

Chapter 7

Exploring the Potential of an Andragogical Approach to Teaching Leadership

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ABSTRACT

This chapter reports designing, implementing, and evaluating a Leadership and Management in ELT course based on an andragogical approach for adult learners in the teacher education department of a state university in Turkey. Participants were seven adult learners aged 28-35 undertaking the course, which lasted 14 weeks with 3 hours of weekly teaching. The course was delivered online, and the course content included leadership and management theories and approaches using videos, books, and a collection of articles. Data were collected using qualitative data collection tools; participants were requested to produce reflective writings, keep a leadership portfolio, and respond to end-of-the-course evaluation. Content analysis of the data revealed that adopting an andragogical approach to teaching leadership and management in ELT has been highly useful in preparing the participants for the leadership and management working environment they were either concurrently involved in and/or had aspirations to be in their professional lives.

INTRODUCTION

The importance of effective leadership and management for the desired functioning of schools and educational institutions is widely acknowledged in the twenty-first century (Dimmock, 2003; Kırkgöz, 2007; Miller, 2001). Bush (2008), one of the pioneering researchers in educational leadership, maintains that “there is growing recognition that the quality of leaders and leadership, is critical if schools are to produce the best possible outcomes for their learners and their stakeholders” (p. ix). In addition, the demands of today’s business world require leaders with knowledge and skills to effectively lead

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and manage people and institutions. This has led many countries to introduce various opportunities for leadership development for practicing and aspiring leaders as a key dimension of school improvement.

Leadership refers to an ability to influence and motivate people in the same organization for the effectiveness and success of the organization (House, Javidan, Hanges, & Dorfman, 2002). Management comprises a set of activities directed towards efficient and effective utilization of organizational resources in order to achieve organizational goals (Sapre, 2002 as cited in Bush, 2008, p.1). Effective leaders perform various leadership responsibilities including delegating tasks, establishing strategic direction, communicating goals, developing visions based on shared values, motivating the followers, and leading change (Coleman & Glover, 2010; Day, Harris, & Hadfield, 2001; Dipaola, 2003). In the absence of effective leaders, the requirements of the current century simply cannot be realized. To be effective, it is important that leaders are well prepared and educated. The issue of how educational leaders can be well educated for their leadership roles can only be addressed by designing and implementing effective leadership preparation programs (Rathert & Kirkgöz, 2017).

I brought leadership and management to the field of ELT in 2014, and since then I have been delivering a Leadership and Management in ELT Course at a postgraduate level. This chapter reports my experience of designing, implementing, and evaluating a Leadership and Management in ELT course based on Andragogical Approach for adult learners in the Teacher Education department of a state university in Turkey. The theoretical framework presents the six assumptions of andragogy that are used as the guiding principles for the design and development of the course. It also explores how andragogical mindsets play an important role in adult learning and considers how the integration of andragogical mindsets perspectives contributes to the development of leadership education. The methodology section of the study gives an outline of the andragogical mindset-based approach that is adopted in the leadership development of adults. As such, the course focuses on process and cognitive development, and capacity-building skills, which are increasingly regarded as appropriate for developing leaders (Kennedy, Carroll, & Francoeur, 2013). The chapter concludes by presenting an argument for the value of andragogical style leadership and management development.

BACKGROUND

What constitutes the background to the present research is my interest in bringing the topic of leadership and management into the field of English Language Teaching (ELT). Since 2014, I have been delivering a course entitled Leadership and Management in ELT at the ELT Department of a state university in Turkey at the postgraduate level to doctorate students. Over the years, I have realized the need to update the course content. This section presents an overview of the evaluation process of the course covering the years 2014-2020 by collecting information from the graduates in order to increase the quality of the course. It briefly mentions needs analysis with the participants of the current course, and finally, it introduces innovations that were incorporated into the revised course content because of this process.

Course Evaluation

The main goal of course evaluation was to obtain feedback from the past course participants regarding their learning experience in terms of how well the Leadership and Management in ELT course prepared them for the leadership and management work environment. A short course evaluation survey was sent

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