



UNIVERSIDAD DE CÓRDOBA
FACULTAD DE EDUCACIÓN Y CIENCIAS HUMANAS
DEPARTAMENTO DE IDIOMAS EXTRANJEROS



A PERSONAL LEADERSHIP STATEMENT

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MARIA VENANCIA ALVAREZ CORCHO



UNIVERSIDAD DE CÓRDOBA

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING PROGRAMME

DIPLOMA COURSE

Lifelong Professional Development: Empowering Foreign Language Teachers

MONTERÍA - CÓRDOBA

2022



"VIGILADA MINEDUCACIÓN"

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Statement submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of English

Teaching Program

MENTOR

PEDRO AGUAS CASTILLO, PhD

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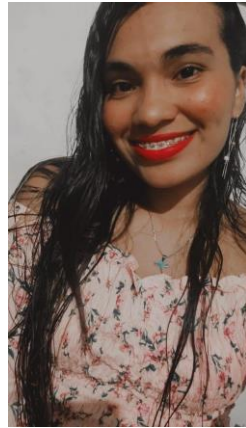
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Our Leadership Profile



As teacher leaders, we see ourselves as the leaders of people all over around, not only the kind of leaders who delegate, but also the ones who help and guide others. We will encourage people to overcome and set up better decisions that aid their professional, personal and mental well-being to raise their main purposes in life. We aim to inspire others to dream, have confidence in their acting, believe in themselves and the capability everyone has. Likewise, we believe in the society and the power, and potential each individual has to be a real leader.

Real leaders focus on aid to others, showing confidence, and transmitting it in order to enhance the power of each individual. Being a leader means inspiring others to follow dreams and reaching goals in life.

—Fabra & Álvarez, *Personal Leadership Statement*.



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Abstract

Leadership has been an uncertain term. Many people have defined it, fixing it to their necessities and taking into account the environment in which their leadership is developed; however, the term does not have an exact meaning yet. This paper gives an original and different point of view and understanding of what leadership is. Also, the assumptions that teacher leaders face, empowerment, and future implications for current practices are addressed. In this statement, we report on studies where authors defined the concept of leadership empowerment that can be applied to us as future teacher leaders. The idea is to implement the concept itself as a tool that helps us develop and apply strategies in educational leadership to provide feasible solutions.

Keywords: Leadership: educational leadership



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1. Introduction

The concept of leadership has been defined in different ways. Day (2012, p. 3) said, “Leadership is a complex and diverse topic, and trying to make sense of leadership research can be an intimidating endeavor”. In addition, Zaccaro| et al. (2004, p. 452) stated, “Most teams contain certain individuals who are primarily responsible for defining team goals and for developing and structuring the team to accomplish these missions”. That individual could be understood as the leader, who is in charge of overcoming the group's struggles and directing the team to success. Following the previous ideas, they let us know that there are different ideologies, ways of being, thinking, acting, and above all, of working according to the goals or the objectives set, making the teams evolve. Furthermore, Hogan & Kaiser (2004) states that:

Leadership is one of the most important topics in the human sciences, and historically one of the more poorly understood; it is important for two reasons. First, leadership solves the problem of how to organize collective effort; consequently, it is the key to organizational effectiveness. (p. 2)

We can say then that a leader directs, gives instructions, and communicates to raise the chances for success of the strategies and activities they develop. The author let us know why leadership is crucial to achieve goals. Consequently, it is important to know and consider the multiple concepts of leadership to have a broader view of what they entail and, as future leaders, put them into practice. In fact, we believe that leadership is not just about



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achieving one's personal goals but also about helping followers and subordinates develop their potential for greatness. Likewise, we contend that a good leader offers efficient results, which have to do with the relationship between the leader and his work team. This is a primary factor that can determine the success or failure of the goals pursued.

Our Assumptions

As future teacher leaders. We believe that a good leader is aware of what happens in the learning process of people when doing some activities that help them to overcome and fulfill specific goals. The same happens to a teacher. However, if we want to link both, it is necessary to enhance different skills that help us to help. That's the main reason why we started wondering if we are ready for personalized accompaniment, support, guidance, development, demand, and encouragement from people.

Teacher leadership is an essential element to achieve good results and pursue goals in our lives, since "leadership implies at a minimum: a leader, a group of subordinates, the exchanges between them... and the context in which the exchanges take place" (Hunter, Bedell-Avers & Mumford, 2007, p. 436). In this case, teacher leadership refers to educational processes, that is, to the relationship between teachers and students. In this sense, collaborative work is important because it helps to improve what they need to reach the goal.

How do we know we are becoming good teacher leaders? In an educational context, a good teacher leader is someone who is willing to help people overcome learning struggles so that they can face the challenge of upgrading their educational levels. In this regard, Dove



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& Honigsfeld (2010) say that “teacher leaders are able to support an overall vision of change by mentoring new teachers” (p. 13). That supports the idea that being a leader requires and needs many aspects that contribute to making important changes in people’s perceptions in order to enhance different processes that are associated with personal growth and enrichment of the learning aspects. Similarly, we believe that a leader is someone who is willing to improve every day in order to be able to help others. In addition, leaders have some qualities, such as responsibility, respect, commitment, tolerance, and some others that give value to the process for both the leader and the follower. On the other hand, “there appears to be an assumption that only positive leader actions are critical to the success of an organization.” (Hunter et al, 2007, p. 438) Considering this last idea, we think that it is partly true, as those positive actions have an assertive result during the leadership commitment and reaching goals; however, we also believe that there are also some negative actions that are part of the apprenticeship, that in addition help people to enhance and enrich the leadership and learning process of every team member.

The evidence described today makes it clear that without properly trained and high-performing teachers, and without pedagogical leaders with the necessary autonomy to decide and implement measures, good school and school development have little chance of success. We wonder if we will be good or bad teacher leaders, even though the desire to be part of the learning processes, we know there are many other important factors that make a good leader. In conclusion, it is important for personal and professional growth to be good teacher leaders as those individuals are really important for academic success and learning



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processes.

Leadership Empowerment and Implication for the Future

Leadership and empowerment are two concepts closely related to excellent teaching processes since both ideas contribute to a good way of guiding students to overcome problems and set goals in their lives. However, if we put these words together, the meaning is closely related to what we need as teachers since empowerment is “a construction that links individual strengths and competencies, natural support systems and proactive behaviors with social policy and social change” (Perkins & Zimmerman, p. 569). Also, leadership includes “the nature of the influence process—and its resulting results—that occurs between a leader and his followers and how this influence process is explained by the leader...” (Antonakis, Cianciolo, & Sternberg, 2004, p. 5).

Leadership is fundamental to enhancing processes for learners, and empowerment gives the security of being part of that process. Likewise, Ojuola says, “Power refers to the means leaders have to potentially influence others” (2020, p. 5). In this sense, leadership empowerment helps teachers guide and lead students to take control when needed making sure that it would be a successful process. The idea of power also has some positive aspects, such as improving creativity of the learners and motivating them to have mental, personal, and professional growth throughout their lives.



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Empowerment could be said to be a process of internal and external change.

Rappoport (1984) has pointed out that it is easy to define empowerment by its absence but difficult to define it in action since it takes different forms in different people and contexts. Even defining the concept is subject to debate.

Zimmerman (1984) has argued that asserting a single definition of empowerment can make attempts to achieve it formulaic or prescribed, contradicting the very concept of empowerment. The internal process is the person's sense of belief in her ability to make decisions and to solve her own problems, while the external change finds expression in the ability to act and implement the practical knowledge, the information, the skills, the capabilities, and the other new resources acquired in the course of the process (Parsons, 1991). In this sense, empowerment is the acquisition of power and independence by a group to improve their situation. Notwithstanding, Sellami, Sawalhi, Romanowski, and Amatullah (2019) said, "Leadership is a type of discursive practice that provides a critical analysis of the way participants 'talk-about' their practice" (p.2). According to these ideas, leadership empowerment connotes sharing power and motivating to put people's work in an exceptional performance (Zhang & Bartol, 2010) concerning their efforts to achieve their goals.

All in all, leadership empowerment supports the students' learning process, which has a direct effect on schools. Taking the power and the control could be a fundamental part by the teachers as they know student's needs, interests and abilities. Following that idea, teachers as leaders could follow the process successfully to improve the mental, physical,



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and personal development of the learners. In this respect, Marks & Printy (2003) states, “To enlarge the leadership capacity of schools attempting to improve their academic performance, some principals involve teachers in sustained dialogue and decision making about educational matters.” (p. 370). That means that teacher participation is important to enhance academic performance in the school, which supports the idea that good leadership empowerment by the teacher could give meaningful results for the learners, other teachers, and all the academic community. “Unlike the conventional notion of instructional leadership, shared instructional leadership is an inclusive concept, compatible with competent and empowered teachers” (Marks & Printy, 2003, p. 374).

Conclusion

In conclusion, as we already know, leadership empowerment is the process where people strengthen their capacities, confidence, vision, and protagonist as soon as they are part of a social group to promote positive changes in the situations in which they live. Empowerment is one of the most important keys to getting where you want to go, taking advantage of every possible teaching resource that you have around you and within you. This capacity is a fundamental part of personal development for the search for fulfillment and life satisfaction and also a fundamental part to develop excellent leadership. Furthermore, leadership empowerment as part of teaching programs could be effective, making the learning process more successful - students could be motivated and engaged in a richer experience.



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