



THE ROLE OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN THE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY

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ABSTRACT

This paper is aimed at educational leadership in the professional learning community, building a professional learning community, and its effective staff development team approach and a strategy for school improvement. Educational leadership is built in a professional learning community (PLC) into fostering collaborative learning among colleagues within a work environment or field. It is often used in schools to organize teachers into working groups of practice-based professional learning. The PLC process aim to be a reflective process where both individual and community growth is achieved, connected with the school's shared vision for learning. Attributes of professional learning communities includes shared and supportive leadership, collective creativity, shared values and vision while the strategies and steps of effective educational leadership need professionals to turn your vision into a reality, to be an effective leader, you need to focus on few key areas that will have the highest impact on turning your vision and goals into a reality. Roles of educational leaders in a professional learning community is where educational leaders assume a wide range of roles to support school and student success extensively. Whether these roles are assigned formally or shared informally, they build the entire school's capacity to improve. Teachers can lead in variety of ways; many teachers can serve as leaders among their peers. Meanwhile, the goals of educational leaders in a professional learning community are to train the prospective Teacher/Mentor/Instructor to practice strategic leadership that promotes a vision, mission, values, beliefs and goals for 21st century Institutes/ schools. In conclusion the quality of the individual teacher remains paramount in student learning and the PLC concept is our best strategy for creating the system that ensures good teaching in the classrooms most of the time. This paper suggested that school heads should interface constantly with educational leadership in their locality. It also suggested that in improving the quality of learners, teachers must organize themselves into collaborative teams in other to create good system that ensures effective teaching and learning in the classroom.

Keywords: Leadership, Educational Leadership, Professional Learning Community, Teacher, Organization, Vision, Goals, Teacher.

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INTRODUCTION

The idea of improving schools by developing professional learning communities is currently being integrated into education. Individuals utilize this term to portray each possible blend of people with an interest in instruction and grade-level teaching team, a school committee, a high school department, an entire school district, a state department of education, a national professional organization, and so on. Indeed, the term has been utilized pervasively to such an extent that it is at risk for losing all importance. The professional learning community model has now reached a critical juncture, one well known to those who have perceived the fate of other benevolent school reform efforts. In this all-too-familiar cycle, early passion gives way to misperception about the fundamental concepts driving the ingenuity, followed by inevitable implementation problems, the conclusion that the reform has failed to bring about the anticipated results, neglect of the reform, and the launch of a new search for the next promising initiative.

Every year schools are looking for ways to improve their system and provide students with the best possible education, which is where good education leadership comes into play. Surprisingly enough, many people involved in their local educational system are uncertain as to what defines educational leadership. Education leadership is a combined process that utilizes the forces, knowledge and talents of teachers, parents, and teachers with the goal of improving not just the quality of education but also the education system itself. It is therefore necessary for good educational leadership to help advance the professional learning community (Razik & Swanson, 2010).

A professional learning community (PLC) is a method to foster collaborative learning among colleagues within a work environment or field. It is often used in schools to organize teachers into working groups of practice-based professional learning. PLCs have many variations. It means extending classroom practice into the community, bringing community personnel into the school to enhance the curriculum, and learning tasks for students, or engaging students, teachers, and administrators simultaneously in learning. DuFour, Eaker and Many (2010) noted that the benefits of professional learning community to educators and students include reduced isolation of teachers, better informed and committed teachers, and academic gains for students.

If schools are to be significantly more effective, they must break from the industrial model upon which they were created and embrace a new model that enables them to function as learning organizations. We prefer characterizing learning organizations as professional learning communities for several vital reasons. While the term "organization" suggests a partnership enhanced by efficiency, expediency, and mutual interests, community places greater emphasis on relationships, shared ideals, and a strong cultural all factors that are critical to school improvement.

DuFour (2004) stated that initiating and sustaining a PLC requires the school staff to focus on learning rather than teaching, work collaboratively on matters related to learning, and hold itself accountable for the kind of results that fuel continual improvement. Educators who are building professional learning community recognize that they must work together to achieve the collective purpose of learning for all. Therefore, they must create structures to promote a collaborative culture.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

So, what makes leaders who they are? Why are some people elected as managers and presidents while the rest remain followers? Leadership theories were developed to find answers to these questions, here, we shall look at some leadership theories.

Contingency Theory

The Contingency Theory emphasizes different variables in a specific setting that determine the style of leadership best suited for the said situation. It is founded on the principle that no one leadership style is applicable to all situations. Renowned leadership researchers Hodgson and White believe that the best form of leadership is one that finds the perfect balance between behaviours, needs, and context. Good leaders not only possess the right qualities but they're also able to evaluate the needs of their followers and the situation at hand. In summary, the contingency theory suggests that great leadership is a combination of many key variables.

The contingency theory gives the educational leader the room for change. The educational leader in the professional learning environment chooses the best leadership skill that best suit any situation at any time. In the professional learning community, the educational leader is always looked up to solve situations and the need to use leadership skill for the situation at hand is very necessary because no one leadership style fits all situations. The contingency theory helps the educational leaders in the professional learning community.

Situational Theory

The Situational Theory is like the Contingency Theory as it also proposes that no one leadership style supersedes others. As its name suggests, the theory implies that leadership depends on the situation at hand. Put simply, leaders should always correspond their leadership to the respective situation by assessing certain variables such as the type of task, nature of followers and more. As proposed by US professor Paul Hersey and leadership guru Ken Blanchard, the situational theory blends two key elements: the leadership style and the followers' maturity levels. Hersey and Blanchard classified maturity into four different degrees:

- M1 – Team members do not possess the motivation or tactical skills to complete necessary jobs.
- M2 – Team members are willing and ambitious to achieve something, but they lack the necessary ability.
- M3 – Team members possess the skills and capacity to accomplish tasks, but they're not willing to take accountability.
- M4 – Team members possess all the right talents and are motivated to complete projects.

For situational theory, a leader exercises a form of leadership based on the maturity level of his or her team.

Implication of the Situational Theory to this Study

As its name suggests, the theory implies that leadership depends on the situation at hand. Put simply, leaders should always correspond their leadership to respective situation. In the

professional learning community, educational leaders use the situation at hand to lead. They tend to use great leadership skills to attain maximum result in any learning environment they found themselves. With educational leaders in the professional learning community, great leadership attributes are exhibited. The Situational Theory, which is like the Contingency Theory, also proposes that no one leadership attributes supersede others. The situational theory throws more light on why educational leaders must not have just one approach in achieving the desired goals and objectives but must be emotionally intelligent enough to know what fits every situation at hand to get maximum result.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

Concept of Leadership

Leadership is a process of influence, leading to the fulfillment of preset targets. It involves motivating and supporting others towards a whole vision for the school, the foundations of which are built on clear personal and professional values. Leadership is not an act or set of acts, it is a process. Leadership is not just influence, yet it involves influencing others through leadership. While between the leader and followers, the influence is mutual, together, they influence the environment around them in some way. Leadership goes beyond achieving goals. There is a purpose, a cause which is broad enough to create a vision that connects followers who might have different individual goals. The concept of leadership has been quite visible in areas such as military operations, politics and management. Within work organization, leadership is no longer exclusively spontaneous or emergent (Bean, 2009).

Leadership can be assigned as a part of the requirement of exclusive jobs of individuals, teams or it can be part of the expectations that members have a role from individual teams. Leadership as a managerial function is no longer limited to the top officers. To become a great leader, a leader must have different leadership skills. There are the different types of leadership styles that exist in the work environments and advantages and disadvantages exist in each leadership style. Some companies offer same leadership style while others follow different leadership styles depending on what task to perform. It's only the culture and goals of an organization that determines which type of leadership suits to the firm (Elenkov, 2002).

A leader is crucial to the success of every team. Take an orchestra, for instance, one that consists of all the best musicians in the world but lacks a conductor. Even though every member of the orchestra can play perfectly by themselves, they will only produce an incompatible melody in the absence of a conductor. The same concept applies to communities, companies and countries, because without a leader, nothing will ever run smoothly. Leadership is the ability to inspire a team to achieve a certain goal. It's usually discussed in the context of business, but leadership is also how you, as an individual, choose to lead your life. The true leadership definition is to influence, inspire and help others become their best selves, building their skills and achieving goals along the way (Elenkov, 2002).

Leadership is not a zero-sum equation. When one person harnesses their powers to lead, it strengthens the leadership opportunities of others, rather than diminishing them. That is because the ultimate definition of leadership is empowering others to become effective leaders as well. That's why many iconic leaders have incredible mentors they cite for their success. As one

person begins to embrace their role as a leader, they inevitably connect with others who have already mastered the art of leadership (Rukmani et al., 2010).

Importance of Leadership

The importance of leadership lies in the ability to get things done. Leadership allows you to communicate a clear vision and then unite your team around that vision. Companies with great leaders are creative, innovative and agile. They also have positive company cultures with a sense of purpose and passion. Ultimately, effective leadership improves your company's bottom line, resulting in fewer turnovers and a mind-set of continuous improvement. But the importance of leadership also shows in other aspects of life. It's a set of skills you can take with you into relationships and on your path to personal improvement (Igbaekemen & Odivwri, 2015).

Leadership Set of Skills

A common misconception about leadership is that it's something you're born with and that the greatest leaders the world has seen were born with some innate magical quality that allows them to lead better than others. But that's simply not true. So, what is leadership? Leadership isn't a position that you're appointed to, it's a skill and a tool you can continually cultivate and use to create lasting change. Leadership is also not something you're born with or without it's a creative muscle you can strengthen and develop over time (Ojukuku et al, 2012). Whether you're a CEO of a Fortune 500 company or a college student trying to manage a pile of homework, leadership is about creating and sustaining positive, lasting change in your life and the lives of the people around you. Developing incredible leadership skills takes commitment. Setting goals is vital, and practice makes perfect.

Outstanding Leadership

In developing a grasp of true leadership meaning, you must ask yourself not only what is leadership, but also, what is great leadership? Great leadership is quality leadership and is servant leadership. Servant leadership refers to someone who is looking to influence others to serve the greater good. They do not just want to get from Point A to Point B, and they are not looking for an outcome that only benefits themselves; a great leader always has the big picture in mind. They're searching for ways to not just help themselves, but to help other people and the community at large. They are figuring out ways to influence their community and culture in such a way that everyone who is part of it benefits. Serving the greater good is their driving force, also known as their purpose.

The very best leaders in the world all have a distinct purpose in mind before they act. Purpose makes us resilient and strong. Without that purpose, you're much more susceptible to failure, prolonged ruts and depression. That is because purpose is what sustains us when things get tough and things will always get tough (Mitonga-Monga & Coetzee, 2012).

When you're looking to develop outstanding leadership skills, turn toward the purpose that drives you. Your purpose is the juice that will drive you to keep going when you face the obstacles and challenges that are so inevitable of any worthwhile journey. It is what will pick you up and uplift others around you whenever setbacks present themselves. It is your energy. It is Kryptonite for defeat and discouragement, and it is what will give you focus and direction

amidst the chaos. In other words, your purpose is the North Star of leadership. There are all sorts of different leaders in this world with myriad goals they're aiming for, but there are a distinct set of learned qualities and styles that unify the best leaders. They are committed to using time, dedication, consistency, and a distinct purpose to achieve their goals. You too can cultivate these skills and become one of the great leaders. By mastering your own set of leadership skills, you can not only fuel yourself closer to your purpose, but also encourage those around you to harness their own skills.

Educational Leadership

Educational leadership is the process of enlisting and guiding the talents and energies of teachers, pupils, and parents toward achieving common educational aims. This term is often used synonymously with school leadership in some part of the world. The term "educational leadership" is also used to describe programs beyond schools. Leaders in community colleges, proprietary colleges, community-based programs, and universities are also educational leaders. However, the term school leadership came into existence in the late 20th century for several reasons. Demands were made on schools for higher levels of pupil achievement, and schools were expected to improve and reform. These expectations were accompanied by calls for accountability at the school level. Maintenance of the status quo was no longer considered acceptable. Administration and management are terms that connote stability through the exercise of control and supervision (Karaxha, 2013).

The concept of leadership was favored because it conveys dynamism and pro-activity. The principal or school head is commonly thought to be the school leader; however, school leadership may include other persons, such as members of a formal leadership team and other persons who contribute toward the aim of the school. While school leadership or educational leadership have become popular as replacements for educational administration in recent years, leadership arguably presents only a partial picture of the work of school, division, or district, and ministerial or state education agency personnel, not to mention the areas of research explored by university faculty in departments concerned with the operations of schools and educational institutions.

In a time of high educational expectations and professional accountability, today's educational leaders need to possess a broad variety of skills that enable them to function comfortably and effectively in changing environments and under highly politicized conditions. Under these circumstances, change is the only constant. The main purpose of educational leadership is to guarantee academic success through process, training, and material improvements. Unfortunately, this success cannot be guaranteed or even accomplished without the help and collaboration of everyone involved, including the students, parents, teachers, policymakers and even the public. An educational leader serves as a guide and influences other educators in an administrative setting. In some cases, it may be a team of educational leaders. Leaders in these executive roles work toward finding ways to improve learning and to improve the process of educating students (Chong et al., 2014).

Attributes of Professional Learning Communities

Educational leadership and school change are recognized clearly and their role and influence in the professional learning community on whether change will occur in the school. It seems clear

that transforming the school organization into a learning community can be done only with the leaders' sanction and active nurturing of the entire staff development as a community. Thus, a look at the principal of a school whose staff is a professional learning community seems a good starting point for describing what these learning communities look like and how they operate (Hord, 2003). The followings are some attributes:

Shared and Supportive Leadership: Leadership in professional learning communities accept a collegial relationship with teachers, share power and decision making, and promote and nurture leadership development among the staff. Supportive leadership of principals as one of the necessary human resources for school-based professional communities referring to them as post-heroic leaders who do not view themselves as the architects of school effectiveness.

Collective Creativity: A learning organizations that might serve to increase organizational capacity and creativity moved into the educational environment. The idea of a learning organization where people continually expand their capacity to create the results, they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together caught the attention of educators struggling to plan and implement reform in the nation's schools.

Shared Values and Vision: Vision is a trite term these days, and at various times it refers to mission, purpose, goals, objectives, or a sheet of paper posted near the leadership office. Sharing vision is not just agreeing with a good idea; it is a particular mental image of what is important to an individual and to an organization. Staff are encouraged not only to be involved in the process of developing a shared vision, but to use that vision as a guidepost in decision making about teaching and learning in the school.

Strategies and Steps of Effective Educational Leadership

To be a great and effective leader, you need to be very clear on your vision, and what actions you need to take to turn your vision into a reality. And, like an organization or a team, to be an effective leader, you need to focus on the few key areas that will have the highest impact on turning your vision and goals into a reality. The more you are willing to learn and the harder you are willing to practice, the more successful you will become at achieving your vision and goals (Hord, 2003).

Here are seven ways to become even more effective in your leadership approach:

Find great mentors: The difference between leaders and managers is that leaders may or may not have a title, but they always have people who are motivated to willingly follow them.

Clarify your leadership vision: Clarifying your vision will help you determine what areas you need to improve and what areas will require more practice.

Be committed: Every day, you will be faced with operational tasks that take your time and effort. Leadership activities almost always take more thought, can be frustrating because people

are involved, and often don't have immediate gratification. Great leaders are committed to staying focused on doing the right thing and accomplishing their leadership vision.

Build your Emotional Intelligence: Your IQ is all about how intelligent you are. Your Emotional Intelligence is all about opening your mouth, building strong relationships, and achieving your goals. In the leadership business, another great test for emotional intelligence is whether your family, friends, boss, peers, and direct reports feel comfortable telling you the truth about your leadership and communication style. Collecting informal feedback on a regular basis, acting on what you learn from the feedback will all be good practice, helping you to improve your leadership.

Treat people right: Everyone would agree that treating people right is important. What is discussed a lot less is that different people want to be treated differently. Some people need more praise and recognition; others want to produce results by working as a high performing team; still others tackle their daily job by getting stuff done and crossing stuff off their list. Figuring people out, and treating them like they want to be treated, will be a big part of a leader's success.

Learn from your mistakes: The best leaders are the best learners. When you think about the ability to practice and learn, then mistakes aren't really mistakes. You have only learned a new way that does not work.

Leadership takes practice: Leadership is not something you practice once and become a master at. But how much practice you do.

Emotional Intelligence in Leadership: Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to understand and manage your own emotions, and those of the people around you. People with a high degree of emotional intelligence know what they're feeling, what their emotions mean, and how these emotions can affect other people demonstrated through leadership behaviors. And they are:

- Leaders lead by example, inspiring, not afraid of difficult stuff, focused and driven (motivation);
- Leaders are confident, honest, direct, consistent (self-awareness);
- Leaders are clear, decisive, straight forward, intuitive (self-regulation);
- Leaders are good communicators, approachable and listen to others (social skills);
- Leaders are empathetic, influential (empathy).

Successful leadership is about being effective in three ways: leading self, leading others, and leading the organization. Leading self: Successful leaders know that they are not perfect. They are aware of their strengths and weaknesses and strive for continuous improvement. A Chief Executive that does not acknowledge their own flaws or blind spots, who tries to do everything by him- or herself, doesn't learn from mistakes and is unable to delegate, will soon be derailed. If you're self-aware as a leader you can work to overcome your weaknesses either through personal development and learning new skills, or by empowering others and using their skills. Motivation is equally important here. Having goals to work towards, and setting high standards for you, means acknowledging that there will be obstacles along the way. As a leader, this means constantly challenging yourself, finding ways round the obstacles, and picking yourself up when

things go wrong. And you need self-regulation to manage your emotions as a leader. Leadership is tough. So, having the ability to keep calm, deal well with pressure and stay optimistic is vital. Mastering leadership of self requires admitting they not perfect and striving for improvement.

History of Professional Learning Community

The phrase professional learning community began to be used in the 1990s after Senge's (1990) in the book "The Fifth Discipline", had popularized the idea of learning organizations, related to the idea of reflective practice espoused by Donald (1990), in books such as *The Reflective Turn*. In the early 1990s to late 1990s, school systems throughout the United States were undergoing a rash of educational reforms because of public demands for holding schools accountable for student learning. Schools were searching for the reform or innovation that would help them improve student achievement. All over the country, professional learning communities were being discussed as one of the newest educational reforms. Since then, professional learning communities have slowly gained momentum as a school reform framework for helping schools meet the needs of their students and meet the requirements set forth by no child is left behind. Currently, professional learning communities are in high demand.

In education, reform efforts frequently are met with high expectations, and school systems from all over the country rush to adopt them. This overview of the professional literature about professional learning communities is written from a historical perspective. Tracking and analyzing the reaction of educators and researchers to the implementation of this educational reform and comparing it to other educational reforms can yield insight into the fate of current and future reforms and innovations in education. In a general sense, a learning community could be described as a group of people who share common values and beliefs and who are actively engaged in learning together from each other. Where schools are concerned, both teachers and students are at the core of the school as a learning community (Thompson, 2004).

Concept of Professional Learning Community

A professional learning community, or PLC, is a group of educators that meets regularly, shares expertise, and works collaboratively to improve teaching skills and the academic performance of students. The term is also applied to schools or teaching faculties that use small-group collaboration as a form of professional development. Shirley (2008), an expert on school leadership, came up with perhaps the most efficient description of the strategy: The three words explain the concept: Professionals coming together in a group a community to learn. It should be noted that professional learning communities may be called many different things from school to school or place to place, including professional learning groups, collaborative learning communities, critical friends' groups, or communities of practice, to name just a few common terms. Terms such as professional learning groups and critical friends' groups are typically applied to smaller teams of teachers usually between four and eight, although group sizes vary rather than to an entire school that uses small-group collaboration as a form of professional development.

Professional learning communities tend serve to two broad purposes:

- Improving the skills and knowledge of educators through collaborative study, expertise exchange, and professional dialogue; and

- Improving the educational aspirations, achievement, and attainment of students through stronger leadership and teaching.

Professional learning communities often function as a form of action research i.e., to continually question, re-evaluate, refine, and improve teaching strategies and knowledge. In the professional learning communities, teams are often built around shared roles or responsibilities. Teachers, for example, will discuss and reflect on their instructional techniques, lesson designs, and assessment practices, while administrators may address leadership questions, strategies, and issues. The specific activities and goals of a professional learning community may vary widely from school to school (Bowgren, 2010), and some of them are:

Reform: Professional learning communities are nearly always an intentional school improvement strategy designed to reduce professional isolation, foster greater faculty collaboration, and spread the expertise and insights of individual teachers throughout a school. Teachers may work largely independently, i.e., they will create courses and lessons on their own and teach behind the closed doors without much feedback from colleagues teaching styles, educational philosophies, and learning expectations can vary widely from class to class, also the effectiveness of lessons and instructions. Teachers may feel more professionally confident and better equipped to address the learning needs of their students, and they may become more willing to engage in the kind of self-reflection that leads to professional growth and improvement. The faculty culture may improve, and professional relationships can become stronger and more trusting because the faculty is interacting and communicating more productively. Teachers may begin using more evidence-based approaches to design lessons and delivering instructions.

Debate: While the professional learning community concept is not typically an object of criticism or debate, sceptics may question whether these groups can have a positive impact on student learning, or whether the extent of that impact justifies the time or expense required to make them successful. Since it often extremely difficult, from a research perspective, to attribute gains in student performance to any one influence in a school. It is more likely, however, that professional learning communities will be criticized or debated when they are poorly implemented or facilitated, if they become disorganized and unfocused, if they are perceived as a burdensome or time-consuming obligation.

Creating a Professional Learning Community

A professional learning community shares a vision. School faculty working in a professional learning community share a common understanding of how to go about getting to that vision, and they share a common commitment to the vision. For example, when a school is functioning as a professional learning community, you can walk around the building on any given day and see teachers talking to one another, discussing curriculum goals, discussing what activities they are going to engage in that day. There is an attitude of cooperation. There is never fear of asking for help. It is obvious that the support participants feel is systemic (Senge, 2006). The ability to explore, to ask questions, ask peers, ask supervisors is only possible when it comes from the top; that is, successful learning communities require support from the superintendent (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2008).

The whole philosophy of a professional learning community is people working together. Each member of the professional learning community wants to help the other succeed in daily interactions with all school stakeholders. Members work together to achieve the goals they have for themselves and what they want to become. The school principal plays a vital role in the creation of a professional learning community. The principal begins by bringing people together to engage in a four-step process and they are:

Creating a Mission Statement: The first step is to create a mission statement that identifies the school's purpose. The first question that the faculty needs to consider is: What is our mission, our fundamental purpose? For example, the school's purpose may be how to identify proven strategies to teach children how to learn (DuFour & Eaker, 2008). That captures something that people can hold in their minds and hearts as they perform their duties (Leithwood & Beatty, 2008). It helps to begin to have an influence on the day-to-day teaching and learning that takes place in the school.

Developing a Vision: After clarifying the school's mission, the next step is to develop a vision. A vision is an attempt to describe the school that faculty members are hoping to become. In an exemplary school, students (a) accept responsibility for their learning, decisions, and actions; (b) develop skills to become more self-directed learners as they progress through the grades; and (c) actively engage in and give effort to academic and extracurricular pursuits.

Developing Value Statement: The next stage in the process is to develop value statements. At this point, the members of another faculty task force might begin to work with their colleagues to identify shared values, attitudes, behaviors, and commitments. All teachers would pledge to demonstrate to move the school closer to their shared vision.

Establishing Goals: To achieve the school's vision, school stakeholders must establish goals based on the adopted value statements. Goals are the results that a school tries to achieve (Locke & Latham, 1995). Principals can provide a faculty with parameters in identifying goals that directly impact teaching and learning. The presence of explicit goals benefits all stakeholders by fostering commitment, providing performance standards, providing targets, and enhancing motivation.

Commitment: These statements describe the school's purpose to participants. The process of getting participants to agree to pursue specific goal gives those individuals a personal stake in the outcome. Thus, goals are helpful in encouraging personal commitment to collective ends.

Standards: As goals define desired outcomes for the school, they also serve as performance criteria. When appraising performance, principals need goals as an established standard against which they can measure performance. Clearly defined goals enable principals to weigh performance objectively based on accomplishment rather than subjectively based on personality. For example, if a school wishes to increase the percentage of students passing state mandated tests by 10% and the actual increase is 20%, the principal and faculty have exceeded the prescribed standard.

Targets: School goals provide principals with specific targets and direct collegial efforts toward given outcomes. People tend to pursue their own ends in the absence of formal organizational goals.

Motivation: In addition to serving as targets, standards, and commitment, goals give a role in encouraging colleagues to perform at their highest levels. Moreover, goals give principals a rational basis for rewarding performance. If colleagues receive rewards equal to their levels of performance, they should continue to exert high levels of effort. To make the school's mission, vision, values, and goals something more than words on paper, the principal needs to communicate and model them so that they are embedded in the daily life of the school.

Attributes of a Learning Community

Educational leadership and school change as recognized clearly discussed the role and influence of the campus administrator (the principal, and sometimes an assistant principal) on whether change will occur in the school. It seems clear that transforming the school organization into a learning community can be done only with the leaders' sanction and active nurturing of the entire staff's development as a community. Thus, a look at the principal of a school whose staff is a professional learning community seems a good starting point for describing what these learning communities look like and how they operate (Mulford, 2013). The following attributes are discussed:

Shared Values and Vision: Vision is a trite term these days, and at various times it refers to mission, purpose, goals, objectives, or a sheet of paper posted near the principal's office (Isaacson & Bamburg, in Shirley, 2008). Sharing vision is not just agreeing with a good idea; it is a particular mental image of what is important to an individual and to an organization. Staffs are encouraged not only to be involved in the process of developing a shared vision, but to use that vision as a guidepost in decision making about teaching and learning in the school. These shared values and visions lead to binding norms of behavior that the staff shares. Brandt in Shirley (2008) maintained that the concern of the adults in the school for the intellectual quality of student learning, in contrast to concern for techniques, such as whether to have portfolios or whether to eliminate all ability grouping makes the difference in the values and visions that the staff bring to teaching and learning. Newmann in Shirley (2008) explained that the degree to which staff develops into a professional community that engages and develops the commitment and talents of all individuals into a group effort that pushes for learning of high intellectual quality is the key to student excellence. Marte (1993) in Shirley (2008) concisely defines the vision of the professional learning community as a focus on the quality of life, quality of work, quality of learning in short, a total quality focus.

Supportive Conditions: Supportive conditions determine when and where and how the staffs regularly come together as a unit to do the learning, decision making, problem solving, and creative work that characterize a professional learning community. Two types of conditions are necessary for learning communities to function productively and they are the physical or structural setup and the human qualities/capacities of the people involved.

Physical Conditions: Time is a resource and time or is one of the most difficult problems faced by schools and districts (Watts & Castle, 1993). This problem is a significant issue for faculties that wish to work together collegially, and it has been cited as both a barrier when it is not available and a supportive factor when it is present by staff engaging in school improvement.

People's Capacity Building: One of the first characteristics of individuals cited by Louis and Kruse (1995) in a productive learning community is a willingness to accept feedback and work toward improvement. In addition, the following characteristics are needed: respect and trust among colleagues at the school at district level, possession of an appropriate cognitive and skill base that enables effective teaching and learning, supportive leadership from administrators and others in key roles, and relatively intensive socialization processes. Note the strong parallel with people or human factors identified by Boyd (1992), positive teacher attitudes toward schooling, students, and change, students' heightened interest and engagement with learning. Boyd (1992) pointed out that the physical and people factors are highly interactive, many influencing the others. Boyd and Hord (1994) clustered the factors into four functions that help build a context conducive to change and improvement and are: reducing staff isolation, increasing staff capacity and productivity.

Educational Leaders in a Professional Learning Community

Educational leaders assume a wide range of roles to support school and student success. Whether these roles are assigned formally or shared informally, they build the entire school's capacity to improve. Teachers can lead in a variety of ways; many teachers can serve as leaders among their peers. The following roles are a sampling of the many ways teachers can contribute to their schools' success:

Resource Provider: Leaders help their colleagues by sharing Curriculum Specialist instructional resources. These might include Web sites, instructional materials, readings, or other resources to use with students. They might also share such professional resources as articles, books, lesson, or unit plans, etc.

Instructional Specialist: An instructional specialist helps colleagues implement effective teaching strategies. This help might include ideas for differentiating instruction or planning lessons in partnership with fellow teachers. Instructional specialists might study research-based classroom strategies.

Curriculum Specialists: They lead teachers to agree on standards, follow the adopted curriculum, use common pacing charts, and develop shared assessments.

Classroom Supporter: They work inside the classrooms to help teachers implement new ideas, often by demonstrating a lesson, co-teaching, or observing and giving feedback (Blase & Blasé, 2006) found that consultation with peers, enhanced teachers' self-efficacy.

Goals of Educational Leadership in a Professional Learning Community

- To train the prospective Teacher/Mentor/Instructor to practice strategic leadership that promotes a vision, mission, values, beliefs, and goals for 21st century Institutes/ schools;
- To provide the prospective Teacher/Mentor/Instructor with the knowledge of best instructional and Institute/school practices that result in an environment of accountability and high standards for all students;
- To provide a program of study that enhances the prospective Teacher/Mentor/Instructor's understanding of the role culture contributes to learning community, student learning, and the achievement of collective goals;
- To develop the prospective Teacher/Mentor/Instructor's skills to create an Institute professional learning community which empowers teachers with distributive leadership;
- To develop the prospective Teacher/Mentor/Instructor's managerial leadership skills in budgeting, staffing, problem solving, and communicating to meet the 21st century needs of every classroom;
- To facilitate the development of the prospective Teacher/Mentor/Instructor's external development leadership skills that will enhance parent/community/business engagement, support, and ownership in the Institute; and
- To develop the prospective Teacher/Mentor/Instructor's micro political leadership skills to facilitate social cohesion and shared decision making among staff.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion the quality of the individual teacher remains paramount in student learning, and the PLC concept is our best strategy for creating the system that ensures more good teaching in more classrooms most of the time. The best way to improve schools is to organize teachers into collaborative teams that clarify what each student must learn and the indicators of learning the team will track, to gather evidence of that learning on an ongoing basis, and to analyze the results together so that they could learn which instructional strategies were working and which were not.

Suggestions

The following suggestions were made:

- Principals should interface constantly with educational leadership in their locality;
- Professionalism should be inculcated into all learning communities to have maximum result in the learning environment;
- In improving the quality of learners, teachers must be organized themselves into collaborative teams in order to create good system that ensures effective teaching and learning in the classroom;
- Schools must improve in all areas of the learning environment, so that teachers will be more organized, and students will learn with great instructional working strategies from teachers;
- Teachers should show professionalism in all areas, and to inculcate good learning ability in the students to get maximum result from the learning environment.

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