



Krakow, 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021

## **Review of the book entitled “Instructional Leadership and Effective Teaching and Learning”**

Professor Nazmi Xhomara is a renowned international researcher in the field of education. He is an expert in the fields of key processes in education both at the level of didactics and management of school institutions. Nazmi Xhomara's new publication "Instructional Leadership and Effective Teaching and Learning" brings together his accumulated knowledge and sets new directions for reflection on educational management. It is impossible not to agree with the author that the indicated area related to the management of educational institutions needs changes. Xhomara rightly observes that the role of principals as real leaders, motivating the educational staff and determining and implementing new didactic solutions improving the quality of education, is still insufficient. At present headmasters are rather a bridge between the central authorities who set educational priorities and teachers who try to meet the top-down rules of school operation. Also in the introduction the author stresses that entering the role of a true authority - leader of change is not fully possible due to overloading with monotonously repetitive administrative duties, which are not conducive to building a deep, trusting relationship between the school headmasters and the stakeholders, i.e.: teachers, students, parents or the local environment. Taking into account all the arguments raised in the theoretical and empirical part of the monograph



"Instructional Leadership and Effective Teaching", the authors argue that it is important to build a deep trusting relationship between school leaders and stakeholders, i.e. teachers, students, parents and the local community. The monograph entitled "Instructional Leadership and Effective Teaching and Learning" is a very valuable position, which is a voice in the discussion on the shape and directions of development of modern schools from the perspective of school management.

The structure of the book is correct. It is a monograph characterised by high clarity and discipline in narration. The study consists of eleven essential chapters. The first chapter attempts to show the differences and similarities between management and leadership roles. It is a chapter that provides a solid theoretical foundation, showing the complexity of attitudes and models of managerial work in educational settings.

In the second chapter, the author shows the complex relationship between instructional leadership and the characteristics of the school environment. In this section, the author refers to research results from different countries showing the specificity of management in education compared to other organisations. However, in order to enrich the chapter I have a small suggestion - is it possible to include the results of research from the Balkan countries and Central and Eastern Europe in the indicated chapter? Unfortunately, I did not notice too many research results from our region in the references.

In the next section, the components of the concept of the instructional leader are defined and analysed. The author refers in this section to the attributes of a leader based on classical as well as recent literature. In this chapter, one can also find issues related to time management, which is not an easy task for contemporary school principals due to the multifaceted and multi-faceted nature of the activities undertaken.

Nazmi Xhomara is aware that the management style of the school organisation is reflected in the results of the teaching work as shown in the narrative in chapter number 4. However, I have a question relating to this chapter. To what extent do the teaching experiences of the school leader determine the development of procedures related to



the quality of education in the school? After all, we know that the principal is in most cases also a teacher and has his/her own preferences regarding the use of innovative learning and teaching methods, the use of different teaching resources such as ICT. In this section, it is worth adding some information about the relationship between being a leader and previous teaching experience as a teacher.

Chapter number five covers issues relating to the question of constructivism in education. The author consciously operates with the classical approaches of Piaget, Vygotsky, Bruner and other established thinkers of this dominant trend in education. Nazmi Xhomara does not place this chapter in the book by accident, because knowing the conditions related to schooling, he is very clear that a leader managing a school cannot be detached from the processes occurring at the lowest levels, that is, at the level of didactics and education.

One of the leader's tasks is to control the performance of those employed in the institution. Control is a necessary task from a formal point of view, but in practice it can take many forms, from oppressive to supportive and providing constructive direction for change. This chapter has shown the algorithmic nature of the control process from a leader's perspective. However, I have some questions related to control - is there a correlation in the literature between control styles and school location? To put the question another way - are there countries where control is more authoritarian and others where it is more authoritative? So can we speak of role models that can become examples for other countries? The following seventh chapter is closely related to the preceding one. Nevertheless, Nazmi Xhomara in the publication tries to highlight the subtle but important difference between the evaluation of teacher quality and the evaluation of the teaching process. It is important that the two chapters are separated from each other.

The eighth part of the monograph is a successful attempt to show the relationship between instructional leadership and student achievement outcomes. The author is aware that the actions taken by the educational supervisor also have an impact on school climate, teaching, evaluation test results and student achievement. The actions



taken by the head of the educational institution are crucial for all stakeholders around the school.

Chapter nine is an empirical presentation of the previously outlined concepts. In this section, the author presents research assumptions showing the relationship between school management style and student achievement outcomes. The chapter attempts to answer the nine research questions that have been precisely defined. However, I have a minor suggestion to the author - I suggest removing the research hypotheses. Hypotheses should be supported by a thorough reference to the literature on the subject or be an assumption derived from previous research. In the sample selection, I also suggest adding information about the sampling operator. It is also worth mentioning in the methodological note to what extent the collected data allow generalization referring to the managerial staff in Albania as a whole?

Chapter number 10 is a review of the literature on the preparation of managers of educational institutions. The author draws on proven examples from: Australia, USA, Denmark, Cyprus, Norway. In conclusion, it is worthwhile, e.g. in the form of a table or a diagram, to briefly summarise the key factors for training effective school management staff using the examples presented.

The last chapter is a prediction of the directions of development of instructional leadership. In the conclusion, the author boldly puts forward theses related to the direction of development of educational leadership in the next eight decades of the 21st century. It is important that Prof. Nazmi Xhomara has the ability to summarise by looking into the post-modern future. This demonstrates the author's research maturity and provides a basis for longitudinal research.

I rate the book very highly. It is a valuable publication, based on a review of the literature and the author's own research. Nazmi Xhomara has demonstrated a high level of scientific integrity. The monograph may be particularly useful for researchers of educational policy, as well as in the training of educational managers. The publication may also become an item of obligatory literature in academic courses related to the



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training of teaching staff. **I congratulate the author on a valuable book and at the same time recommend the manuscript for publication.**

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