

# Impact of School Leader's Qualities to Supervision

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## Abstract:

The primary purpose of this study was to identify the common and distinct qualities and characteristics of leaders and how these qualities and characteristics impacted the leader's performance of his functions and responsibilities. This study utilized the qualitative design, and for the method, data mining was used. From the design used, every quality and characteristic is described as it was practiced in the country from where it is reflected. For the data mining, the data were being considered and findings were obtained for thorough analysis and interpretation. Studies and researches all over the world that tackled on school leadership qualities and characteristics were gathered, presented and discussed. The findings showed that when leaders possess these qualities, they are able to dispose of their functions and responsibilities effectively and efficiently. Furthermore, leaders who possess these qualities and characteristics are able to sustain their leadership, they too, made their teachers feel good, as a result, and these teachers become more motivated to do well in their job, thereby making their respective schools well performing schools. In summary, these leaders have special and unique combination of these qualities that set them up as great leaders, making them different from other leaders. Specifically, they inspire their followers toward a common goal, motivate and support them on their way to achieving the goal.

**Keywords:** school leadership, personal qualities, professional qualities, performance, supervision

## Introduction:

Leadership, according to Rouse (2017), is the ability of an individual or a group of individuals to influence and guide followers or other members of an organization. She further asserted that leadership involves making sound decisions, creating and articulating a clear vision, establishing achievable goals and providing followers with the knowledge and tools necessary to achieve these goals. Great leaders are expected to possess the ability of making strategic and visionary decisions and convince others to follow those decisions.

Specifying leadership to educational institutions, Bush, Bell and Middlewood (2019) termed it as *instructional leadership* where in most cases, the school principal is considered as the leader, while in a few cases, a department head may also take such leadership role, especially in big schools and universities.

According to Hallinger and Heck as quoted by Bush, Bell and Middlewood (2019), the twenty first century instructional leadership has evolved into "leadership for learning", from that of being concerned only with teaching rather than learning, and on being focused too much on the belief that the principal is the center of expertise, power and authority. In this assertion by Bush, et.al, they elaborated that in this present time, being a school leader entails that one should be more involved in the learning process; that the school leader needs to be in close participation on the teaching –learning processes of the school. Moreover, the school leader needs to have a mental concept of shared responsibility that is, distributing his leadership functions by delegating responsibilities to others, rather than absorbing all these to himself. In fact, according to Rouse (2017), delegation is an important aspect of leadership. This

is so because a leader is not expected to be perfect in all ways; that he may not be skilled at or involved with the day-to-day management of the work needed to turn the set vision and goals into a reality. Thus, there is a need for him/her to delegate some of his tasks and responsibilities to those who are more skilled and are available to manage tasks at hand.

A lot has been said about the qualities and characteristics of an effective and successful leader. Rouse (2017) claimed that an effective leader possesses self-confidence, strong communication and management skills, creative and innovative thinking, perseverance in the face of failure, willingness to take risks, openness to change, and levelheadedness and reactivity in times of crisis. These are just a few of the many qualities and characteristics of a good leader.

This study is anchored on a theory of leadership that is called The Great Man Theory. According to Thompson (2019), The Great Man Theory sees leadership as a heroic act of the individual. It means, there's something special about a person's unique combination of qualities, personality traits and personal abilities that sets him up as a great leader and distinguishes him from all others. He has the ability to inspire people toward a common goal, and to motivate and support them on the way to achieving this goal.

This theory of leadership relates much to this study since leadership qualities and characteristics that make a leader effective and successful are the main focus of this study.

**Objective:**

This study aims to identify the common and distinct qualities and characteristics of leaders and how these qualities and characteristics impact on the leader’s performance of his functions and responsibilities. Specifically, this study attempts to identify the behaviors, actions, and practices of school leaders that are considered good qualities and characteristics. Furthermore, this attempts to get the qualities that are common among leaders, qualities that are proven to have significant impact on the success of their performance of their functions and responsibilities.

**Design:**

For the design, it used the qualitative design, for the method, it used data mining. Studies and researches all over the world that tackled on school leadership qualities and characteristics were gathered, presented and discussed. As soon as this process was done, identification of the different qualities, characteristics and practices was done, followed by the identification of the qualities and characteristics which are common among successful leaders. Lastly, conclusions were drawn. From the design used, every quality and characteristic was described as it was practiced in the country from where it was reflected. For the data mining, the data were being considered and findings were obtained for thorough analysis and interpretation.

**Presentation of Data:**

This part of the study presented the results of the different studies conducted about the qualities of leaders from different countries. These selected studies come from Asia specifically Malaysia and Saudi Arabia; Canada, Europe, specifically the Czech Republic and the United States. The qualities being analyzed are the following: conscientiousness; agreeableness; skills, knowledge and attitudes that are effective; attachment of values to leadership practice; being consistently professional and prepared; being visionary and an instructional leader; integrity, forward-looking, inspirational, competency, and self-efficacy; knowledgeable, one who trusts and respects, caring and safe, disciplined and decisive, has a sense of family/community, is positive, has high expectations, aware of innovations, speak the same language, and communicates well.

**Discussion**

From the data gathered, it can be deduced that some qualities and characteristics, both professional and personal, were identified as common among the studies conducted by different proponents that were selected. The following table displayed these common characteristics.

Table 1. Quality – Ability to Delegate

Counties	Impact
United States of America	A leader who delegates tasks makes her followers feel important and trusted, thus giving them a boost of their morale.
Saudi Arabia	This quality of a leader in Saudi Arabia enhances the growth of the followers, fosters cooperative and collegial environment, and made the followers feel empowered.

**Interpretation and Analysis:**

Table 1 showed that a leader who has the ability to delegate makes her follower feel trusted and empowered, giving them a boost of their morale, thereby encouraging them to work collaboratively and collegially. According to Hull as quoted by Krasnoff (2015), an effective leader shares leadership responsibilities, rather than just delegate paperwork. Moreover, according to another study on *Effective Leadership Characteristics and Behaviors for Female Department Chairs in Higher Education in Saudi Arabia*, Gonaim and Peters (2017) asserted that delegation is one of the most important characteristics of an effective leader, especially when the delegation of tasks is accompanied with follow up by the leader.

Table 2. Quality – Caring

Counties	Impact
Canada	Because of this quality in the Canadian leaders, teachers feel valued; because the teachers feel that they are being valued by their principal, they do well in their job. Moreover, the teachers feel safe and secure because they know that no matter what happens, they can count on their principals to be there for them., thus, they are able perform their job well.
Malaysia	Leaders who possess this quality are clear about the work which needs to be performed; this enables

	them to become skilled in capturing the hearts of staff so that they continue striving and are courageous in facing changes.
United States of America	This quality of a leader heightens the morale of the followers or teachers.

**Interpretation and Analysis:**

Table 2 showed that a caring leader makes their teachers feel valued and secured, encouraging them to do well in their job. This too, enables leaders to capture the hearts of staff, encouraging them to continue striving. This also heightens the morale of teachers. According to Parsons and Beauchamp (2012), a principal who personally cares for his teachers, who believes that teachers' personal lives are as important as their professional lives makes teachers feel safe, that they can count on the principal when confronted with "aggressive parents" and other similar situations. Also, Goolamally & Ahmad (2014) identified one quality of a leader that captures the hearts of staff; a quality that allows the leader to spur them with motivating words so that they have initiative; a leader that provides them with guidance, this quality is equivalent to being caring. Hickman (2017), on his *Qualitative Study on Educational Leadership Styles and Teacher Morale* asserted that one quality of a leader that impacted teacher's morale is the leader's ability to encourage others while demonstrating compassion.

Table 3. Quality – Disciplined

Counties	Impact
Czech Republic	Being a conscientious and agreeable leader made them become more effective, and this quality of leaders made the group under them perform better.
United States of America	This quality of a leader enables teachers and students alike to perform better as teachers and as students academically. In the case of student performance, it was found out that disciplined school leaders have greater impact on the students' academic achievement.
Canada	The Canadian teachers appreciated that their principals are disciplined and decisive because they feel assured that their principals would fight to get them what they needed to do and that their principals would do what needs to be done.

**Interpretation and Analysis:**

The table above indicated that being a disciplined school leader made teachers become more effective, made them perform better, made them feel secure knowing that their principal would do anything that needs to be done, and made students achieve better academically. In a study by Prochazka, et.al (2018), it was found out that agreeableness and conscientiousness are the most important leader personality traits. Conscientious leaders display planned rather than spontaneous behavior. This entail being self-disciplined and being responsible. Hickman (2017) on a study about *Leadership Styles and Teacher Morale*, found out that being professional and prepared is one quality of a leader that impacted the morale of teachers. Being professional and prepared can be equated to being disciplined. Also, in a study by Parsons and Beauchamp (2012), one quality of a leader that made schools successful is being disciplined and decisive. This means that the principal or leader is strong and confident that when problems arise, the principal is there to address them and set up appropriate interventions.

Table 4. Quality – Experience and Competence

Counties	Impact
Canada	This quality made the teachers in Canada respect and appreciate their leaders more; teachers become more comfortable asking help from their principal because they are confident that their principal is knowledgeable enough to provide the help they need.
Malaysia	Malaysian leaders believe that competence enables them to become committed to excellence, dedicated, and focused, one who dares to take risks, are proactive.
United States of America	This quality made schools perform well academically, teachers and students alike incur fewer absences, effective teachers stay longer.
Saudi Arabia	This quality is being valued by Saudi leaders. Being knowledgeable on the policies, rules and regulations of the organization and the responsibilities and rights of their position is important to them to be able to lead effectively.

**Interpretation and Analysis:**

Indicated in Table 4 are the impacts when leaders are experienced and competent. When school leaders have this quality, they make their teachers respect and appreciate them more, making the teachers more comfortable asking for help from with confidence that their principal would be able to give them the help they need because they are knowledgeable. Moreover, this quality made schools perform better academically, made teachers and students incur fewer absences. This quality is being valued by Saudi leaders for whatever reason they have. Supporting these are studies by Parsons and Beauchamp (2012) who asserted that being knowledgeable is one quality of a leader that made schools effective. Knowledgeable means that principals share their expertise and help teachers when they ask for it. In a study in Malaysia by Goolamally & Ahmad (2014), it is said that a leader with work, emotional and spiritual competencies make their followers become committed to excellence, dedicated, focused, risk taker, proactive. These leaders use diverse strategies and leadership management techniques to develop members towards achieving excellence. They too, are able to manage themselves through realization and emotional control in all situations. Krasnoff (2015) found out that a leader who has at least three or more years of experience in leadership is an effective leader. Moreover, Barret and Breyer (2014) found out that leaders who model and demonstrate effective strategies are more appreciated by teachers because this entails that the principal is knowledgeable enough. Meanwhile, Gonaim and Peters (2017) found out that leaders who have knowledge in leadership theories and practices, those who know their responsibilities, rights, policies, rules and regulations are leaders who are found to be effective.

Table 5. Quality – Integrity

Counties	Impact
Malaysia	This quality makes leaders in Malaysia not only effective but this enables them to sustain their leadership; they are able to provide the right direction for their followers.
United States of America	This quality of leaders boosts the morale of teachers and it makes them more motivated.
Saudi Arabia	Leaders believed that there is a need for them to bring certain attitudes to their work, attitudes that are built on collegiality, cooperation and appreciation, attitudes that take into consideration the interest of the team or organization rather than on of self

interest.
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**Interpretation and Analysis:**

In Table 5, it was shown that integrity in a leader makes them sustainable leaders, enable them to provide the right direction for their followers, boosts their teachers’ morale, made their teachers work collegially and cooperatively. Goolamally & Ahmad (2014) in their study asserted that leaders with the attribute of integrity are honest, trustworthy and sincere and their words and actions are trusted, are transparent, just and, and show congruence between their feelings, thoughts, actions and words. Davis (2015) in a study of technical school principals found out that professional and personal integrity is among the quality of leaders that is being considered as important. It boosts morale of teachers and make them more motivated. Gonaim and Peters (2017) asserted that leaders who bring with them attitudes that are built on collegiality, cooperation and appreciation are effective leaders.

Table 6. Quality – Visionary

Counties	Impact
Canada	This quality made Canadian teachers understand that their principal held them in high standards and that they are being encouraged by their principals to rise above these standards, making the school strive for excellence. Teachers feel that they become part of a school that is highly academic, a school where they can be the best that they can be
Malaysia	Being forward-looking or visionary enables the leaders in Malaysia to create an environment where each member of the school has one vision and objective. They are able to build aspirations and are able to motivate followers to work together as a team to achieve the objectives.
United States of America	This quality of a leader boosts others by putting them in an optimistic mind, inspiring them to work together towards the same vision. Another study in the US revealed that this quality enhances human

	resource hiring practices and also assist with performance evaluation tools. In another study, it was revealed that this quality has three to four times more impact on student achievement.
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### Interpretation and Analysis:

Table 6 indicated that leaders who are visionary made their teachers understand that their principal held them in high standards and that they are being encouraged by their principals to rise above these standards, making the school strive for excellence. Moreover, this quality enables the leaders in to create an environment where each member of the school has one vision and objective, this boosts their followers, enhances human resource hiring practices, and has impacted more on the students' achievement. Parsons and Beauchamp (2012) found out that the principal who set high expectations held teachers in high standards and to rise above these standards, making the school strive for excellence. Having high expectations means having vision and goals to work on. According to Goolamally & Ahmad (2014), a forward-looking leader is capable of promoting the growth of an organization by instilling work spirit, motivation and a shared vision in his followers by setting strategic and visionary work and direction as well as using the potential of every individual in the organization. A forward-looking leader could create an environment teach member of the organization has one organizational vision and objective. Davis (2015) on the other hand asserted that a visionary leader serves the good of the whole. Gonaim and Peters (2017) also found that one quality of an effective leader is one works according to their vision.

### CONCLUSION

The qualities and characteristics mentioned in each study that were selected are categorized into six (6) major categories namely **being disciplined, ability to be able to delegate, experience and competence, visionary, caring, integrity**. These are qualities and characteristics that are found to be possessed by effective and efficient leaders. The findings show that when leaders possess these qualities, they are able to dispose of their functions and responsibilities effectively and efficiently. Furthermore, leaders who possess these qualities and characteristics are able to sustain their leadership, they too, made their teachers feel good, as a result, and these teachers become

more motivated to do well in their job, thereby making their respective schools well performing schools.

Consistent with the Great Man Theory of leadership, these leaders have special and unique combination of these qualities that set them up as great leaders, making them different from other leaders. Specifically, they inspire their followers toward a common goal, motivate and support them on their way to achieving the goal.

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