

Chapter 4

Andragogy and Leadership in Higher Education: A Framework for the Implementation of Leadership Development Programs

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ABSTRACT

This chapter focuses on various factors requiring changes in higher education leadership, such as societal pressures, availability of financial support, labor market characteristics and expectations for job-ready college graduates, and the tension between institutional processes and the degree to which internal/external stakeholders are involved in decision-making processes. In this light, leadership development has become critically important in creating the necessary cadre of professionals committed to the mission and vision of institutions of higher education they lead. As a clearer focus on effectiveness and differential impact on the emerging leadership skills of participants is still needed, this chapter proposes a theoretical framework infusing andragogical principles into leadership development.

INTRODUCTION

Given the range of challenges facing higher education, ranging from curricula to students, faculty, staff, shared governance, the overall value added to society, etc. (Zusman, 2005), leadership in colleges and universities has been the center of attention for quite some time now. Living in a global post-industrial society characterized by ever-increasing information consumption (Taylor & Machado-Taylor, 2010) has had a direct impact on higher education as a sector designed to serve the public good. Access, attrition, affordability, and accountability are the four main areas of focus for college and university leaders in the U.S. today (Berdahl, Altbach, & Gumpert, 2011). To an increasing degree, the same applies to more countries around the world, as resources and support for higher education are under increasing scrutiny. In this light, theoretical frameworks focused on leadership development underscore authentic (Cooper,

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-6684-7832-5.ch004

Scandura, & Schriesheim, 2005), distributive (Jones, Lefoe, Harvey, & Ryland, 2012), or visionary characteristics (Taylor & Machado-Taylor, 2010). Situated in the larger context of globalization in the technological era of the 21st century, higher education institutions around the world need to balance a myriad of local needs with increasing requirements stemming from a focus on global citizenship and its reliance on knowledge, skills, and dispositions that bring all of us together (Archer & Zhang, 2021). Moreover, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on instruction and overall work in virtual environments, rethinking social mobility and its correlation to cultural capital and diversity implies recalibrating policy and leadership in higher education (Challen, 2020). In this chapter, the author propose a conceptual framework intended to outline variables and relations among them (Miles & Huberman, 1994) as they support the effective implementation of leadership development programs built on andragogic principles, thus addressing a gap in current practice.

CHALLENGES IN HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE NEED FOR EFFECTIVE LEADERS

In synchronicity with the evolution of the higher education sector, the concept of leadership acquired additional significance over time. Leadership can be thought of as a complex process aimed at establishing a relationship toward a common goal within a particular context (Perruci, 2011, as cited in Sowcik, Andenoro, McNutt, & Murphy, 2015). Charisma-led leadership was centered on the idea that individuals are born to lead. Scientific management followed, elevating leadership to include processes designed to help individuals become efficient leaders. The next iteration was focused on the need for a more engaged/engaging leader, who would become transformational through leadership development (Kelly, 2019, as cited in Roux, 2020). Increasingly convoluted layers of multi-sector attributes that come into play to activate leadership skills across a plethora of environments require flexible planning and execution of strategic moves that factor in scenarios dealing with an unpredictable future highlighting diminishing resources and a stronger competition for them. At the same time, too much information, coupled with data abuse could become a particular contextual parameter that may end up delaying or blocking change by potentially leading to a lack of trust in leadership and/or planning processes (Mack, 2015). An analysis of the evolution of organizations points to greater complexity and maturity over time, leading up to the current stage where a full range of organizations have become more aware of their societal impact, thus emphasizing stronger ethical considerations supporting enhanced community-focused collaboration (Roux, 2020). In this light, organizations have become more agile and invested in providing value-added products/services/solutions to customers (individuals, groups, or other organizations), while deploying a less hierarchical structure to secure a competitive advantage by more pro-active decision making (Heerwagen, 2016, as cited in Roux, 2020).

As colleges and universities are becoming more complex institutions that have grown significantly in terms of the spectrum of their specialized services offered to co-located communities, they have to address the needs for flexible, pro-active leadership to cope with societal expectations of entrepreneurship, globalization, and marketization (Dopson et al., 2019). Emerging structural changes perceived as disruptive/innovative require concerted efforts focused on preserving the integrity of higher education's mission and commitment to the public good, while sustaining the spaces created to establish communities of learners, conduct research, and engage in pedagogical practices that address authentic, real-life issues (Keohane, 2013). As mentioned earlier, the various pressures that the higher education sector

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