Full Length Research Paper

Integration of leadership styles of school director

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Management style can be defined as a special behavior of directors in the work process that affects the performance in an organization, in this case-school. Management style has two related meanings: first is behavior of directors to employees, second is directors' approach in school regarding management, participation of employees in decision making processes, relationships and communication. The aim of the research is to determine the integration of different management styles among school directors – autocratic, democratic and delegating. Research sample included 16 high school directors in Kragujevac region in Serbia. All high schools in this region were examined, so we could get a full insight in specific way of director management at these institutions. The main conclusion of the research is that management styles in school, e.g. autocratic, democratic and delegating style are integrated and inseparable from each other. Director has to be familiar with all the styles of management, and also to use those that are most effective in a particular situation and the most convenient to work with teachers and users.

Key words: Style approach, leadership, school director, autocratic, democratic and delegating way of management.

INTRODUCTION

Leadership is an interdisciplinary field that enters into the scientific sphere of organization and management, communication, economics, computer science, pedagogy, sociology and psychology. Principal must continuously conduct research, analysis, make decisions and take risks for his actions. The school principal is "more a manager responsible for numerous tasks: planning, organization, management and control, and also, function of human resources is introduced"(Oljača, 2011: 63). Also, principal is responsible for changes in organizational culture at the school, creating a favorable climate for students and parents, e.g. users with one hand and teachers on the other side. It is necessary to fit school into the local environment. Principal is responsible for pedagogical work in schools. He/she is manager and leader. Leadership in education is a process that is different from the ideas of leadership in other areas of connected, and researchers in this field believe that the decisive factor in evaluating management performance is management style, because it determines the general social life. It is based on three key features: proactive

responsibility, authenticity and affirmative presence. (Oljača, 2011: 67). All these functions and roles are inter-climate in the organization and affects the motivation to work and results of associates (Duygulu and Ozeren, 2009).

There is no principal in evaluated schools who has degree from specialized school for principals. Principal place is taken by teachers who have knowledge and experience which does not have to provide good performance. In other words, it does not mean that good teacher has to be good school principal. Also, selection of principal includes politics of education authorities so it additionally creates difficulties in his work.

The first working day of the principal begins with development of his style of leadership. Principal creates his style of management through work. Creating of style of management is a difficult task. It is necessary to take into account factors that affect the good functioning of the school, traits of employees, their mutual relations in school, the needs of users and local communities. The school principal quickly realizes the need to integrate more styles in the management. He consults with teachers about teaching, orders class elders class to find a solution for reducing absenteeism and proposes staff to find a way to communicate better with students in order to reduce conflicts. So within only one job at the school, principal

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uses three styles of leadership. According to this, we conclude that a good leader will be principal who best combines the styles of leadership while respecting the needs and requests of customers and employees regarding the situation at school. As a problem, the question arose within research: Does principal uses one or more integrated styles for leading of school?

Theoretical approach

Leadership in a broadest sense defines as leading of unique action in achieving of specified organizational goals (Vujić, 2008). Style approach is based on the behavior of leaders (Adeyemi, 2010). Focus in this kind of approach is aimed to leaders' actions and way of their behavior (Northouse, 2008), Liderstvo, data status, Beograd. In this way, attention is directed to followers in different situations. Researchers who have studied style approach noticed that leadership includes two kinds of behavior: (1) behavior oriented to tasks and (2) behavior oriented to relationships. Northouse (2008) noticed: "basic purpose of style approach is to explain how leaders combine these two kinds of behavior so they can have impact on subordinates and their efforts to reach the goal". Studies of the University in Aiova (Lewin and Lippitt, 1938) examined three styles of leadership. Autocratic style described a leader who usually wanted to centralize decision making, define work methods and limit participation. Participative or democratic style includes employees in decision making process, gives them authorities and enhances participation. Laissez-faire style (Delegative or Free Reign) gives freedom for group to make a decision and complete the work (Robbins and Coutler, 2005), Management, Data status, Beograd). When asked what style suits the school in ensuring the quality of its work there is no single answer (Keng-Boon, 2009). Good management style is a style appropriate to participants of the situation, such as: kind of a work, characteristics of employees, current situation, characteristics of groups (Bojanović, 1998). It means that school director needs to be familiar with all three styles of management, so he/she can be flexible in their application, depending on the situation (Lee and Yu, 2010).

METHODOLOGY

Theoretical importance of the research includes searching for connections between different management styles, while practical importance includes application of different management styles to different situations that the director has to deal with on a daily basis, so the efficiency and the effectiveness of his/her work can be enhanced. A case study represents the integration of management styles in school. The research problem is seen as follows:

What is the relationship between autocratic, democratic and delegating style of leadership by the school principal?

Leadership style can be described in different ways. Style approach is chosen because the relationship between leader and subordinates is the basis for a good work of the school. School has a good working basis if it has good relationships and communication between employees and if employees, users, students and parents have the feeling as they belong to this school. School principal has to make partners of his employees and also to create organizational culture which provides development and changes. Emphasis on relationship problem between these three leadership styles helps to make an insight of an essence and management character in school. Appropriate selection and integration of leadership styles create assumptions for successful management of the school.

The aim of the investigation is to establish connections between different leadership styles of a school principal – autocratic, democratic and delegating.

Research questions

Are management styles of principals at the school all connected and integrated into a whole? (Basic research question). From basic research question comes following questions: (a) What is the character of the autocratic style of leadership of school principals?; (b) What is the character of the democratic style of leadership of school principals?; (c) What is the character of the delegating style of leadership of school principals?

We used descriptive method in this study. Research was conducted in year 2010. This research included (all) 16 high school principals from the Kragujevac region in Serbia. Principals were given questionnaires directly from the researchers and they had time as one school class to fill. Principals who participated in the study properly filled out a questionnaire so that the researcher had access to the data given by the principals of secondary schools in this region. Regarding gender rate, research included 56.25% female principals and 43.75% male principals. The average tenure of principals is 25.64 years, ranging from 14 to 34 years. The average time spent on the principal job in the surveyed schools was 6.1 years, ranging from 1 to 12 years. The average age of principals is 51.57 years, while the youngest principal is 40 and the oldest is 62 years old.

The research used questionnaire for gathering data about leadership style Leadership Style Survey (LSS) developed and tested by Donald Clark. Researcher got the permission from author for using of this questionnaire. This questionnaire was checked in more than thousand investigations in military and educational facilities and had positive marks (Clark, 2011). It included 30 ascertainments/claims which school principals had to rate through 5 points of Likert type, while each ascertainment had certain number of points: (1) almost never true had 1 point; (2) rarely true had 2 points; (3) occasionally true had 3 points; (4) often true had 4 points and (5) almost always true had 5 points. Research should provide us data about styles used in schools. Data made by research were analyzed with SPSS program. After that, mean values (AS) and standard deviation (SD) were derived.

RESULTS

Research question

(a) What is the character of autocratic leadership style of a school principal? First claim, which says that principal always keeps right to make a final decision in its department and team has the average value 3,94 (maximum 5)

Table 1. Autocratic style.

Ascertainment	N	AS	SD
(1) I always retain the final decision making authority within my department or team.	16	3.94	0.929
(2) I do not consider suggestions made by my employees as I do not have the time for them.	16	1.38	0.619
(3) I tell my employees what has to be done and how to do it.	16	4.19	0.655
(4) When someone makes a mistake, I tell them not to ever do that again and make a note of it.	16	3.25	1.238
(5) New hires are not allowed to make any decisions unless it is approved by me first.	16	2.25	1.438
(6) When something goes wrong, I tell my employees that a procedure is not working correctly and I establish a new one.	16	4.19	1.047
(7) I closely monitor my employees to ensure they are performing correctly.	16	4.50	0.730
(8) I like the power that my leadership position holds over subordinates.	16	1.81	1.109
(9) Employees must be directed or threatened with punishment in order to get them to achieve the organizational objectives.	16	2.25	1.183
(10) Employees seek mainly security.	16	4.56	0.512
Autocratic style total	16	32.32	

which means this ascertainment is confirmed with a high grade. Ascertainment that principal does not consider proposals given by employees has the average value 1.38, which means this claim does not work. Third ascertainment that principal tells his/her employees what to needs to be done and in what way has the value 4.19, which means this ascertainment is confirmed. Claim which explains how when any of the teacher makes a mistake, principal tells them to never do it again and make a note about it is confirmed with grade 3.25, which means this ascertainment is also confirmed. Fifth claim which tells that new employees must not make any decisions before they are approved by principal has value 2.25, which means that principals sometimes provide training for new employees. Sixth claim, that principal changes procedure when something goes wrong has value 4.19, which means principals do it often in their schools. Sixth claim explains that principal carefully monitors his/her employees in task completion had a high value 4.50, which means that principal takes care about completion of work by employees. Eighth claim tells that principal likes the power he/she has in the school and it has a value 1.81, which means it is not confirmed. Ninth claim tells that employees have to be directed or they should be threaten punishment to achieve the expected results has the value 2.25, which means that most of principals does not use this kind of methods. Tenth claim says that employees mostly need security has a value 4.56, which means that employees demand conditions for good and effective work. According to research data, total value of autocratic leadership style is 32.32. It means that principals at schools use autocratic leadership style, depending on circumstances (Table 1).

(b) What is the character of a democratic style of leadership of school principals? First claim that principal always try to include other employees in decision making yet with the ability to keep the power of making final decision had a high rate 4.44, which means principals respect opinion of their employees and according to that make decisions. Second claim, principals ask employees about their ideas had a value 4.81, which means that principals rely on ideas of their employees. Third claim, that principals accept advice from employees during crisis had value 3.88, which means that principals accept advises and complaints from employees in order to overcome crisis at school. Next claim which says that school principal wants to create an environment where everyone can feel as a part of school projects had a value 4.50, which means that principals create environment where employees can feel as participants in order and decision making at school. Fifth claim-principals ask employees about their vision has a high value 4.31, which means that principals accept their opinion about development and the future of the school. Sixth claim, that principals allow employees to create lists of priorities in their work, had a value 4.13, which means they allow independent work of employees with leadership of a principal. Seventh claim, that principal works with employees in order to overcome school problems had a high value 4.31, which means that principals involve in making of common projects, realization of plans and goals for school. Eighth claim, which says that principal uses his/her leadership power to help development of employee had a value 4.00, which means that directors take care of employees and their professional development. Ninth claim, that employees will act according their conscience had a value 3.94, which means that principal needs to pay attention to employees needs so they can be dedicated to work. Tenth claim that employees know how to use creativity to solve organizational problems had a value 3.81, which means that employees are used to democratic working principles in their school. From research data comes that the total value of democratic leadership style is 42.13. It means that principals use democratic leadership style, depending on circumstances (Table 2).

Table 2. Democratic style.

Ascertainment	N	AS	SD
(1) I always try to include one or more employees in determining what to do and how to do it. However, I maintain the final decision making authority.	16	4.44	0.727
(2) I ask for employee ideas and input on upcoming plans and projects.	16	4.81	0.403
(3) When things go wrong and I need to create a strategy to keep a project or process running on schedule, I call a meeting to get my employee's advice.	16	3.88	0.885
(4) I want to create an environment where the employees take ownership of the project. I allow them to participate in the decision making process.	16	4.50	0.730
(5) I ask employees for their vision of where they see their jobs going and then use their vision where appropriate.	16	4.31	0.873
(6) I allow my employees to set priorities with my guidance.	16	4.13	1.147
(7) When there are differences in role expectations, I work with them to resolve the differences.	16	4.31	0.873
(8) I like to use my leadership power to help subordinates grow.	16	4.00	1.033
(9) Employees will exercise self-direction if they are committed to the objectives.	16	3.94	0.854
(10) Employees know how to use creativity and ingenuity to solve organizational problems.	16	3.81	0.750
Democratic style total	16	42,13	

(c) What is the character of delegating leadership style of school principals? First claim that director and employees vote when ever important decision needs to be made had a high value 4.44, which means that principals consult and appreciate opinion of their employees. Second claim, that important decisions are made where they appear had a value 3.63, which means that principals ask their employees who are entitled to work in their department, so decision is not made without them. Third claim, that principal does not transmit information personally, but through the media, had a value 2.25, which means that principals like direct way of information transmission. Fourth claim, that principals allow their employees to decide for themselves how and when something needs to be done, had a value 3.88, which means that principals approve their employees to plan their work on their own. Fifth claim, that employees are competent in their areas of operation, and principal allows them to make decisions in terms of performing their jobs, had a value 3.31, which means that principals have confidence in their employees to be good and well in their jobs. Sixth claim, that principal delegates tasks, had a value 4.56, which means that principal transmit powers and duties of his/her employees when the situation permits. Seventh claim, that everybody is responsible for defining his/her job had a value 4.25, which means that principals at the school ask their employees to take responsibility for what they do. Eighth claim, that principal likes to share leadership power with employees had a value 4.19, which means that principals transmit power to their employees and help them create competencies which will transform them into leaders. Ninth claim, that employees can determine their objectives by themselves, had a value 4.06, which means that principal allows the possibility for employees to organize their work according to rules and procedures. Tenth claim, that principals believe that their employees can lead a school by themselves as good as he/she, had a value 3.63, which means that principals have confidence in abilities and competencies of their employees. From research data comes that the total value of delegating leader ship style is 38.01. It means that principals use delegating leadership style, depending on circumstances (Table 3).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research results help us determine the style of leadership in which principals in school work. We came to the following data:
(I) Principals use all three styles of leadership, autocratic, democratic and delegating style. What styles of leadership will be used depends on the needs and situation at school. Compared to the situation and the employees, the director uses an autocratic style when there is a new employee who is not familiar with the organizational culture of school. Democratic, participative style, the principal will use when employees know their job and want to become part of a team at school. Principal will use delegating style when there are employees who know the job better than him/her. This will enable the school to do higher quality work and during that time the principal can engage in other activities.
(II) Principal uses all three styles of leadership when: (1) indicates to his/her employees which procedures are performed properly (authoritative style); (2) when the principal asks that his/her ideas and ideas of employees have result in changes (democratic style) and (3) when the director wants to implement new procedures, by delegating tasks to employees (delegating style).
(III) The prevailing style of leadership in school is a

Table 3. Delegative style.

Ascertainment	N	AS	SD
(1) I and my employees always vote whenever a major decision has to be made.	16	4.25	0.775
(2) For a major decision to pass in my department, it must have the approval of each individual or the majority.	16	3.63	1.025
(3) To get information out, I send it by email, memos, or voice mail; very rarely is a meeting called. My employees are then expected to act upon the information.	16	2.25	1.342
(4) I allow my employees to determine what needs to be done and how to do it.	16	3.88	0.957
(5) My workers know more about their jobs than me, so I allow them to carry out the decisions to do their job.	16	3.31	1.401
(6) I delegate tasks in order to implement a new procedure or process.	16	4.56	0.629
(7) Each individual is responsible for defining their job	16	4.25	0.856
(8) I like to share my leadership power with my subordinates.	16	4.19	0.750
(9) Employees have the right to determine their own organizational objectives.	16	4.06	0.680
(10) My employees can lead themselves just as well as I can.	16	3.63	0.806
Delegative style total	16	38.01	

democratic style (42.13 points), after which comes delegating style (38.01 points) and authoritative style (32.32 points). Since the result of delegating and autocratic style is more than 30 points, it means that principals moderately often use this style. The result for a democratic style, which is over 40 points, indicates common, participating leadership style. We conclude that the democratic style is the main style and that delegating and authoritarian leadership styles serve as assistant styles for work of principal at the school.

(IV) High results in democratic and delegating style indicate that principals are oriented to delegating style.

(V) Differences between styles (32.32 points – 42.13 points) tell us about clear perception of principal for the most appropriate style at school.

(VI) According to data, from 16 examined principals, 87.5% (14 principals) uses democratic style as prevailing one, while 6.3% (one principal) uses delegating style and 6.3% (one principal) uses authoritative style.

The main forces that affect the leadership style of school principals are: time period which the principal has at his disposal, character of relationships between principal and employees, authority over the information at school, vocational and professional qualifications of teachers, internal conflicts, type of tasks, development and changes at school, positive or negative approach of the school principal, motivation level, legislation and procedures.

Conclusion

This research has shown that the Serbia democratic leadership style in schools in Kragujevac Region is a prevailing one. Good school principal will use all three examined styles and apply them moderately depending on circumstances, tasks types, level of vocational and professional qualifications of teachers. Leadership style will depend on positive or negative approach of the school principal regarding jobs, tasks and employees. Mutual relations of employees can significantly influence the choice of the leadership style of the principal. Therefore, we can conclude that the leadership styles in the school are integrated and inseparable from each other. Omitting one of these styles would lead to problems in managing the school.

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