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Dynamism in Academic Leadership

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Introduction

Leadership is an art of engaging the hearts and minds of ordinary people to achieve extraordinary results. Leadership spans all humans' collective activities relating to different professions where the leader has the responsibility to realize the objective of the organisation. The power of the leader precedes the power of the rest including the organization. Leadership in education is different. The goals are different. Government of India brings lots of efforts and reforms to improve the quality of higher education. The quality of higher education definitely depends on the quality of teachers. The dynamics of higher education today are driving the demand for a new set of skills and capabilities for tomorrow's leaders. In academics everyone has to rise to his level of competence and collectively contribute to the excellence of the institution. So the leader of an educational institution has to be aware of the shared gains, shared work, shared responsibility and shared enthusiasm for intellectual development and be cautious in the spirit of ego of others. In an academic institution the focus should be on the student achievement, Faculty excellence and Organisational effectiveness. In this contributing environment the work and the resulted naturally goes with the stakeholders by the stakeholders and of the stakeholders towards improving the learning and instruction leading to the development of the institution. A key aspect of the leadership role in education is to empower staff members both the teaching and non-teaching and also to improve the learning outcome of the students. In this dynamic world we need visionary collaborative and culturally appropriate leader in the academic arena. To transform diversity and turn challenge into opportunity the leader should have a clear vision and ability to communicate the team about the vision. As leadership expert Warren Bennis once stated, "Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality." Great leaders possess dazzling social intelligence, a zest for change, and above all, a vision that allows them to set their sights on the things that truly merit attention.

1

The essence of leadership consists in superior qualities and powers not in authority. These powers enable leaders to influence people not govern them. Authority is finite it has limits imposed by organisational status and jurisdiction whereas its influence is infinite. Great leaders including great teachers exert positive influence on people's lives across time and space. The proof of leadership is in followership. Only followers give legitimacy to leadership. Leadership is about vision, trustworthiness, and optimism. Good leaders make people hopeful and transform the vision in action.

Opportunities and Challenges in Academic Leadership

Academic leadership is broad capability and function across a higher education institution reflected in leadership in governance both corporate and academic and in operations. Being an academic leader one has to perform many roles of visionary, team player and academician and so on and so forth. If we can cast a bird's view over the present scenario in higher education the situation speaks about more number of male community representing the position. The under- representation of women in senior positions is also very often grounded in women's own ideas about leadership roles. Many career paths are slowed down because women shy away from leading roles for reasons such as statusa fulfilment in the role or simply because of existing models linked to admired leadership features. There are various reasons at the personal, institutional and societal levels preventing women from ascending to management position in universities. Women have a different voice and therefore a different mode of leadership this difference can bring new and positive values and become incorporated and accepted in social and cultural systems.

The demands on academics and academicians are much more complex. The government academic institutions to produce more and better research outputs; the industry demands better employable graduates, parent except all round development. It is not difficult to imagine the burden of expectations on academic institutions in such a situation. While meeting all these expectations requires many stakeholders of the institution to work together, it most certainly needs a leader who can provide the leadership necessary to visualise, articulate, coordinate and implement strategies to achieve the goals and satisfy all stakeholders. In such a setting the role of a leader in academia becomes highly essential who will lead within and beyond the classroom, identify with and contribute the community of teachers, students and staff towards improved educational practice and pursuit.

The higher education in India particularly in the last two decades has remarkably transformed and developed in a notable manner to emerge as one of the largest system of its kind. We need to make our curriculum and pedagogy relevant to the needs of our society and economy and nurture qualities of problem solving and creative thinking, learning by doing, greater engagement with the live context and confident self-expression from a young age. Leadership poses a host of challenges. They come in three categories: external, internal and stemming from the circumstance of being a leader. They often arise in periods of instability or change such when a period of work is beginning or ending or when a group or organisation is in transition. Some are concrete and limited- dealing with a particular situation for instance but many more abstract and on-going, such as keeping your group focused on its vision over the long term.

Challenges of an Academic leader focussed on Human challenges such as working with people communication for collaborative efforts and provide information for making informed decisions. Strategies for development of competencies like emotional intelligences which includes trustworthiness by keeping a promise and not going the other way; negotiations but understanding the limits of your power and not exceeding them to risk the reputation as a leader. It involves compromise and mutual agreement to be successful; Motivation which includes looking for ways and means to make them happy and enhance their ability to achieve their objectives. Inspiring others is the challenge by motivating others to ensure they are satisfied with their jobs and working smart; developing managerial effectiveness, creating ecological environment, strategic action planning, preparing reports, institutional research and networking. The financial challenges included budget management, money and management strategies. Trends in higher education, responsibilities continue to grow, commanding trust and respect, identifying new opportunities, key policies and guidelines. In this way academic leader can become successful; handling all the above challenges with proper action pan and planned strategies.

The challenging nature of the society perceives more and more problems which are chronically important. An able leader is the one who takes the staff into confidence to do things. Academic leadership is the one to concentrate on the basics of educational system. The leader has to maintain the calibre command and moreover willing to listen to all suggestions but to take final call. It is not difficult to imagine the burden of expectations on academic institution.

3

Without the appropriate leadership the institution will be like a ship without rudder. Leadership activities and team games can definitely help introduce leadership traits in children. Activities help the children identify their hidden traits. Academic leaders perform a variety of functions of post-secondary institutions including but not limited making recommendations regarding bring decisions, evaluating faulty providing faculty with necessary resources they need to be successful and mange financial resources.

Leading is a social process that involves learning and exchange. The way leaders think about others learn from their experiences and translate that into effective action makes the difference. Universities and colleges face a growing crisis of relevance in the 21st century and academic departments are not immune to it. Academic leadership is a noble enterprise. It is too difficult and important for the faint of heart or light of mind. We may never fully escape error imperfection but we can do better. The quality of education and the success of an academia depend largely on the co-opertion and interaction between these relationships at the helm. The ability to establish trusting and collaborative relationships has been identified as one of the predominant characteristic of academic leaders and that indeed becomes the primary means of exerting influence to govern the academia.

Autonomy and Accountability in Academic Leadership

Leader of academic institutions face a much more complex set of challenges now than they did 40 years ago. Yet strangely they seem to be chosen and trained for these positions n differently that they were before. Are good leaders born or taught? Are these characteristics inherent part of their personality or acquire through formal training? The answer is bot. a good academic leader needs to be a good planner, an administrator, a good decision able and an effective implementer of actions. Such skill in an academic leader would make him accountable.

Various authors have proposed identifying much different leadership which are exhibited by leaders in the political business or other fields. The leader's intellectual capacity helps in conceptualised solutions and to acquire knowledge to do their job, the research paper focussed on the leadership style followed by the primary school leaders and it was found that they follow the leadership styles such as authoritarian, democratic, laiseez –faire policy as per situation.

In another research paper it focussed on the leadership qualities of school principals as perceived by the secondary school teachers of greater Mumbai. It studied the components of leadership qualities of school principals such as intellectual, psychological, and the personality traits of the educational mangers. The researcher also studied the teacher morale of secondary school teachers. It highlighted the relationship between the perceived leadership qualities of school principals on the teacher morale of secondary school teachers.

Strategies for Skill Development in Academic Leadership

Effective leaders in various departments should different leadership styles. Hersey and Blanchard proposed four leadership styles that include telling, selling, participating and delegating appropriate to the ability and willingness of followers to perform the assigned tasks. As effective leaders require leadership competencies to perform the necessary leadership roles in the universities especially when operating in global context. They also require having essentials traits or show leadership effectiveness.

Teachers who are committed to their profession have similar qualities to leaders in other areas. They are not just thinking about themselves but how their efforts will produce success for all those who are a part of their profession. Great teachers are great leaders.

Competencies include skill, behaviours, attitude, and abilities. Some of them can be developed by training some can be learned by practice and vision. The effective leadership and management of universities is a crucial issue for policy makers, leaders themselves and for the university staff. Efficient leaders can make efficient followers and can march towards the progress.

Charismatic leaders create visions that seem to improve one's present circumstance by finding the missing link between what one is getting and what one desires. This type of leader is persistent and even willing to make personal sacrifices to attain the vision which has been set. Leaders of academic face a much more complex set of challenges now than they did 40 years ago. Yet strangely they seem to be chosen and trained for these positions no differently than they were before.

Developing faculty in to academic leaders is both a privilege and responsibility of university administrators and institution of higher education. The privilege is advancing while the responsibility rests in developing our most valued resource people. Trough campus leadership programs, institutions benefit from building academic leadership teams, creating

connections of leadership across campus, tapping hidden talent, maximising individual's potentials, retaining campus talent.

Leaders need to project ideas and aims to greater heights this requires broad visions which will facilitate student learning and add to body of knowledge creation. As an academic leader one has to be grounded with the changing world scenario and take the position of being an achiever in the long run.

Academic leadership must be reconceptualised in the present context. A change of understanding of the leadership perspectives lead to widening the understanding of academic leadership. ; Leader cannot lead from the front from within, knowing their own self as well as others. The prime responsibility of leader today must be to create more leaders. Academic leader must therefore understand that they accountability to society will be measures according to the leaders they have created. Decision making in situations must be multi-tiered and democratic in nature will bring in more participation and commitment.

The research was conducted to examine the leadership practices in schools it focussed on the work culture, goal setting and the standard operating procedure. It drew the conclusion that the principal of the secondary school followed work culture, goal setting and standard operating procedure and teacher support in functioning of the school.

Transformational curriculum and evaluating teachers and teaching whereas traditionally focuses vision and inspiration. So it can be said that the two forms of leadership are not mutually exclusive. A combination of strategies can be most beneficial in ensuring school success and most leadership effects operate indirectly to promote student outcomes by supporting and enhancing conditions for teaching and learning trough direct impacts on teachers and their work.

Networking in Academic Leadership

Building an academic leadership network is less a matter of skill than of will. When first efforts do not bring quick   rewards. But networking is not a talent; nor does it require a gregarious, extroverted personality. Making a successful leadership transition requires a shift from the confines of a clearly defined operational network. Academic leaders must find new ways of defining themselves and develop new relationships to anchor and feed their emerging personas. They must also accept that networking is one of the most important requirements of their new leadership roles and continue to allocate enough time and effort to see it pay off.

6

Conclusion

The teachers, leaders a structural change is required for adapting to changing scenario. There was a consensus that campuses of higher education institutions are becoming more socially diverse than ever before and that this diversity is reflected in the aggregate leadership quality in the country. There is a need to evolve new strategies and programmes to address the need for academic leadership in higher education. The strengthening of the academic sector and establishing good positive relation.

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