in the educational area, according to research findings and the body of literature. At the same time, the degree of job satisfaction appears to be a safeguard against job burnout. Because of this, the leadership style plays a critical role in creating a safe working environment, sustaining high levels of job satisfaction, and averting job burnout. A 2019 study in Greece with 285 primary school leaders in general education found a

substantial association between the transformational leadership style and the job satisfaction component, which serves as a buffer against job burnout 2019 (Loukeri).

4. Emotional Intelligence and Charismatic Leadership

A charismatic leader typically focuses on creating a stable, collaborative workplace that may provide employees' emotional empowerment. Over the years, leaders have served as their followers' emotional safety net in the face of any danger or ambiguity (Goleman et al., 2014).
The ability to identify one's own emotions as well as those of others, to recognize the differences between them, to label them appropriately, and to apply this emotional information for making decisions is known as emotional intelligence (Coleman, 2008). An individual's ability to recognize and manage his or her own emotional state, as well as that of others, with an eye toward personal and social development is referred to as having emotional intelligence (Goleman, 2011). A sort of mediator between the leader and the team members, emotional intelligence ensures the dialogue and, as a result, efficient communication.
A highly emotionally intelligent Leader appears several characteristics, which differentiate him/her from others. Such characteristics are the non-critical behaviour towards his/her colleagues, the recognition of others' emotionally considerations, the followers' guidance, and support through personal experience. This kind of Leader is also honest concerning his/her feelings and intentions, taking any responsibility he/she needs to. What is more, detail matters to him/her without ignoring at the same time the key – points of a situation. He/she is also quite supportive to his/her followers being decisive and a very efficient conflict manager within the team. Leader has a strong self-confidence and honestly cares for his/her followers' progress (Louis et al, 2010). A great number of studies highlights Leader's emotional intelligence to be crucial for the structure of a motivational and inspirational work environment where, employees are secured from potential Job Burnout syndrome (Goleman, 2000; Fox, 2002).
An international research investigated the success factors of senior executives, in a sample of 515 Leaders in Japan, Germany, and Latin America. According to the findings there are three determinant factors which affect the Leader profile: their previous working experience, the responsibilities they used to have in previous workplaces and their emotional intelligence level (George, 2000). Moreover, studies conducted in international companies showed that, top management employees, with higher emotional intelligence are 15 – 20 % more effective in achieving company's KPI's compared to those with lower emotional intelligence (McClelland & David, 1998).
International literature supports that the Leaders, who are able to handle their own feelings and set their own satisfaction of minor importance, appear as role models for their followers gaining thus their respect (Hersey et Blanchard, 1977). Within this tactic the Leader may achieve the

"idealized influence" offering at his/her followers the essential emotional support and initiatives for enhancing their performance (Fisher & Ashkanasy 2000). Additionally to the gift of understanding others' feelings, an emotionally intelligent Leader can distinguish others' personal expectations supporting them towards the fulfilment through an inspirational motivation; an additional characteristic that differentiates this Leader (Mathew & Gupta, 2015). Furthermore, it is worth to be mentioned, that a Leader with high leveled emotionally intelligence, recognizes the uniqueness of every single team's member with different needs and priorities. This individualized consideration of each person makes the followers to feel that they are special, and their Leader regards at them accordingly (Caruso et al 2002). The above mentioned special characteristics of an emotionally intelligent Leader are also found in the theory of Transformational Leadership, one of the most effective leadership style, a fact that indicates the correlation between the emotionally intelligent Leader and the Transformational Leader.

A team working environment that secures employees' motivation and inspiration is one of the fundamental points of Transformational Leadership style. To be more specific, Transformational Leadership facilitates the cooperation between the team and the leader, aiming to organization's goals achievement. As a result, the Transformational Leader becomes a role model who motivates his/her followers' by creating a challenging and supportive environment (Bass, 1990, 53-55). The Transformational Leader inspires the employees so that each personal goal to be identified to these of the organization. As far as the Transformational Leadership style in the school context, Leithwood pinpointed three basic sectors: Setting Direction, Developing Human, Restructuring School (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003).

According to the findings of several studies, teachers' support for students' academic and cognitive performance as well as their emotional development can be attributed to transformational leadership. These factors include the school climate, school culture, and students' emotional development. As a result, it is clear that a transformational leader effectively leads the entire business toward a shared vision while encouraging teachers to collaborate in order to accomplish the objectives. Given the relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership style discussed above as well as the advantages of a transformational leader, an emotionally intelligent leader can make a significant contribution to the cohesiveness of a school.

5. Conclusion

The literature that is currently available indicates that effective leadership practices are primarily focused on inspiring and motivating followers in ways that support organizational objectives. Additionally, the capacity of leaders to inspire, persuade, and pique the interest of

their followers is correlated with their emotional intelligence. Particularly when making decisions, the relationship and interplay between emotional intelligence and leadership style are of utmost importance. Similar to this, the school director's primary responsibility in an educational setting is to create the desired connections between the entire team, the leader, and the teachers. The emotional support that the Leader provides to the instructors in order to support their multitasking and demanding duty is closely related to charismatic leadership traits and the leadership style in general (Blase & Blasé, 2001; Rewster & Railback, 2003). In other words, empathy is strongly characterizing a charismatic Leader and at the same time it seems to be a protecting factor against employees' Job Burnout syndrome, a syndrome quite common in education field (Eichinger, 2000).

The emotional support provided by Special Education Teachers to their students is closely correlated with their job satisfaction and organizational commitment, according to numerous worldwide research. Moreover, a charismatic leader can support a consistent school culture, which in turn can strengthen teachers' continued participation in a particular school community (Gersten et al., 2001). As a result, it would appear that a charismatic and highly emotional intelligent leader could ensure the spiritual and emotional growth and well-being of schoolteachers (Day, 2000; MacGilchrist, 2003).

Concluding, we emphasize the significance of all digital technologies in the field of education and in teacher’s guidance domain, which is highly effective and productive and facilitates and improves assessment, intervention, and educational procedures via mobile devices that bring educational activities everywhere [45-49], various ICTs applications that are the main supporters of education [50-70], and AI, STEM, and ROBOTICS that raise educational procedures to new performance levers [71-85] and friendly games [86-89]. Additionally, the development and integration of ICTs with theories and models of metacognition, mindfulness, meditation, and the cultivation of emotional intelligence [90-127], as well as with environmental factors and nutrition [41-44], accelerates and improves more than educational practices and results, especially in teacher’s guidance domain.

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