

Book Review

Book Title: Instructional Leadership and Effective Teaching and Learning

Author: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nazmi Xhomara

Principals have an important role in setting aims and objectives and creating a positive school culture, as well as supporting and enhancing the teachers to foster teaching and learning improvement and promote academic success for students. The Monograph entitled: "*Instructional Leadership and Effective Teaching and Learning*" written by Nazmi Xhomara include eleven chapters; (1) understanding leadership and management, (2) the importance of instructional leadership and learning environment, (3) the instructional leader, (4) effective teaching, (5) constructivist learning, (6) supervision of teaching, (7) evaluation of teaching and learning, (8) the relationships between instructional leadership and teaching, learning, and students' achievements, (9) the relationship between the school leadership styles and students' achievements; empirical study: Albanian Case, (10) instructional leadership preparation, and (11) the future of instructional leadership.

In the first chapter, the author has presented and analyzed two main important issues: educational leadership vs educational management, as well as models of educational leadership and management. The author argued on the importance of different leadership models, such as managerial leadership, transformational leadership, participative leadership, interpersonal leadership, transactional leadership, postmodern leadership, moral leadership, and contingent leadership.

Chapters two, three, and four shed light on instructional leadership and teaching and learning, understanding of instructional leadership, the concept and practice of instructional leadership, instructional school leadership and learning environment, attributes of instructional leaders, instructional excellence, instructional leadership time management, effective teaching and teachers, as well as teaching challenges and learning environment.

Meanwhile, the author has analyzed constructivism, student intelligence, understanding of supervision, instructional collegial supervision, supervision approaches, understanding of evaluation of teaching and learning, teacher evaluation, and instructional observing instruments in chapters five, six, and seven.

Chapter eight is focused especially on the research work of the relationships between instructional leadership and teaching, learning, and students' achievements, where many authors have done a lot of work to study this relationship.

Chapter nine is been dedicated to an empirical study designed and conducted in Albania as a case. The empirical study includes research questions, hypothesis, methodology, results and discussion, and conclusion.

Instructional leadership preparation was dedicated the chapter ten, which includes instructional leadership preparation, instructional leadership preparation program, and leadership preparation for culturally diverse schools.

Meanwhile, in the last chapter, the author discussed and argued the future of instructional leadership, which includes instructional leadership challenges, instructional leadership vs transformational leadership, as well as school leadership for the 21st Century.

The monograph is a very well-argued case for giving even more attention to the school leadership, especially instructional leadership since it is identified as a key function in assuring quality in children's education. Using a constructivist approach the author seeks to show how instructional leadership is a key tool in the creation of learning experiences that will enhance students to achieve knowledge, skills, and competencies to contribute to the development of society.

The principals, as Xhomara said, are the main stakeholders in the school to support effective teaching and learning, as well as for creating a learning environment, where teachers facilitate the students' aims and objectives, and where the students build their knowledge and skills.

School leadership can have a direct influence on student's academic achievements by improving teaching, and support learning. The instructional leadership model, as the author indicates, is referred to like the role and the functions of school leadership to employ different management tasks with regards to teaching and learning. A central task of the instructional principle is to ensure that the goals of the school are being translated into practice at the classroom level through supervision of teaching and learning and monitoring and evaluation of students' achievements.

In an age of rapid change instructional leadership has predictably placed significant demands for accountability for student success and equity on the principal as well as for the university programs that prepare them.

The monograph has a wealth of statistics of empirical study to attempt to help answer the research hypotheses that Xhomara has set for his investigations. The author performs his task diligently and addresses each point most thoroughly with attention to detail.

The author indicated that fulfilling the promise of transforming both principals' practice and school reform requires a community of learners who become a community of educational leaders. With the empowerment of others in the school family, the leader becomes a catalyst for effecting needed change. Working in twenty-first-century schools, the instructional leader is held more accountable than ever for student success.

Xhomara's monograph outlines the body of knowledge about instructional leadership, teaching, and learning in general and more particularly in the relationship between instructional leadership and students' achievements. Via a case study approach of a cluster random sample of teachers in the main municipalities in Albania Xhomara test research hypothesis such as, "There is a positive relationship between the leadership style (managerial, transformational, interpersonal, transactional, postmodern, contingency, moral, and instructional) and students' achievements".

The empirical research found that according to most teachers, as well as to most principals, the managerial, interpersonal, transactional, moral, and instructional leadership is shown most often or always in the Albanian schools. According to most teachers, as well as to most principals, the empirical research also found that transformational, postmodern, and contingent leadership is shown mostly never or seldom in the Albanian schools. His empirical research found mainly an intermediate or upper-intermediate level of students' achievements according to most teachers, as well as according to most principals.

His research shows a positive relationship between the managerial, transactional, and contingency leadership styles and students' achievements. At the same time, the research found that there is not a positive relationship between the transformational, interpersonal, postmodern, and moral leadership style and students' achievements. At the last, the research indicates a positive relationship between the instructional leadership style and students' achievements.

As Xhomara emphasized in his conclusions, school leadership is second only to teaching in its potential influence on student learning. So, the importance of the instructional leadership role in school is fundamental. Instructional leadership is learning-focused, learning for both students and teachers, and learning is measured by improvement in instruction and the quality of student learning. There's no doubt that instructional leadership requires the school principal to play many roles and to make many functions. The principals must be administrators, managers, teachers, and curriculum leaders, as well as able to fluidly switch from one role to another, sometimes within a school day. The book is an important tool not

only for principals, but also for teachers, students, researchers, school community members administrators, and education policymakers.

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