

# *Analysis of Principal Leadership and Sustainable Development of Schools*

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**Abstract:** The headmaster, as the name suggests, plays a very important role in the development and improvement of the overall level of the school. Administratively speaking, he is an important manager of the school, a team leader, and a leader who leads the development of the school. Therefore, the leadership level of the principal is one of the important factors to improve the overall level of the school and promote the development of the school. With the development of the economy and the further improvement of the educational environment, the increasing overall quality of the people, the complex social environment and teaching requirements, as well as how to ensure the sustainable development of the school, all these have put forward great challenges to the principal, and the principal's leadership, business ability and quality requirements are also getting higher and higher. To sum up, the leadership of principals and the sustainable development of schools have become more and more urgent problems to be solved.

In 2018, the Opinions on Comprehensively Deepening the Reform of the Construction of Teachers in the New Era jointly issued by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and The State Council clearly pointed out that the construction of the team of principals, as an important part of education, must be further strengthened, and vigorously cultivate a number of educationalist principals to comprehensively enhance their leadership.<sup>[1]</sup> The principal's leadership ability, such as thinking ability, personality charm, learning ability, planning and execution ability, decision-making foresight ability, innovation and coordination ability, plays an important and decisive role in improving the overall quality of teachers and students, improving the overall educational ability of the school and the sustainable development of the school with high quality. Strong leaders can guide the team to change through their own influence, and through effective leadership, the goal of consistency of individuals, teams and organizations can be realized.

In school work, the role of the principal is the core of the team, and one of the core elements of the effectiveness of the principal responsibility system is the principal leadership<sup>[2]</sup>, which is one of the important areas concerned by teaching research, policy formulation and first-line education teams. Excellent leadership of the principal is able to establish an efficient work team, optimize and improve teachers' teaching and students' performance, lead and manage a series of teaching activities in every link of the school, provide a good educational environment for teachers and students, train high-quality talents who can serve the country,<sup>[3]</sup> and achieve educational goals and sustainable high-quality development of the school.

## 1. Definition of principal leadership

As for the definition of leadership, different theories have different classifications, and there are more categories such as goal leadership, vision leadership, teaching leadership and supportive leadership. Domestic and foreign experts summarized the analysis of three categories: one view tends to leadership is the personal ability of leadership, specifically refers to the role of an individual in the team, a person's influence; The second is that leadership is the mutual power generated between the individual and the organization, between the leader and the led, and is an organizational power generated through the structure and the team. The third is that the comprehensive ability of leadership through the implementation of various behaviors, such as the formulation of policies and institutions, the improvement and shaping of value systems and development directions, cannot simply be equated with leadership, nor is it a right. Cowley's description in the 1920s is perhaps the most basic of all: "A leader is a person who succeeds in getting others to follow him or her."<sup>[4]</sup>

Personally speaking, leadership is the ability of leaders to lead teams to achieve goals. At the micro level, it is a specific person's ability to use their own ability and influence, use surrounding resources to attract or pressure leaders, and continue to achieve goals.

The experts and scholars of western leadership and educational leadership were the first to study the principal's leadership and put forward the concept. The earliest dates back to the 1970s. In the early study of leadership system, researchers constructed educational leadership theories such as instructional leadership, participatory leadership, ethical leadership and transformational leadership, and gradually shifted from theoretical research to practical application. Scholars who hold the "five elements theory" believe that the basic elements of the leadership of the president mainly include five kinds. For example, in the Function and Effectiveness of Education, Zheng Yanxiang, based on Borman's "four forces structure of organizational leadership" and Saciovanni's "Five forces model of educational organizational leadership", proposed a five-dimensional model of principal leadership: structural leadership, interpersonal leadership, political leadership, cultural leadership and educational leadership. At the same time, based on this model, she conducted a questionnaire survey on principals of primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong and found that these five dimensions had a strong correlation<sup>[5]</sup>. The United States, a developed country with an early start, is one of the earliest countries that began to study the leadership of the president. Through continuous research and learning from the theories of other developed countries, American scholars gradually formed relatively mature theoretical models and evaluation methods of leadership. However, after time verification, the model construction based on American school cases is often limited to its specific region, language and culture background, and the research on the principal's leadership theory is not comprehensive. Therefore, subsequently, scholars in Europe and other countries and regions began to conduct targeted and diversified research on different environments based on different cultural backgrounds and historical origins.<sup>[6]</sup>

## 2. How does the leadership of the principal guarantee the sustainable development of the school

The sustainable development of the school should be regarded as one of the most important assessments to evaluate the leadership of the principal, and the so-called sustainable development of the school means that the school can develop the teacher and student team system in a comprehensive and healthy way, and the school's education level and quality development can maintain continuous improvement and growth. Warren Bennis said, "Leadership is like beauty. It's hard to define, but you know it when you see it." The formula can be expressed as: the level of school development = the strength of the principal's leadership × the strength and weakness of the principal's leadership. So, how can principals play a leadership role to promote sustainable development of the school?<sup>[7]</sup> In order to realize and promote the sustainable development of the school, the principal must have the

comprehensive leadership ability of the school leader, and must be able to effectively lead the whole team, and be able to lead the school management at all levels to plan and set goals to achieve the sustainable development of the school. I am able to achieve leadership in teaching, maintain the sense of responsibility for all students, select outstanding talents to form a team structure, and establish a good relationship with parents to participate in school activities.

### **2.1 External tree image inside strong quality, give play to personality charm and do a good job of leading geese.**

Personality charm is the most vivid, vivid and influential factor among all the influential factors of leadership, and it belongs to the influence of non-power. Personality charm can produce infinite and far-reaching appeal. The principal's own quality, accomplishment, knowledge and behavior will affect teachers, students and parents. Establishing an excellent image of the principal can get everyone's respect, admiration, trust and resonance in actual life and teaching, so as to increase the combat effectiveness of the team.

"The principal is the soul of a school." The principal has three roles at the same time, which is not only the administrator of the school, but also the leader of the team and the educator of teachers and students. By uploading, issuing and implementing government decisions and existing rules and regulations, the school ship runs in good order. On the basis of doing a good job as a manager, we should have a strong sense of ownership, do a good job as a leader, and take on the responsibility of teaching and educating people.

### **2.2 Improve their own school philosophy and lead the development of the school**

Principals' school-running philosophy is the cognition and concept used to guide educational behavior, which is formed in the actual teaching, and has practical operation and experience. The school-running philosophy should be inherited on the basis of summarizing the experience of predecessors, and formed on the basis of summarizing, reflecting, communicating and improving the teaching practices experienced by oneself and peers in the teaching experience in combination with the actual situation of the school.

In my opinion, education must have a guiding incentive mechanism, and education should make people feel the happiness of knowledge. The sustainable development of the school is to always be able to lead students to develop comprehensively and individually, lay the foundation for students' lifelong development, stimulate students' desire for lifelong learning, and give them the ability to learn for life. In the teaching process, students should be cultivated to form a good ideological and moral character, behavioral habits, positive and optimistic attitude towards life, and guide students' innovative spirit and practical ability. Thus, it can improve students' ability to think and plan life, and lay the four value pillars of "learning to recognize, learn to do things, learn to cooperate, and learn to survive".<sup>[8]</sup>

### **2.3 Improve their own quality and cultivate the ability of teachers to develop sustainably**

As a principal, when the organization gives this honor to take over a school, he should take the school as his home, based on the responsible attitude towards teachers, students and parents as well as the long-term planning and sustainable development of the school, think deeply and actively, make suitable development goals for the school, and plan the blueprint for the sustainable development of the school. Teachers are an integral part of the process of enhancing the sustainability of schools, as well as the creators and implementers of educational outcomes throughout the organization. As a principal, he should share hardships with teachers and start a business together, give full play to each

teacher's conscious initiative and innovation and creativity, and form a joint force with all the faculty and staff to jointly achieve the improvement of the principal's leadership and the sustainable development of the school.

Therefore, in the actual teaching process, principals as leaders should formulate reasonable incentive plans, regularly train teachers, provide re-education opportunities for front-line staff, and at the same time, through a strong supervision mechanism, put the learning ability of these staff into teaching activities, and strive to improve the quality of teachers, improve teachers' work and learning ability. The headmaster should really base himself on the development of teachers, think what teachers think, worry about what teachers are anxious about, adhere to the people-oriented management concept, understand the people's feelings, use the people's wisdom, gather the people's feelings, conform to the public opinion, and further improve the level of democratic management of the school.<sup>[9]</sup>

Based on my understanding of the principal's leadership, I believe that the principal's leadership is a process of influencing the school, which includes all the participants in the school, including the school, teachers, students and even parents. The specific performance of this is whether the school is developing, whether the teacher's professional ability is progressing, whether the student's training level is improving, and whether the parents are satisfied with the education. The important thing to realize this process is whether the educational task accomplished by the principal and other administrators is satisfactory.

### **3. The enlightenment of Western research on the leadership of principals in promoting sustainable development of schools in China**

#### **3.1 The primary task is to establish professional standards for principals, improve the training system for principals, and strengthen institutional construction.**

The principal should bear the brunt of the promotion of various professional skills and knowledge, and formulate detailed training plans, establish standards, and improve the system to provide high-quality training for aspiring school leaders. In terms of the research on the leadership of principals of primary and secondary schools in the United States, scholar Zhong Jianguo clearly pointed out in his research on the Leadership Evaluation of Principals of Primary and Secondary Schools in the United States that China should construct a set of effective standard guidance for principals as soon as possible, strengthen the practical evaluation of teaching, and analyze the leadership level of principals from various aspects, so as to help principals improve their leadership. So as to achieve the ultimate goal of sustainable development of the school.<sup>[10]</sup> An effective principal training program can select potential managers and provide high-quality training and learning opportunities for those with leadership potential as principals, thereby improving the overall quality of teaching.

#### **3.2 Innovate and change the learning concept, and be a qualified educational principal**

Innovative thinking always accompanies a qualified principal, and innovation can empower the principal's leadership. Because of the traditional system and cultural situation of our country, the principal of our country attaches great importance to moral education in the actual teaching process, so as to formulate a large number of rules and regulations to manage students from the aspects of educational psychology and school system constraints. It does not realize the educational concept of differentiation, diversity and individualized teaching, and only focuses on classroom teaching and does not pay attention to extracurricular practice. The innovative thinking requires the principal to broaden his horizon, be good at summarizing and learning the excellent educational management experience at home and abroad, and at the same time, combine his own work and life practice,

constantly improve himself and combine his own experience with foreign theories, so as to truly become a wise and thoughtful educator principal.<sup>[11]</sup>

### **3.3 Optimize resource allocation to improve resource utilization**

As a social practice, the characteristics of non-material production of education determine that its reform and development cannot be separated from social resources. In order to make full use of the limited resources, it is necessary to rationally allocate the educational resources. At present, although China has invested a large amount of education funds and improved the conditions for running schools, due to the poor material foundation and relatively limited stock, there is a big gap from the reality of the transformation of the balanced development mode of education. In this context, moderately increasing the input of educational resources is the premise of transforming the balanced development mode. The funds invested in education should be rationally arranged and the original distribution pattern of resources should be readjusted.

### **3.4 Carry out diversified assessment and promote personalized development**

The balanced development of education is not equal treatment, it means that the conditions of running schools and the level of teachers are relatively balanced and diversified. The diversification of education and the characteristic of running a school are the inevitable trend of the development of education and the improvement of education quality and efficiency.

For a long time, the development of education in China has paid more attention to coherence and identity, and many schools in the education concept, education methods and other aspects also show a single, similar and other characteristics, lack of their own characteristics. Under the current situation of deepening education reform and education development, some people are still influenced by traditional concepts and have bias and worries about educational equity. They believe that the implementation of diversified development runs counter to educational equity. They question and resist the promotion of diversified development of education, deny the rationality of class classification and stratified teaching, ignore teaching according to students' aptitude, and hinder school characteristics. We will further strengthen the homogenization of education. This educational development model has been unable to adapt to the economic globalization, value diversification, and cultural diversification of today's development.

To achieve the above goals, it is necessary for the president to always maintain innovative thinking, explore the laws and principles of the principal's leadership and management as well as the sustainable development of the school, and constantly dab in philosophy, anthropology, sociology, psychology and other disciplines, so as to build himself into an educator with "cross-border" thinking.<sup>[12]</sup>

## **4. Conclusion**

The research on the leadership of the principal has proved that a successful principal, with his/her personal qualities, moral beliefs and life experience, is conducive to dealing with complex situations, good at finding and cultivating the strengths of students, daring to change and organize innovation in the current problems of the school, leading members to co-create a vision, and ultimately promoting the sustainable development of the school.<sup>[13]</sup> In short, principal leadership is not only about planning and decision-making, but also about shaping culture, promoting values, and driving organizational innovation.<sup>[14]</sup>

The main factors of school sustainable development include teachers' career happiness, students' learning ability and parents' democratic participation, which should be the focus of principals' leadership. Principal leadership is not a one-way behavior, but a two-way or even multi-directional

behavior. Through the attitude, behavior and cognition of the principal, it penetrates into all aspects of the school. After the collision and blending with the campus people, it accumulates into the school culture, which is constantly fermented and passed on, and exerts a subtle influence on every campus person, thus promoting the sustainable development of the school.

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