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School Leadership for the 21st Century: A Conceptual Overview

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ABSTRACT

This paper puts forth that leadership for the 21st century should be inclusive and distributive, and at the same time, promoting leadership capacity building. It underlies the belief that leadership occurs at all levels, a school is a learning organization, and that all personnel has the potential to learn and be developed, and that school leadership should be looked at holistically, and one that is distributive. Effective leadership in this paper is devoted to the process and function – a joint and holistic perspective that encompasses all the personnel in the school, the principals and the teachers – that is the world of teachers and classrooms, and leadership of the whole school system which should give the support and environment for the schools to flourish. Hence, school leadership is to facilitate learning or leadership for learning not merely student learning, but learning for all, towards making the school a place to learn, albeit not undermining the importance of the principal in promoting a learning environment. The gist of this paper is to promote distributive leadership, as the future of school leadership and management, towards school effectiveness and improvement. It offers the perspective of what could be effective school leadership in the third millennium – not because it is the beginning of the unknown that we all will have to face and be ready for.

Keywords: School leadership, Leadership for learning, Distributive leadership, Principal-ship, Building leadership capacity, School effectiveness and improvement.



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INTRODUCTION

The advent of the new millennium was preceded by a lot of interest from all quarters, more so among educators. Many things have been said and will continue to be said, about the future of schools, and school leadership in the new millennium.

The phrase 'effective school leadership' brings two things to mind, battling for prominence - effective schools and leadership of the principal. In the current situation, the focus of education policy makers should be on the issues of leadership and management for the effective and successful schools in the 21st century and in the future. This is vital in facing the course of the future, to ensure that schools will be relevant and continue to be functioning as they are expected to. Specifically provide education for the future generation, in the most successful manner that can be, in the light of increasing globalization, and the need to preserve local heritage and identity as well as development of individuals. What will be alluded to is the school as the best educational institution and the best organization which is defined as the environment that supports the improvement of "organizational learning" (Marks & Printy, 2013). Moreover, it is a place that encourages consolidated learning at all levels as "learning organization" (Senge, 1996c, 2003, 2006).

This paper underlies the belief that leadership occurs at all levels, as a holistic whole. A school which is learning for all personnel and the realization of everyone's potential to learn. Moreover, it refers to school leadership as merely leadership of the principal is inadequate – for the belief that leadership in schools, and in any organization for that matter – should be looked at holistically, and one that is distributive. Effective leadership in this paper is devoted to the process and function – a joint and holistic perspective that encompasses all the personnel in the school, the principals and the teachers – that is the world of teachers and classrooms, and leadership of the whole school system which should give the support and environment for the schools to flourish. Hence, school leadership is to facilitate learning, leadership for learning (MacBeath & Cheng, 2008), not merely student learning, but learning for all, towards making the school a place to learn, albeit not undermining the importance of the principal, towards promoting a learning environment. In fact the gist of this paper is to promote distributive leadership, or in Lambert's (1998, 2003) terms, building leadership capacity, particularly that of the 'middle management' in the school, as principals in the future will have to take charge of the wider and more perplexing demands of the society at large.

This paper is triggered by the trend and interest for the future of school leadership and management. It will offer the perspective of what could be effective school leadership in the third millennium – not because it is the beginning of the unknown that we all will have to face and be ready for.

BACKGROUND

The new millennium has brought with it a lot of uncertainties. We are confronted with changes, which are escalating. We are now in the post-industrial era, enjoying the benefits of technology advancement. Changes which happen in the last decade far surpass what has happened in the twenty to thirty years before that. The world has become a much more complex place to live, while at the same time becoming more similar across boundaries. With the rapid advancement of technology, particularly information communication technology, the nature of schools and meaning of learning change drastically. It is certain however, that the world of schools, the teacher and classrooms will be more complex than ever.



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The principal-ship and school leadership will be more challenging; principals will continue to be struggling to manage and lead their schools, to ensure that professional standards are enhanced and to manage their multifaceted jobs with increasing demands dictated by the changes and challenges brought about by the world outside. Although schools have been functioning relatively well, it will be increasingly more difficult for the principal-ship of tomorrow, because how schools are structured today, may well be not suited to changes taking place and the increasing demands on the school brought about by the changes. The world of high technology and sophisticated communication channels force us to face the 'new world' in a different way. What is coming next is uncertain – what is certain is that there will be more changes, with greater speed. Furthermore, what happens in faraway places is brought into our classrooms and living rooms with the opening of the skies through computer technology.

For the schools then, the environment is becoming more complex and contradictory, multifaceted, and multicultural – which are real challenges to the current practices and way of doing things. What is certain is that we have to be prepared to prepare our children and youth for the world of work which is different from what we know, yet not certain what is really is or what will actually work. Yet we have to do the same basic thing – i.e. educate our children and educate them in the way we want them to be – truly Malaysians as inscribed in the National Education Philosophy.

What is real is that there is a need for the new approaches to leadership in schools, new ways of doing things and new school environment – which must be in a constant flux of changes to cope with and hopefully be at least abreast with if not a little ahead of the changes in the world outside the school, of which the school is an integral part of.

THE CONTEXT OF LEADERSHIP IN THE 21ST CENTURY

It has been said that the post-industrial era is a world of 'chaos', where traditional cultures and structures are diminishing and organizations are non-rational and non-linear. Things are not as neat as we want it to be. Boundaries are vague and diffused. Schools being a part of society they are in and mirrors the same, are as organizations non-linear, non-rational, and have vague boundaries. With technology advancement, the world is in the classrooms. Whether we like it or not, we cannot stop the world becoming a global village, and with it comes contradictions and constraints, as well as confusion. Nevertheless, as Fullan (1997) states, the non-rational world is not a nonsensical one. Goals are stated, but because of the confrontation of global values and local contexts, goals are often multiple and competing (p.5).

Likewise, school goals are now multiple and sometimes competing. One of the key goals is to ensure every child's success as citizens and work force in the information age. Moreover, it aims to advocate for the infusion of 21st century skills into education and provides tools and resources to help facilitate and drive change. As stated in the Malaysian National Education Philosophy; the main focus of education is to produce Malaysians who are global in nature, and be able to face the challenges of the modern world. This will prepare them to be able to attain the country's vision of becoming a developed nation by the year 2020 (Ministry of Education, 2003).

Along with individual development of the future citizens, in coping with the changing world, schools have to make a balance between globalization effects (the world trends) with the 'local' and national characteristics as the country's determinants. Similarly, Cheng (2000) calls for a change of paradigm which espouses what he labels as 'triplization', that is (a) adopting the values of globalization – for a long term relevance; (b) individualization – adapting to individual needs for individual self-development.



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The world of the teachers and students are likewise as complex, in the face of flexible working hours, intrusion of knowledge and influences, which may be competing with current practices. The nature of the student body is different, more diverse, multi-faceted, and more multi ability than ever before. In essence then, schools will have to be restructured, and need to be in a constant state of transformation.

THE PRINCIPAL-SHIP

School principals occupy the most difficult position in the educational system (Hallinger, 2003). They are faced with conflicting demands, as the school system is still largely 'hierarchical in nature', existing in a non-linear world. At best, they are ill prepared, ill-trained and has to fare for themselves in these turbulent times. They are chief executives in their respective schools, but they are the lower end of the educational/school system hierarchy. At the most peaceful times they have to be in the middle, answering to conflicting demands of the central agency and the school, and at worst he has to bear the brunt from all sides.

Effective school leadership focuses on principals, head teachers and the teachers and classrooms. In this regard, paying attention to the others who may just be as important – specifically the middle managers/technocrats in the school, the head of departments, or the senior teachers, who may have devoted a lot to the success of the schools are also important. Where will the successful principal/head-teacher be without the assistance or the contribution of the Heads of Departments and teachers? The principal-ship of the future will have to take account these middle managers in the school – as leadership of the principal alone may be insufficient as schools become more complex. However, with this sharing of leadership, the principal needs new set of skills and new ways of doing things.

Changes need schools to be reformed and continuously reforming, particularly in terms of curriculum and instruction, in order to be abreast of times. The 'new curriculum' will have to take into consideration that schools can no longer be adequate to 'teach' in the traditional manner-both in terms of subject matter as well as methods of instruction. There is so much more knowledge to be explored, and there are numerous sources of knowledge which students and teachers can and need to access. The new curriculum then will have to be one that is flexible, one which encourages information accessing and self-analysis. This requires flexible leadership, management and organizational structures which facilitate their implementation.

Teaching in schools can no more be merely implementation of a centrally designed syllabus. Teaching will have to be an adaption of the 'world curriculum', to the local needs and with a local flavor. It has to be, at one and the same time be facilitative of knowledge acquisition, as well as analysis and adaption, and in Malaysia, to suit our own national identity. This needs a new kind of leadership – one which facilitates autonomy and enhancement of individual teacher autonomy, yet not to ape what others have done without consideration of what we, as a nation, strive for.

Our philosophy dictates that schools follow a common content syllabus, with clear guidelines for the values we espouse. Planning and implementation have in general been done separately. However, with increasing complexity, schools need to be decentralized in administration, but still maintaining the national identity and proponents of national ideology. A balance must be found so as to ensure that at the school level, teachers and students can feel that they own the curriculum – and hence their teaching will be with passion. "Leadership management and organizational structures should be shaped by the requirements of the curriculum, teaching, and learning, rather than the reverse. Fundamental purpose of schools is to provide relevant curriculum for students and to maximize their opportunity to learn. Leadership, management, and organizational structures should facilitate and support this main purpose (Dimmock & Lee, 2000).



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The leadership of the future will have to shift away from merely teaching syllabus – oriented curriculum, to focus on student learning outcomes – yet not neglecting what is spelt out by the philosophy of the nation. Emphasis is then on higher order needs, problem solving, critical thinking and creativity, which are already “buzzwords” in education circles. However, it is the responsibility of the school and its leadership to ensure that the “buzzwords” does not remain buzzwords, or become passing “fads”. This then means that success depends on site based techniques and strategies.

This also means that more importance must be given to learning – no longer for the teacher to cover the syllabus, but for the teacher to facilitate the students to discover for themselves, what they need to learn and acquire what are outlined in the centrally designed curriculum, on top of what teachers discuss in the classrooms. This learning has to be more through their own thinking skills, which also need to be developed. It also means that schools need to cultivate the learning culture in schools, and leadership to build truly learning organizations. Leadership then, is to apply higher order practices, setting visions and goals and building climate and learning culture, to be combined with management which is to ensure that resources are available, the National Education Philosophy.

School leadership, particularly with regards to curriculum and instruction at the school level, should not be only in the hands of the appointed principals, the chief executives of the school, who is responsible not only for setting the directions and make key decisions. Leadership should be concerned with designing the instructional strategies, the learning process, whereby the people throughout the schools, the teachers particularly, can deal productively with the critical issues they face, and develop their mastery in learning disciplines. Leadership should be concerned with guiding the vision of the group by learning to listen carefully to the others’ visions, and adapting it holistically to make it something everyone feels they have a say in. It also means leadership includes the teachers as teachers, and teachers as learners, open to challenge and further improvements that foster learning for everyone.

This means that leadership must be distributive, allowing for all involved to be truly involved, and collaborative. Much more importance must be given to the teachers. Research has proven that these “silent leaders” have been contributing in no small way to school success. A new kind of leadership is brought to the fore, and new skills are needed to make it work.

A special kind of skills is called for - one, which employs new skills, new perspectives and changed attitudes. The culture must be build – that which values flexibility, and innovation, and ownership for all in the school, as a learning organization, and teachers as professional learning communities. According to Mintzberg (1994), “Never adopt a [management] technique by its usual name. ...call it something different so that you have to think it through for yourself and work it out on your own terms. If you just adopt it and implement it, it is bound to fail” (p. 27). There is, according to Fullan (1997) no “silver bullet” or set of techniques that can do the job. Leaders for changes must immerse themselves in real situations or reform and begin to craft their own theories of change, constantly testing them against new situation and accounts of others’ experience (p.8).

Leaders must make the choice between maintenance, that is “playing safe” or taking risks, but, and, according to Fullan (2010) the key is to look at each encounter as an opportunity to support autonomy and to create an organization for one’s own choosing. Cultures get changed in a thousand and one ways, not by dramatic announcement from the top, and hence more autonomy must be with the school.

LEADERSHIP SKILLS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Previous literature on leadership has shifted away from being prescriptive to being flexible. Having toured what should be the school and leadership is in the face of escalating and uncertainties for the future, what then is the type of leadership or new skills needed to cope with this perplexing situation? Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach



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(1999) propose that at times of change, what works for leaders will be different from what works in times of less turbulence. Referring to Senge, they state:

"... (we need) ... approaches to leadership that productively respond to the complexity of the challenges faced by organization today (and tomorrow), that radically altered expectation that employees bring to their work, and the considerably greater respect that has developed for the capacities of people throughout the organization (school) to think productively about missions and how they can be addressed... there is no final word about what is good leadership. We are trying to hit a moving target, maybe get a little ahead of it" (pp. 3-4).

However, the concept leadership continues to be a fascination for all of us. Thousands of definitions have been offered, and yet it remains elusive, and will always remain elusive, for it is closely related to being human and the nature of human beings are the most complex being phenomena on earth. Man who will never be fully understood, except by the creator. Furthermore, effective leadership means different things to different people, and different things in different cultures. It is not something that you can get it right, and it is right for all times. As contexts change, so too does the meaning of effective leadership. However, from the tons of literature on leadership, it is agreed that leadership involves social influence. Yukl (2010) states that it is "...influence exerted by one person (or group) over other people (or group) to structure activities and relationships in a group or organization" (p. 3).

On school leadership, Leithwood, et al. (1999), named six categories or types, namely instructional, transformational, moral, participative, managerial, and contingent. Each is differentiated by the main focus of intention, and influence, In terms of source, purpose and outcomes. They proposed that the only form of leadership which is most likely to be successful is transformational and moral leadership, for "(it)...entails not only a change in the purposes and resources of those involved in the leader-follower relationship, but an elevation of both – a change for the better... it ultimately becomes moral in that it raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both leaders and led, and thus has transforming effect on both" (Burns, 1978, p. 20).

Furthermore, school leadership is basically instructional leadership, since the main focus of the school is instruction, the core business of the school. In terms of behavior or approach, as mentioned by Leithwood, et al. (1999) it should be transformational, as in the business of the school, it involves the transformation of human beings, the students and teachers, and focused on the transformation of the school, specifically school improvement. The main function of school leadership is to transform the school to make it an environment conducive to and facilitative to learning for all. School leadership should be transformational in nature, as leadership is to enable teachers to realize their potential and ultimately to enable the students to achieve what is achievable. Recognizing that the school, being the most important agent of socialization, after the home, and its traditional role of inculcating values and norms of the society (and nation), leadership must also be focused on the modal aspect emphasizing Malaysian values to be espoused by all. In short, the Malaysian school principle, and Malaysian school leadership is instructional leadership, which is transformational in nature, entrenched with moral values. For this kind of leadership, leaders need to have vision and able to inspire others to share the vision: in the Malaysian case, the vision that is in line with the national philosophy of education. This specific vision for the specific school will have to be a blend of all people concerned. This vision is a "blend of experience from the past, and our hopes for the future" (Edwards, 2002). Ensuring a shared vision is a key skill of transformation leadership. This vision needs to be realistic and attainable, yet inspiring, able to make that dream a reality. In the other words, that vision should have taken into consideration the special characteristic of the students we serve. From our own small research that involved four principles, it was found that for every principle who has brought improvement to



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his/her school, a different style and approach was exhibited – each suited to the environment and nature of the school and students, and the principal's own personality. But each of them had a vision – not lofty, but realistic and tailored to the special needs of their schools, but all were in line with the National Educational Philosophy (Rahimah & Zulkifli, 1996). Each of them could articulate what they wanted for their schools, and the mission stated, were in line with their visions, as well as the strategies used to bring their school that little bit better than it was before – improve. Hence, the leadership styles (not the same for all) are flexible, and ‘tailor made’, and effective for their schools.

Additionally, school leadership for the 21st century – in these times of uncertainty and changes, must have compassion and care. Where conflicts abound, negotiations must be made to value relationship, as part of their commitment to care and to be socialized that prepares them better for collaboration. For all the principals mentioned above, each showed there was care and compassion, both for the students, as well as for the teachers, and the parents they served. They negotiated conflicts in ways that did not affect their relationship with teachers, it includes the value of horizontal and inclusionary leadership, the inclusion of teachers in all matters of the school. In one of the schools we studied, teachers were consulted on ways to improve community relations, on the organization of meetings with parents on to discuss the welfare of their children, and the “gotong royong” projects the school undertook to beautify the school. It does agree with the literature that emphasizes the urgent need for relationship of care, the celebration of pluralism and diversity, and the commitment to interacting with communities with empathy and two way communications. It does mean that the principal-ship should espouse and strengthen with more collaboration and community building.

Moreover, leadership for the new millennium calls for a renewal. It calls for the leadership for change in action (Fullan, 1997, 2010), which is mainly participatory. For the principal it should not be about “selling” your idea but asking for real participation from the teachers and staff, and asking for dissent and having brainstorming sessions, a few if need be. According to Champy (1995), a culture that squashes disagreement is a culture doomed to stagnate because changes always begins with disagreement. Besides, disagreement cannot be squashed entirely. It gets to merge later as a pervasive sense of injustice, followed by apathy, resentment, and even sabotage. Hence what is needed is a culture of embracing, valuing, and seeking new learning organization in the energy of resistance; and the corresponding costs of reaching negatively to resistance. Disagreement is not disrespect in the learning organization, it is essential for growth. Both individualism and collaboration must co-exist, isolation is bad, but collaboration has its bad sides too – conflicts are inevitable, ugly but it can also begin a breakthrough.

Leadership for action also means inclusion – include everybody to enable them to accept and feel they own the “change”. As far as possible everyone should be made to feel they are wanted as part of the team. Meetings should be scheduled for when everyone can be present. Negotiate for the dates, and never decide the dates beforehand, and only accepting those who want to or who can attend. The dates should enable the staff to make adjustments to their own schedules. If they are not given the choices, they feel alienated, and will not make adjustments to their schedule. It would be worse, if they see the principal forcing them to attend, and reprimands them for “being not interested”.

This is in line for whole school reform, the objective is towards a learning organization, enhancing leadership capacity, and enhances self-growth of the teachers. It can be difficult, for principals must be willing to let go of control, fostering the process. Mandates must not be made without going through the process, even for trivial matters, decisions should not be made in a hurry, except for certain times when situation demands that principals must take action immediately. In everyday matters, meetings should be meetings, principals should be more or co-participants, getting input from all stakeholders, and encourage consensus rather than voting. Allow time for dissent.



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As school leadership is first and foremost instructional leadership, the main emphasis that would be put forth is importance to the curriculum development and implementation as well as teacher development at the school level. This calls for instructional supervision at its best, suited for the times ahead. The trend observed in Malaysia particularly, and the world at the large generally, is the lack of emphasis on instructional supervision. Furthermore, the practice of supervision itself takes many facets. Historically, supervision has evolved from being inspection and examination, to the practice of facilitating and guidance for teachers in their professional skills development. It is the stand here that instructional supervision, a very important component of instructional leadership at the school level, be revamped thoroughly to reflect it being a practice that facilitates teacher development, and continuous teacher development. The main aim of instructional supervision is to enable teachers to reach a level where they are able to improve and enhance themselves, in line with changing times. As things are constantly changing, and new things are introduced, on top of the rapid technological development and information building as external forces, the teachers need constantly able to adapt to change according to the demands of the times. This is all the more so, principals of the new millennium must possess the skills discussed above.

GUIDELINES FOR ACTION

Fullan (1997) proposed a ten steps guideline for individual action principals towards change, which are relevant for the 21st century principals as follow:

1. Avoid "if only ..." statements – i.e. take charge.
2. Start small, think big. As managing multiple innovations in school does represent complexity – and facing paradoxes, it is best not to over-plan and over manage. "Effective leader has a bias for action". They have an overall sense of direction, and start into the action as soon as possible – and then adapting, refining as the process unfold. Focus on fundamentals: Curriculum, instruction, assessment, professional culture. (consistency in school must be obtained at the receiving end not the delivery end) – establish priorities – 'we are going to implement a few things especially well, and implement other priorities as well as we would have anyway ...' - i.e. problem based solution.
3. Practice fearlessness. Act of courage. Be prepared to lose if need be not as a failure but a lessons to be learnt (if forced to abandon). In other words – take risks and adjust in the process, or abandon if need be. Effective principals are men and women who take independent stances on matters of importance of their school.
4. Embrace diversity and resistance while empowering others. Empowering others in the system has to form a major component of the effective principal's agenda. Complex changes sometimes require active in initiation, but if it is to go anywhere, and especially in the face of turbulent times when changes are generic, there must be a good deal of shared control and decision making during implementation. While initiative can come from anywhere, "power sharing" becomes critical once it is adopted.
5. Build a vision relevant to goals and processes (An organization, to be effective, need both a vision of the nature or content that it represents, and a clear vision of the processes it characteristically values and follow). The leader has vision, but need not invent it – more likely to extract it from the others, and formulate it as everyone's vision. Should be of value, lofty and uplifting – something to "aim" for – a preferred future. Not one to be obtained in the future – but to obtain now for the betterment of the future.



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6. Decide what you are not going to do (Effective principal's job is to ensure that essential things get done, not to do them all himself or herself) principals are 'victims of the moment' get interrupted.
7. Build allies – for support, for stronger movement. Empowerment – reciprocal. Networking.
8. Know to be cautious. When survival is at stake, when following periods of risk and expansion, when there is an extra difficult object/person, and zero trust environment.
9. Give up the search for the silver bullet. Management techniques come and go; they are sometimes mere fads. Approach things differently, with creativity, and allow of expansion, distribute power, share power to act...leaders get involved as learners.

Elaborating on Fullan's guideline, there are some key elements that should be adapted by the schools' system. First of all, "go for autonomy rather than dependency". This means, principals should strive for autonomy in running the school. This does not mean that principals should ignore the rules and regulations or work in isolation. Moreover, it does mean that principals should be courageous, and know what is best for their schools, and implement policies accordingly. In addition, it calls for balance, and personal confidence, as well as knowledge of the job. Fullan, says that if you have to err, err on the side of autonomy rather than dependency. It means that as far as possible, make a decision which is good for the school, a decision that is different and innovative, within the limits allowable. In other words, the principal should be creative in leading the school, both in terms of facing external forces, the ministry and stakeholders, and creative in leading the teachers, to allow them to be autonomous in carrying out their duties. In fact, as early as 1980's (Rahimah, 1981) it was found that different headmasters perceived the control imposed by the Ministry of Education differently. While some found it stifling, others felt that they could be creative in their administration, within limits. Hence, cherish empowered teachers and staff when find them and seek for those with leadership capacity (Rahimah, 2003, 2005).

Leadership empowerment is the most powerful agent in making things work. Moreover, understand the paradox of loosely coupled and control, and the concept of "managerially tight and culturally loose" (Sergiovani, 2001; Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004; Gelfand, Chiu, & Hong, 2012; Gelfand, Nishii, & Raver, 2006). The school should strive to be culturally tight, that is building a climate that emphasizes relationship and which has shared values, goals and objective. It is the culture of the school, the shared vision that should be the regulatory factor rather than the rules and regulation, per se. rules and regulation, even the curriculum, which in the Malaysian case is centrally designed, will be locked upon by the teachers and others as "non – regulatory". However, autonomy should not mean neglect – hence supervision to allow teacher to develop professionally and to develop their teaching skills continuously. It also means empowerment for the teacher to develop and have their own developments plans. This also means emphasis on continuous learning for all, and autonomy to learn – perpetual learning. Leadership in non – rational world means counting on ourselves to improve.

THINGS GOOD PRINCIPALS SHOULD VALUE

The concept and value of leadership for the 21st century has various aspects; I) leadership should be instructional in putting importance to curriculum and instruction at school level, II) leadership should be transformational in nature, that leadership and management strategies emphasizes on the participation and inclusion, and III)



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leadership should be with an inclination towards moral leadership that acknowledge and highlight moral assumptions, and learn how values and beliefs shape leadership styles and overall management performance with integrity and trust.

The following are the perspectives that principals and school leaders should value in the current 21st century:

1. Reminiscent thinking – focused review of the past and present practice. This means looking back over the shoulder – from where we have come, and reminisce thing that we have done, and what are the impact of those action, and how do these action help us in the future. What lessons have we learnt, and how would those actions be done again? By answering these questions, we will be able to identify causes and effect of the actions, learn from them, and find implications from the experience. From reflection – we think about what we have done and thinking about our future. As we think about our context we think about how to cope in new context, we produce new pictures of what might be attainable – new visions. We need this as times are changing and changing with a speed beyond our comprehension.

“Like the wild flower, reflective practice celebrates the organic above the artificial. It emphasizes the primacy of experience ... (it) engages the teacher (and the principals) in a cycle of thought and action based on professional experience. It generally portrays the teacher (and the principal!) as the creative artist/designer than as an engineer/technician” (Wellington, 1991, as quoted by Edwards, 1999)

Likewise, Sergiovani (1988) stated that knowing in action itself and reflective professional become students of their own practice, professional create their own knowledge and their improvements from the unique, changing situation they face daily and by their interaction with that contextual knowledge. This is the true meaning of valuing reminiscent thinking which is the key requirement for the 21st century principals.

2. Vision: As mentioned earlier vision is a key value to the 21st century school principals. A vision is formed based on leaders’ experience from the past and the hopes and aspiration for the future – a statement of possibilities; a broad picture of where a school might be going in doing this job. It is a statement of what the school and the people in it what to achieve. Vision is a waking dream (Bennis, 1989), and it becomes the basis for day – to – day decision and action. Its important quality is that it results from the discussion and is understood (and owned) by everyone involved. Good principals value vision, and must strive to have one for the school which is formed and accepted by all in the school. Effective leadership for the 21st century begins with the development of a school wide vision of commitment to high standards by focusing on the success of all students. The principal helps to achieve that vision by communicating and motivating all the stakeholders (Mendels, 2012).

3. Commitment and courage: Commitment and courage go hand in hand. It is important for principals to be willing to “stand up” for the things, which are truly important in their school. It is important that principals have to courage and commitment to carry out plans and ideas which they think are crucial to providing better teaching and learning opportunities – innovative and more that the daily routine, things which principals believe will truly make a difference. It also takes courage to “stand up” against doubter or higher authorities. Hence it is important for the beliefs to be well grounded. Commitment to act in the face of uncertainty is certainly a difficult thing to do. Today, it is more important than ever that principal commit firmly to what good schools should be like and have the courage to stand by that commitment. Good principals should value commitment and courage.

4. Empowerment: The importance of empowerment and building leadership has been discussed earlier in the paper. Underlying empowerment is the belief and trust in people; making people feel valued and part of the action, making them know that their ability is important, where sharing is a real underlying value and where choice is a real possibility for everyone. Empowerment is about building the synergy which draws out the power of the group. It also means the weaning of power from the principal. Blasé and Blasé (1994) consider that empowerment



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means recognizing teacher as knowledgeable professional in activities beyond their classrooms. This would heighten teacher morale and satisfaction, commitment to goals, and ultimately better school and improved

student achievement. It means better use of the power invested in the principal by his appointment. The good principals value empowerment and the best use of power.

5. The Head Learner: Senge (2006) promotes the concept of the “learning organization” and its emphasis on organizational participants learning about the organization in order to share better performance. The principal is the first person to be the learner – a perpetual learner. Barth (1990) stated that the principals occupied central places in this community of learners. The principals, as the head learner engages in, and displaying and modeling the behavior we expect and hope teachers and students will adopt. The principals are continuously learning and thinking about the importance issues which face schools – about issue in education, and seeking to find way of evaluating and improving school performance and taking the lead in exercising responsibility for one’s own professional growth and development, modeling the behavior to teachers and other staff – leading the leading the learning environment. The good principal values the roles of the head learner, as a perpetual learner and leading the learning environment.

6. Leaders as Strategic thinkers: In this postmodern era, the new millennium, it is vital that the principal a professional instructional leader is also strategic thinker. He has to continuously think of ways to be ahead, while preserving the traditional that we espouse. These calls for strategic thinking and planning as thing are never constant, and plans cannot be prescriptive. Plans need to be regularly discussed and refined and developed as time progresses. Plans are merely “roadmap” for the future. More importantly, the principal of the new millennium, as discussed earlier, draws people together and motivates them towards their shared aspirations for organizational and individual achievement.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this paper emphasized that effective leadership for the 21st century is a serious call to make schools, ‘learning organization’ and learning centered in character; one in which first of all everyone, at all levels is learning all the time, together and in harmony; one in which there is flexibility for the teachers to adapt the curriculum, one in which the environment fosters creativity and it is safe to take risks that enhances teachers to learn to make learning meaningful to the students. Most of all nurturing to be prepared for adversaries and exigencies – for the world of the 21st century and beyond is an uncertain world. What can be taught in the old tradition will never be sufficient. Advancement of knowledge outside the school and advancement ICT, will always make school to be trailing behind instead of leading – unless what is taught and practiced in school, is the capacity to learn and look for new knowledge, facilities and fosters risk – taking, accessing knowledge and training our minds. In schools, while the principal, teachers and other adults, learn together with the students, at the same time they provide an environment and stimuli and guidance with the effective values that they espoused for that special characteristics as school leadership. Leadership is both transformational and distributive, and school leadership is instructional leadership, with the principals being the ultimate instructional leader. The principal is entrusted with ensuring that the school is safe and an enjoyable place to be, one that students see something happening which is meaningful to them; encouraging all persons involved to strive for self I improvement. The principal will have to also manage the schools to stay in line, and stable enough to allow flexibility needed. Real instructional leadership practice is best shared with the teachers and middle managers in the school – the senior subject teachers and the heads of departments.



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As stated by Edwards (1999) the hallmark of a 'good' school is that its emphasis is always on providing better teaching and learning opportunities for kids and better support for teachers who do that teaching as well as the creation ways to question and to speak better opportunities in our future world. Therefore, in the 21st century,

the principal-ship is more vital than ever, and will be much more so. The task of principals as leaders and strategists in creating better schools never ends, and will continue to increasingly be more challenging. Accordingly, in the current era, leadership is all about vitality, flexibility and innovativeness. In addition, it is regarding collaborative, innovativeness and distributive, sharing of power and authority, enhancing leadership capacity of all stakeholders.

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