

EDUCATIONAL LEADER VERSUS INNOVATIVE METHODS OF TEACHING

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SUMMARY

The objective of this article is an assessment of the influence of an educational leader on introducing innovations to school. Following presentation of the issues concerning educational leadership, knowledge management, innovative form of managing a pupil's potential called tutoring, sample studies verifying occurrence of the problem in school environment, the authoress put forward the following hypothesis: *An educational leader, who is not of changes and innovations plays the most important role in implementing innovative methods of teaching.*

The conducted research made it possible to collect the research material, analyse and present results, which will provide a kind of answer to the questions concerning the role of a school headmaster and teachers in implementation of innovative methods of teaching – school tutoring.

Keywords: educational leader, educational leadership knowledge, knowledge management, tutoring

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INTRODUCTION

Leadership is one of those categories, which is applicable in many spheres of social life.

The issue of leadership in education is also discussed more and more often. There is a constant search for leaders having appropriate traits of personality and capable of effective implementation of plans in cooperation with other people.

The notion of educational leadership, which scientists in different disciplines are trying to determine, is closely related to the management of knowledge. Knowledge management means the way of management including the processes facilitating identification, choice, synthesis, storing, reconstruction, propagation of knowledge and creation of an interactive model learning from the environment in which individuals continuously share their knowledge and make use of the existing conditions to gain new knowledge (Błaszczyk, Kaczmarek, 2001). There are different innovative methods of knowledge education. One of the innovative methods of managing a pupil's potential is tutoring.

The objective of this article is an assessment of the influence of an educational leader on introducing innovations to school. Following presentation of the issues concerning educational leadership, knowledge management, innovative form of managing a pupil's potential called tutoring, sample studies verifying occurrence of the problem in school environment, the authoress put forward the following hypothesis: *An educational leader, who is not of changes and innovations plays the most important role in implementing innovative methods of teaching.*

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EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

There has been a gradual change in the model of school management and requirements expected from school headmasters going on in Poland since the political transformation of 1989. In the report of Talis studies published in 2009, it was stated that the modern look at school means that a headmaster is not only expected to manage the school, but perform the leadership roles as well, which means more independence and responsibility, the necessity to look at things in more extensive perspective, unassisted setting of targets (Pyżalski, 2014). Diverse methods of defining the term leadership indicate four, most often applied attitudes and properties:

- Leadership focused on constant, individual properties of an individual, which are most often connected with his/her character and predisposition.
- Leadership, which is important as a skill, an ability to engage others in the process of realization of objectives, winning people over, making them work.
- Leadership resulting from the mutual influence between the leaders and those who follow them.
- Leadership as a series of changes involves expressing a concept, building strategies, influencing results achieved by others, encouraging cooperation within a team and setting a good example, spurring into action and motivating (Michalak, 2014).

Due to non-commercial nature of acting, there is no discussion on the choice of management style in Polish school system (Grodecka, Gierczak, 2014). Effici-

ent leadership, which is a style of management, is an important element, which is translated into the quality of functioning of a school and any other educational institution. Leadership has gained advantage over professional management, because it can influence people in a more considerable and long-lasting degree (Stolarska, 2012).

According to Maxwell (1966), there are five criteria that allow to distinguish leaders occupying managerial positions from the people just acting as managers:

- A leader thinks on the long term basis, reaching far beyond current problems and the deadline of the quarterly report.
- A leader does not limit his interests to the scope of operation of the organizational unit, which he/she manages, and he/she knows how the individual units of the institution his/her unit is part of cooperate with one another.
- A leader attaches a lot of weight to a concept, value and motivation.
- A leader is very good at managing contradictory needs of different units of his/her organization.
- A leader does not accept the current state of things (Mądra, 2014).

The Table illustrates the comparison of activities of a manager and a leader.

Table 1. Manager vs. Leader – comparison of actions

Manager	Leader
Manages	Invents
Focuses on systems	Focuses on people
Monitors	Inspires, motivates, inspires confidence
Thinks on a short-term basis	Thinks on a long-term basis
Accepts the status quo	Negates status quo
Uses formal structures	Does not use formal structures
Makes plans and budgets	Introduces changes
Copies	Creates

Source: *Analiza porównawcza systemu kształcenia i doskonalenia kadry kierowniczej szkół oraz placówek.* (2014). Wyd. Uniwersytet Jagielloński, Kraków, 16. (*Comparative Analysis of Training and Improvement of School Management Staff*)

It is difficult to indicate even one theory of “good” leadership, which everybody would accept and derive one, binding definition of the term.

With reference to leadership, it is necessary to recall the Goleman triad, which includes the cognitive empathy, which allows to accept another person’s point of view, understand his/her state of mind and control our own emotions, when jud-

ging the other person's emotions. It also includes emotional empathy making us share the other person's feelings, adapt ourselves to his/her emotions. Goleman also distinguished the third type of empathy, i.e. compassionate empathy, which makes us not only understand another person's predicament and feel with them, but are spontaneously moved to help, if needed (Grodecka, Gierczak, 2014).

The described actions of a leader and the system of behavioural traits should influence the choice of a leader in school, who is able to gather others around him/her and lead them to achieve extraordinary results. Headmasters, as successful educational leaders should, among other things, aspire to enrich positive experiences of teachers, manage knowledge in order to introduce innovative forms of education. It is also emphasized in modern attitudes towards leadership that the relations between a leader and his/her subordinates are no longer of a single-track nature. A leader is no longer the only person responsible for efficient leadership. The role of a leader is to make people use their potential.

KNOWLEDGE AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Each subject, in his or her actions, makes use of resources. Resources are the subject of management. Human resources, i.e. the labour force and their qualifications are the most important of all.

Since the early 90s of the 20th century, the development of the Internet has been very dynamic and globalization of the world economy has intensified. This is why the role of information in the life of each society has begun to increase. The concept of an information society was created by one of the influential psychologists of the 20th century, D. Bell. There is no explicit definition of the concept of an information society in the literature. However, one of the most complete definitions was created by M. Casstels, who maintained that an information society is a society for whom information becomes an important business and cultural activity and deals with creating, distributing and trading information. In his opinion, prosperity is created due to exploitation of knowledge. Attempts to define the idea of knowledge, have been made since the earliest times. The first person, who took this venture upon himself was Plato, who asked a question about the essence of knowledge and the legitimacy of identifying it with wisdom. It turned out to be impossible to define it unambiguously. He identified it with perception, and then he refers to the "true judgement" maintaining that *when the true judgement is combined with accurate presentation, the most perfect knowledge is created* (Platon, 2002).

The notion of knowledge was also dealt with by Aristotle, Kant or Ryle, whose works are the basis for the contemporary works on the management of knowledge. It was assumed that knowledge concerns the sphere of practical implementation of the acquired image of the reality in its new form and modification of the existing conditions of the environment – i.e. is transformed into action and is the result of combining information and the existing knowledge.

Knowledge is the starting point in the process of Knowledge Management. Due to a growing interest in knowledge management, the term has earned many definitions. It can be defined as the activities serving identification, preservation, propagation and utilization of overt and hidden knowledge of the staff of an enterprise to increase efficiency and effectiveness of actions performed by its employees (Mazurkiewicz, Wyręba, 2013). Definitions of knowledge management as formulated by theoreticians and practitioners are presented in the Table.

Table 2. The term of knowledge management in theory and in practice

	Author	Definition
THEORETICIANS	R.Bennet. & H Gabriel.	<i>Information, knowledge and experience management, i.e. creating, collecting, storing and using them to ensure future development based on the possessed resources.</i>
	T. A Stewart	<i>Possessing knowledge about what we know, acquiring and organizing it and making use of it in the way bringing definite benefits.</i>
PRACTITIONERS	Mc Kinsey	<i>A systematized procedure of transferring right knowledge to the right people at the right time in order to take a decision bringing profits to a company.</i>
	Ernest & Young	<i>A system helping an enterprise in acquiring, processing and making use of the knowledge in order to take fast wiser decisions in order to gain competitive advantage.</i>

Source: Kowalczyk, A., Nogalski B. (2007). *Zarządzanie wiedzą. Koncepcja i narzędzia*. Difin, Warszawa.

Definitions of knowledge management refer mainly to the result, i.e. efficiency and ability to take correct decisions. According to Błaszczyk i Kaczmarek (2001), Knowledge management means the method of management involving processes making possible identification, selection, synthesis, storing, reproduce, distribution of knowledge and creating an interactive model of learning environment, in which individuals continuously share their knowledge and make use of the existing conditions to acquire new knowledge. This is why managing knowledge refers to three processes:

- Creating knowledge or the , so called, innovation;
- Transfer of knowledge, i.e. making use of documents and the media for communication;
- Making use of the knowledge of the students, teachers, the headmaster, other school employees.

These three processes should coexist in education, because transferring knowledge we create it, whereas making use of knowledge we transfer it. Among public organisations, school occupy a particular place in creating knowledge or in innovation. When answering the question, what actually is innovation, we can repeat after Z. Pietrasiński (1970) that it is a set of changes deliberately introduced by individuals or cybernetic systems designed by them, which involve substituting the state of things to date by other states, positively evaluated in the light of definite criteria and essentially making up progres. Whereas , W. Okoń defines innovation as a change of the school system structure as a whole or of structures of its important components in order to introduce improvements of measurable nature (Okoń, 1998).

A school, which follows progress and wants to function as well as possible, teaching a large number of pupils, must offer something interesting. It must be “different” from all other institutions of the type. This is exactly one of the factors that a potential pupils of a school takes into consideration – its unusualness and innovation in fulfilling its tasks. The implemented innovation should, therefore, be a long lasting and effective process. Educational institutions introduce innovations on the basis of the Order of the Ministry of the National Education and Sports of April 9, 2002 concerning conditions for conducting innovative and experimental activities by public schools and educational institutions, which defines the concept of pedagogical innovation. It says that the innovation is an innovative curricular, organizational or methodological solutions aimed at improving the quality of schools.. The Order divides the innovation into three groups: curricular, organizational or methodological (Dz. U. 2002). Pedagogical innovation is nothing else than new school services, which make it possible for the teachers to vary their work, introduce attractive forms of their classes, and hence encourage their pupils to discover new educational horizons. The most innovative method of knowledge transfer is tutoring.

TUTORING – AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY EDUCATION

Tutoring is a method of teaching having its roots in ancient Greece, and in modern times it was practiced at Oxford and Cambridge universities. The idea of tutoring is based on individualized attitude towards a pupils or a student, where a tutor is at the same time a teacher and a kind of guide, and a pupil or a student is an active partner of an educational situation. A tutor and a pupils or a student should be connected by mutual confidence, as it favours intellectual development of a pupils or a student (Brzezińska, Rycielska, 2009). School tutoring is a form of educational work implemented in direct and individual contact with a pupils with particular attention paid to the dignity of the pupil and the teacher, resulting from the fact of their humanity. The definition was created on the basis of the records contained in the educational conception of the ALA (Aktorskie Liceum Artystyczne – the Grammar School of Acting Arts) (Brzezińska, 2009, Budzyński). Educational tutoring was divided into three types, i.e. developmental, scientific, and artistic. The developmental tutoring is a method of individual work with a pupil in a class team, in order to discover his or her abilities, develop a style of acquiring knowledge and determine occupational development.

The scientific tutoring is a form of didactic work aimed at developing pupils in acquiring and consolidating knowledge and the ability to improve it. The term artistic tutoring is applied to acquiring knowledge and skills in different fields of art (Nerwińska, 2011) In tutoring, a great importance is placed on the developing potential of a pupil – a young man. The method is contained in the teacher – pupil, master – pupil relation. Working in this way, a tutor must concentrate on individual needs and problems of his or her ward. Tutoring can be introduced already at the earliest stages of education – starting from the kindergarten, elementary school, up to post-secondary schools. Talking about tutoring, it should be noted that a tutor in this relation is a wise teacher, who skilfully accompanies, supports and determines definite trains of thought of his or her pupil. Tutoring is certainly a long-term, though regular, process.

The conducted research reveals that according to Piotr Czekierda the tutoring method is an excellent answer to the serious shortage of talent development paths, selecting young leaders, creating elites..., tutoring should not be a method for anyone, but for each one who needs it and wants to use it (Kalińska, 2012). Tutoring is a chance for education of the 21st century. This original, and therefore innovative method, which more and more often is successfully applied in Po-

lish schools. The importance of innovative methods is increasing in the context of building an economy based on Knowledge, the major point of which is the knowledge and intellectual capital of teachers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Our research tool was an anonymous survey form, which was filled in on the principle of freedom of choice. The survey for headmasters contained 3 questions, and the survey for teachers contained 18 closed questions. Following a pilot study on a sample group during a project implemented by postgraduate students of Management of *Educational Institutions*. Then a study of the average number of the sample at voivodeship (provincial) level of respondents on the basis of the Eurostat recommendation

$$n_{\min} = \frac{1,2(1-0,08)}{0,08 \times (0,15)^2} = 613 \quad (1)$$

which was $n=613$.

As a result of the conducted survey, we have obtained research material in the form of 615 questionnaires filled in by teachers and 56 questionnaires filled in by headmasters. The material was analysed, interpreted and the analysis and the results are presented underneath in the form of a pie chart.

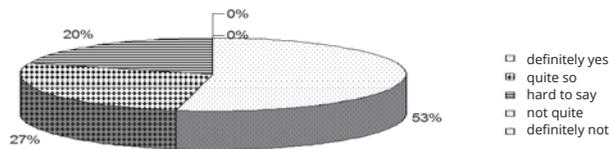


Fig. 1. Assessment of the percentage share of the importance of the headmasters in implementation innovative teaching methods
Source: own study – questionnaire

Analysis of the above data shows that the headmaster plays the major role in implementation of innovative methods of teaching, as over 53 % of the headmasters stated that they play a definitely major role in implementation of innovative methods of teaching. It is also interesting that none of the headmasters shirked responsibility of having influence on implementation of the innovative methods of teaching and none of them marked “not quite” or “definitely not”.

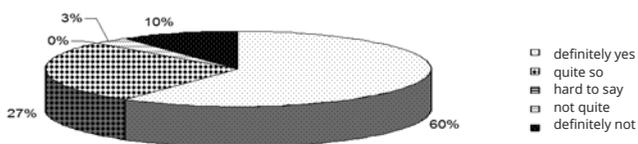


Fig. 2. Assessment of the percentage share of headmasters' knowledge about working with pupils acc. to the tutoring method.

Source: own study – questionnaire

Analysis of the abovementioned study shows that only half of the responding headmasters have heard about the innovative method called tutoring. The interesting fact is that, some of the headmasters – 10 % - have not heard at all about the method, which according to many people is the method of the future in the 21st century educational system. The abovementioned data indicate that only 12 schools make use of the tutoring method in their work with pupils, whereas in 2 schools using this method for teaching is not preferred, and no elements of this method of teaching are introduced. After the analysis of the headmasters' questionnaires, an analysis of teachers' questionnaire followed. The questionnaire was filled in by 615 teacher respondents. When analysing the study on the basis of the submitted questionnaires only four, key answers were taken into consideration, They were: *Does the headmaster play an important role in introducing innovative methods of teaching?*

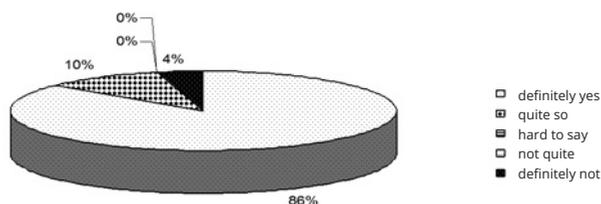


Fig. 3. Assessment of the percentage share, acc. to teachers, of the role of the headmaster in implementation innovative teaching methods.

Source: own study – questionnaire

The analysis of the results presented in Fig. 1 reveal that teachers agree as to the role of the headmaster in implementation of the innovative methods of teaching. According to the respondents, the role of headmasters in this field of activity is very important, and their attitudes have a great effect on the innova-

tive programmes applied in their schools. It is quite surprising, however, that 4 % of the respondents had doubts whether their assessment of the situation was unequivocal. According to that group, it is not clear whether the headmaster is the key figure in implementation of innovation in teaching. The question: *Is the method of tutoring used in teachers' work with pupils in your school*, was a bit of a problem to the respondents. All variants of answers were used in reference to the question. Yet, when analysing the chart above one should admit that certain post-secondary schools make use of the innovation, i.e. tutoring, in their work. Only 10 % of the respondents definitely denied making use of the method in their schools.

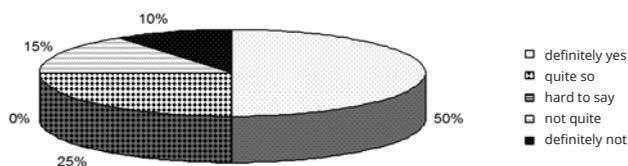


Fig. 4. Assessment of the percentage share, acc. to teachers, of the need to introduce innovation into the syllabuses

Source: own study – questionnaire

50 % of the respondents agreed that *implementation of innovations into syllabuses* is worth the effort. They claimed that introducing innovations into the syllabuses is a very valuable method. Due to work with the new methods, we form a kind of “innovative personalities”, who can think creatively and solve problems at different levels of their own life. The fact that a body of teachers were quite reticent in expressing their views on implementation of innovation is quite surprising. 15 % of the respondents marked “not quite” when asked about usefulness of introducing innovative methods into their syllabuses. The reason for such nature of their answers remains unknown. Another group, which definitely opposed implementation of the innovative methods of teaching was made up of as much as 10 % of the responding teachers. It is a alarming fact, as a teacher is a person who is expected to develop his workshop and techniques of teaching his or her pupils.

After analysing of answers to the question: *Would you take it upon yourself to work with a pupil using the tutoring method*, it is necessary to say that more than a half (68 %) of the respondents would undertake to work with their pupils

using the tutoring method. It is evidence of their knowledge of the method and willingness to implement it in their syllabuses to show young people that they can learn effectively, and in an original way at the same time. Whereas 20 % of the teachers would rather not take it upon themselves to work using this method, and 12 % would entirely reject it.

CONCLUSION

A headmaster should set a good example and encourage teachers to apply innovative methods of teaching (Grzeńskiewicz, 2010). In a school based on knowledge management, the headmaster performs the function of a knowledge manager, i.e. someone who is the manager of the process of learning. He is responsible for coordination of activities connected with knowledge management in the institution, and it is his task to plan and introduce the system of knowledge transfer in and out of school. A school is a learning organisation, because teachers are forced to search constantly for new opportunities for achieving the desired effects, they create new standards of non-stereotypical thinking, develop in their team work through continuous learning.

An analysis of the answers provided by the respondents of the survey proves that the headmaster of a school plays a very important role in the process of implementation of innovative methods of teaching in the school that he/she manages. School headmasters know the methods of teaching called tutoring and use them in their institutions. Whereas majority of teachers agreed with their headmasters, as they were convinced about the key role of their headmaster in introducing innovative methods of teaching, including tutoring. There were teacher, however, who definitely negated the role of a headmaster during activities connected with implementation of innovation to the school curricula. Tutoring is well known and used as a method of teaching in some schools, but other institutions negate this method of individual work with a pupil. It is a good thing that there is a large number of teachers who are not afraid of challenges and would like to take it upon themselves to apply tutoring in their work with their pupils. It is very surprising that there are also teachers who definitely reject making any attempts to make use of this method. Analysis of the other responses to questions asked in the survey reveals that the majority of teachers are ready to introduce innovative methods of teaching at school. Innovations are good for schools and their popularisation among young people has a good effect on raising the level of school work. Pupils are always glad to make use of different methods of

learning, which are more attractive and constructive than the traditional ones. More and more often, contemporary world seeks more effective methods of managing educational institutions, and when applying for a job at school, teachers take into account innovative nature of school curricula.

An important role in the process is attributed to the headmaster of a school, who is demanded to have an innovative idea about his/her own role in management of his/her school. This is why the headmaster is forced to acquire new competences, which would enable him/her to manage the school in the new circumstances. He/She must be ready to play a leading role in a school based on knowledge, when he is equipped with proper knowledge how to manage the institution and applies it actively.

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ŠVIETIMO LYDERIAI IR INOVATYVŪS MOKYMO METODAI

Paulina Ucieklak-Jeż

Santrauka

Šio straipsnio tikslas – įvertinti švietimo lyderio įtaką mokyklos veiklos naujovėms. Atliekant tyrimą buvo keliamos šios problemos: lyderystė švietimo srityje, žinių vadyba, novatoriškumo formos, mokyklos aplinka. Autorė kelia hipotezę: ar švietimo lyderis, kuris nėra pokyčių ir inovacijų skleidėjas, geba taikyti novatoriškus mokymo metodus. Atliktas tyrimas, duomenų analizė parodė, kad svarbiausias vaidmuo taikant novatoriškus mokymo metodus tenka direktoriui, mokyklos vadovui.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: švietimo lyderis, švietimo lyderystės gebėjimai, žinių vadyba.