Chapter 7
Barriers to Strategic Leadership in Education

Joseph Ezale Cobbinah
https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5200-7093
University of Ghana, Ghana

ABSTRACT

The concept of strategic leadership has been in the discourse of corporate governance and management but in recent days, strategic leadership has become a concept in education literature. Strategic leadership is also relevant in education more especially in a PK-12 educational setting. This chapter focuses on the barriers that hinder strategic leadership in education. Although school leaders in PK-12 educational setting are making efforts to bring improvement in their institutions there are some factors that militate against the strategies that school leaders adapt to bring improvement. Overcoming the challenges will not only help PK-12 school leaders to become very effective but also will make them more efficient in their work as school leaders.

INTRODUCTION

Success of educational institutional leadership does not depend on a number of students the institution graduate every year but the competent way in which the leadership handles affairs of the school, pursuant of the school's vision and mission, achievement of the school's goals and objectives as well as the value-addition that is noticed in the numerous students that pass through the institutions. Strategic planning is one of the key component in education institutions and school leaders. However, being strategic as a PK-12 school leader is not about pursuing the vision of the school but it is about acting, thinking and influencing in 'ways that promote the competitive advantage of their organization' (DuBrin, 2013, p. 451). Although the concept of strategic leadership has been in the management discourse for a very long time, some critics argued that strategic leadership in education has its focus on the theoretical and empirical work in corporate governance and not related to educational settings, so scholarship devoted to strategic leadership in education is however very limited and scarce (Chan, 2018). Application of strategic leadership in education has been application of leadership strategies of corporate governance. Gill (2009) has argued that educational institutions do not only adopt strategic leadership approach in management but also adopt strategic leadership approach to drive of organizational vision and achievement of organizational goals and objectives. Strategic leaders are supposed to find a short term as well as the long term approach to achieve the organizational vision (DuBrin, 2013). However, no matter the strategies school leaders adopt to implement policies and programmes, there are some barriers that may affect effective the leadership strategic plans.

Like other institutions, PK-12 schools are made up of individuals with diverse backgrounds, aspirations and interest. Leading such institutions need strategic thinking, planning and ability to handle whatever barriers that may affect effective implementation of policies and programmes. Although the main focus of this chapter is barriers to strategic leadership in education it will also examine in detail strategic leadership in education before looking at the barriers to strategic leadership and assess what makes it difficult for school leaders to effectively implement their strategic agenda whether it is for the longer or shorter term. The chapter explains how educational leaders could become strategic in their handling of issues in a PK-12 education setting. In examining the barriers we will not look at strategic leadership as a concept but will critically examine how educational leaders carry out their strategic plans to enable them succeed as leaders. This include an examination of both the external and internal environmental conditions that affect effective execution of a school's strategic plan. Every school needs to evaluate its performance and strategize towards improvement of its performance. When schools go through evaluation process, they draw an improvement plan which is based on the school's strategic plan. The strategic plan is based on the school's vision which needs to be communicated by the leadership. So the chapter will also examines how PK-12 educational leaders adopt strategic planning process to bring improvement into their schools. The final section will look at ways to overcome the barriers to strategic leadership in PK – 12 education.

Strategic Leadership in Education: What Is it?

When we say PK-12 school leaders must be strategic in handling issues in their schools our attention shift to approach that is applicable in corporate governance rather than the field of education. Strategic leadership has been in the management discourse for many years but little investigation or studies have

Related Content

Robots and Autism Spectrum Disorder: Clinical and Educational Applications
Amie Senland (2016). *Special and Gifted Education: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications (pp. 905-924).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/robots-and-autism-spectrum-disorder/151237

Teaching Young Children About Sustainability: A Constructivist Approach
Kerry Carley Rizzuto, John E. Henning, Katlyn M. Nielsenand Catherine Duckett (2022). *International Journal of Curriculum Development and Learning Measurement (pp. 1-12).*
www.irma-international.org/article/teaching-young-children-about-sustainability/313933

An Enquiry into the use of Technology and Student Voice in Citizenship Education in the K-12 Classroom
Venus Olla (2014). *K-12 Education: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications (pp. 892-913).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/an-enquiry-into-the-use-of-technology-and-student-voice-in-citizenship-education-in-the-k-12-classroom/88193

Potential of Human Tracking in Assistive Technologies for Children with Cognitive Disabilities
Mark Tee Kit Tsun, Lau Bee Theng, Hudyjaya Siswoyoand Sian Lun Lau (2017). *Supporting the Education of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (pp. 245-266).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/potential-of-human-tracking-in-assistive-technologies-for-children-with-cognitive-disabilities/165906

An Exploration of Multilingualism and Zimbabwean Language Policy as an Impact to Child's Holistic Development
Magret Jongore (2020). *International Journal of Curriculum Development and Learning Measurement (pp. 19-34).*
www.irma-international.org/article/an-exploration-of-multilingualism-and-zimbabwean-language-policy-as-an-impact-to-childs-holistic-development/247108