

HOW CAN THE ORGANIZATIONAL DYNAMICS OF A SCHOOL AFFECT STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

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Abstract: This essay examines how the organizational dynamics of a school influence student achievement. Schools, as complex organizations, are shaped by key elements of organizational dynamics including vision and mission, team building, power and politics, and organizational culture. The essay argues that a clear vision and mission provide direction and motivation for both teachers and students. Effective teamwork, guided by models such as the rocket model, enhances collaboration and maximizes resources. The strategic use of power by school leaders can drive necessary changes and raise academic standards, while a positive organizational culture fosters a supportive environment conducive to learning. Through case studies and theoretical analysis, the essay demonstrates that these elements interact dynamically and collectively contribute to students' academic success. It concludes that schools must adopt a holistic and adaptive approach to organizational dynamics to effectively enhance student achievement.

Keywords: Organizational dynamics; Student achievement; School leadership; Vision and mission; Team building; Power and politics

1 INTRODUCTION

An organization means an institution or an association that has a joint goal or vision with a certain environment. Variety types of different organizations can be seen among us. Schools as educational institutions, are a kind of complex organizations. It has its organization inputs like human resources, physical resources and financial resources. After the process of teaching, learning, knowledge transformation, all the inputs can be transformed to outputs like students' achievements or their values. Under these circumstances, schools' operations are under the framework of organizational dynamics. The effective use of organizational dynamics will bring a positive effect to school.

So, this essay will mainly focused on some effective elements of an organization dynamics: vision and mission, team building, power, politics and organizational culture. And the main purpose is to find out how can the organizational dynamics of a school have some effects on student achievement.

2 LITERARY REVIEW

Organizational dynamics is a kind of models that focuses on the interaction along the time among the people in the community [1]. School is the combination of the students, teachers and administrator stuffs, it can also be called an organization. In this circumstance, Its development is also under the effects of organizational dynamics.

According to the Organizational Health (OH) theory, If the organization is much more healthy, then it will get a much higher the grades [2]. In school content, the healthier the school is, the higher academic grades student will achieve. A healthy organization means that students can be cultivated by the organization, the students will not be influenced by some negative elements. If the school itself is bad organized, like the problem of mammonism or low interest in academic, all these will block the development of students. School educators or administrators have always been finding the efficient school operation system to motivate student achievement. Maslow's theory extends to management theory. The principal, as a manager and leader, has a dominated influence on students' learning and studying. The principal will also have great impact on school climate [3]. The climate of a school appears to have a direct influence on school, it decided whether the school will be a success one failure one [4]. A school with high efficiency will lead to students' high achievements. High efficiency means that all the resources, like the money, education equipment, teachers, time can be well organized and used. Under these circumstances, school will form an efficient system, and the students are easily got influenced and motivated.

3 THE POWER OF ORGANIZATIONAL DYNAMICS IN SCHOOL CONTENT

For the school content, organization's achievements can be the achievement of students. The organizational dynamics has great influence on students achievement. An organization can be effected from many aspects, like the vision and mission, team conflicts dealing methods, power and politic, team culture and so on. The following part is some of these elements that will have a great impact on organization performance—students' academic achievement in school.

3.1 Vision and Mission

Vision is a kind of power which will promote all the members looking forward. It has a great impact on attitudes and behaviors. It has a kind of top to down impact. In school content, that means once the vision and mission are set it will have an impact from principals to students. The school vision can be the landscape of the school. Vision is the leading culture of a school, school will be homogenization with the same vision. School's vision is about how to develop students, school leadership focus on looking forward and outline a strategy. Every school should have its vision, it is not just a slogan, but the actual action. The school vision then influences the stuffs' attitudes and behaviors. That means school while set its own developing mission, the teachers can be influenced in many aspects, like the design of curriculum, the interaction between teachers and students and so on. Under these circumstances can create an outstanding school and develop high performing students.

According to Leithwood and Riehl, "Leaders engage in three kinds of activities that will promote the achievement. The dominated one is to build direction that includes, but not limited to, establishing a shared vision and mission and fostering the acceptance of group goals [5]." Vision plays an important role in an organization. Vision and mission reflect the organizations' priorities and define the norms of organizational culture. Just like the Lampton school in Hounslow indicated: values drive decisions and the decisions make differences. Lampton school used to be unpopular and the standards were low. There was not a sharp focus on going forward. After Sue John joined Lampton school, she wanted to make a difference. To achieve this, a clear vision was set: to make a difference, to make student achieving. The mission is focusing on teachers' teaching and students' learning, having perfect relationship and making sure that all the parents are willing to come into school. Mission and vision give people a desire to go. After the shared mission was set, teachers are motivated to achieve this goal. Much time was spent on ensuring that whether the lessons are consistently good or not. Then teachers' behavior brought a positive effect to student achievement. In the end, Lampton school became an outstanding one.

Vision and mission do not only have some influences on teachers and administrator stuffs which will bring some benefits to students. It also has some impacts which will directly act on students' performances. For students, the school vision bring them a great attitude, that means the vision promote them going forward. The school vision let them know what they should do in their learning life and how can they achieve their goal. The school mission is just the students' learning framework. It gives students a guideline for their learning. So, school's mission and vision acts as a landscape of students learning and students are definitely promoted by vision and mission.

3.2 Team Building: the Rocket Model with Group Development

According to Katzenbach and Smith opinion, a team is a small number of people and all the team members having different skills, they come together for a common purpose [6]. all the team members are committed to a series of goals and approach. Most people do not work by their own, we are in a situation that have to interact with people. So, all the people have to work with others in some extend. In school content, it means that both teachers and students may work either fully cooperative or just totally independent. Teamwork is more a means to a synergistic way of working. It means with team work, the sum of single parts is greater than the parts. Teamwork will maximize strong points and bring out the best in every single person. For teachers, teamwork means that they can prepare the lessons with other teacher and sharing their teaching experience with the team member. For students, teamwork means that they can work together on some questions or solve some problems.

The team rocket model consists of eight parts: mission, talent, norm, buy-in, power, morale and results. The results is at the top of the rocket, that means all the other elements serve for it. The several elements of rocket model basically correspond to the four development stages which was proposed by Tuckman [7]. According to his theory, the first stage a team experiences is the forming period, and the team leader can help get through it by focusing on the elements of mission and talent. Tuckman pointed out that a team may experience a storming stage, during which a leader is supposed to pay attention to the element of norm and buy-in. Power and morale need to be emphasized during the stage of morning, and finally in the performing stage, the results element should be the focus.

The rocket model can be used in all school teams, from students to teachers to school administrators. Every team will confronted by some conflicts in group decision making. For students, they may have conflicts in how to make a handicraft or how to win competition together. For teachers, it might be how to make class preparation together or how to work with other teachers. For school administrator stuffs, it can be how to work with others to manage the school. Take Greenwood Dale School for example, the school is hugely oversubscribed but serves. It was a very mixed community, with a large Muslin Population, eastern European and working class. In this hard situation, it is important to build an effective team. So, the school try to deal with above these difficulties through bringing some young generations from this complex and challenging community together. These young people is the element of talent in rocket model and they really play an important role in team development. That means the effective school team makes full use of school resources and brings some new teaching strategies to the students. At the end, an effective team of school was formed and the students benefited a lot from these effective teams.

3.3 Power and Politics

According to French and Raven, power is entitled to five bases, they are legitimate, reward, expert, referent and coercive. All the politics of an organization will be carried out under these five elements. "All the activities happened in the organizations to acquire, develop, and use the power and some other resources to gain one's preferred results in a

situation in which there is some uncertainty or disagreement about the final choices [8].” Power comes from different aspects. For a position, it comes from the control of the resources of the upper class; for single person, it comes from its followers supports to the leader. In school content, it comes from the position. The principals have the power to manage the administrator stuffs and teachers, the teachers have the power to manage the students.

In an organization, its structure or developing directions may not always be that correct. The leader must encounter some problems in managing the organization members. In school content, that means some of the administrator stuffs or teachers may not work that hard. They may be at the retirement ages, so they just want to stay the same and do not like to change. Their low aspirin results in negative effects on students’ performance. In this condition, the principal can use the power to make a difference.

An example about this is the Carton Technology College in south tyneside. The school has avoided all of the self-satisfaction that will keep a very stable stuff, some of key person whom have served in the school for most or even all their lives. Principal Gibson has a clear idea that this kind of stable can result in low performance. So, he used his power to change the situation. He has build on success by keeping to raise the standards of the school through a series of different methods, add modern foreign languages, create new curriculum and so on. All these policies will have a great impact on existing school system, some teachers or administrator stuffs may not adjust to the new standard and will leave the school. Teachers and administrator stuffs do not want to change, a stable environment makes people easier. But the principal has the power to make a change.

Power can be used in many situations in a school content. But using the power to influence the policies should under a careful thinking. While using the power, something like group decision making should also take into consideration. According to Mannix & Neale’s concepts, it showed that social-category differences generally have negative while differences in knowledge and skills tend to be positive [9]. Using the power to make a decision may cause a conflict, in some situations, low power distance is important. Just as Van Der Vergt, De Vliert & Huang said, low power distance enhances positive effects of demographic diversity [10]. It helped to solve the conflict. Just as Eisenhardt, Kahwajy & Bourgeois , Kahwajy III said, to keep constructive conflict over problems from degenerating into dysfunctional interpersonal conflict to encourage managers to argue without destroying their ability to work as a team [11].

3.4 Organizational Culture

Organizational culture focus on behaviors and values that always make an improvement to the unique social climate of an organization. Organizational culture performs a lot of different functions within an organization. In school content, it can be the relationship among the principals, administrator stuffs and teachers. It can be the relationship between teachers and students. It can also be a kind of climate that others will feel while stay in the school for some time. The organizational culture have the influences on all members behaviors and motivations. A school with a good organizational culture tends to be an outstanding one.

Morpeth School used to be a school with low performance and standards, with only 11 percent of students achieving five or more higher grades GCSEs. But over the years, the school has been utterly transformed into a remarkable school under the management of a new leader—Sir Alasdair Macdonald. All these changes can be attributed to certainty of vision, consistency pf purpose, proper school culture and belief of everyone. The key of being an excellent school is to keep a powerful ethos and culture, which can be based on a strong, shared view to meeting students’ complex needs. It has a total different school culture comparing with the past years. Peterson and Deal said that culture encompasses the complex elements of values, traditions, languages and purpose somewhat better [12]. The culture can be the basic element of promoting the transformation of school.

The principal had a good use of Leader-Member Exchange(LMX). As a relationship-based approach to leadership, it mainly focused on competence, organizational networks, universal morality and employment [13]. The principal brought the young people from a complex community. He also get then together that raise hope for the future generations. It gradually raising aspirations and delivering on its promises. It is not like Chinese GUANXI, if principal Macdonald used GUANXI in his school, there might be little change for the teachers, so there would be no improvement on students.

In Chinese GUANXI, it focuses on deterministic, loyalty, personal networks and its morality can be specific to relationship. It emphasizes family and associates. If a school is dominated by Chinese GUANXI, the administrator stuffs and teachers may no longer want to improve their ability, which will results in students’ low academic performance.

So, for an organization, its important to create a correct organizational culture.

4 CONCLUSION

All in all, there are a lot of elements that have an influence on students’ academic performance, like mission and vision, team conflicts dealing, power and policies and organizational culture. Except the elements above, some other elements can also have an impact on students. School is just a kind of organization. So, all the school’s performances are just under the control of organizational dynamics.

In school content, all the goal is about students' achievement. Especially students' academic grades and their value. For these elements in organizational dynamics, all of the single one do no work separately. They are more likely to work like a Just like a circle, that means they are equally important to the final goal. Every kind of elements has a relation to

the others. To achieve the final goal—students' high academic performance, it is not enough only to use these methods, it should be a dynamic one. That means the influences of the organizational dynamics can be changed along the time. So, the school has to choose and change the methods they use to achieve students' performance. In addition, as the time change, some new elements should also take into consideration.

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