



Original Article (Qualitative)

Providing a model to explain and apply coaching for school administrators

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to provide a model for explaining and applying coaching for school administrators. This research is qualitative. The research population includes academic experts, experts at the management levels of education and training, and school administrators. Based on the purposive and accessible sampling method, after a semi-structured interview with 15 people, theoretical saturation was achieved and the interview was stopped. Validity in this study achieved through consultants and experts in the field of educational management; and to determine reliability, the research colleague confirmation strategy was used; and accordingly, validity and reliability were confirmed. The analysis method used in the present study was the content analysis method, which was carried out using Maxqda software version 20. Based on the results of the interviews, 25 themes were identified in the form of 8 concepts of strategic human resource management (employee participation, empowerment, etc.), organizational health (employee responsibility and organizational trust), organizational improvement (employee training, educational planning, etc.), knowledge management (sharing, dissemination, and organization of knowledge), organizational support (management of friendly relationships, organizational empathy, etc.), organizational communication management (strengthening communication skills and improving intra-organizational interactions), and organizational ambidexterity (emphasis on organizational productivity, strengthening creativity, and organizational flexibility). Accordingly, it is suggested that school administrators consider the model developed in this study as a criterion for their work in order to improve their management in schools.

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Extended abstract

Introduction

The continuity and survival of any society requires that its set of beliefs, values, behaviors, attitudes, knowledge, and skills be transferred to new generations. The mechanism of this transfer is education and training. One of the important pillars of education, which is actually the main institution for providing the necessary training, is the school (Taghiani et al, 2023). Effective school management and leadership play a vital role in improving the quality of teaching and learning in the educational environment (Blackmore et al, 2024). One of the main reasons always been raised about poor school results is the inability of principals to have the necessary skills and training to properly manage and lead the school (Matthew, 2021). One of the important variables for improving human resource management, including school management, is coaching. However, unlike training, which usually involves a group of people and has a time limit, coaching is a focused and individual method that can be implemented at any time and every day. Also, unlike some forms of training that are immediate and fleeting, coaching has a lasting and long-term impact on the individual and the organization (Jones & Newland, 2022). Organizational coaching is a process that aims to increase the profitability of the entire organization, strengthen the professional skills of managers and employees, and create job satisfaction and success in the employees of that organization (Park et al., 2020). The role of the education system in the growth and progress of societies is outstanding and undeniable (Mohammadi et al., 2024); for this purpose, education as one of the vital areas of society, given the fundamental role it plays in educating young generations and providing the country's human resources, requires the use of effective and up-to-date management systems. Therefore, developing and presenting an appropriate coaching model for school administrators seems necessary and even inevitable. Accordingly, the present study seeks to answer the basic question: what the coaching model for school administrators is like and how it can be applied in schools?

Theoretical Framework

School Management

Among educational institutions, education plays an important role in society, with a very old background; and for better education, the management system in education is of great importance. Therefore, among the types of management in education, school management is the most important, most effective and most delicate type of management (Laleh et al, 2023). School administrators face many challenges such as limited resources, diverse and extensive needs, diverse teachers and students, less applicable educational content, poor development of a participatory culture, etc. Therefore, developing the skills of school administrators is necessary and inevitable so that they can guide schools towards professional and specialized educational organizations, and pave the way for the growth and development of society (Ponsombut et al, 2014). Human resources are the most important and vital resource in today's organizations, and, compared to competing organizations, these resources can maintain and enhance the organization's position or cause it to decline. (Toyama et al, 2023) Today, education and its management are considered an important factor in the development of countries, and efficient and effective management in education and training organizations can improve teachers' job satisfaction, create a strong bond between parents and students, strengthen the parent-teacher association, reduce academic dropout, promote innovation and creativity, flourish students' talents, and achieve optimal utilization of human resources (Montecinos et al, 2018). Today, the goal of school management is not only to manage, organize, supervise, guide, and discipline, but in addition to them, the lofty goal of school



management is to realize professional ethics and create an environment for growth and development. (Emamdoust et al, 2020).

Coaching

In the 1950s, coaching was first introduced to the management field by Mis (2008), who initially defined it as a management tool for guiding and developing employees (Gregory & Levy, 2016). In recent years, coaching has emerged as a significant development intervention in schools in countries such as Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States; and is used to help develop managers, teachers and students while supporting school improvement and development (Butler, 2024). The International Coaching Federation defines coaching as: “Coaching is an ongoing partnership between a coach and a client in which the coach helps the client to achieve desired outcomes in their personal or professional lives by engaging them in thought and awakening their inner creativity” (Kameron & Ebrahimi, 2017). Another goal of coaching is to draw solutions to problems from within the coach, thus enabling the coach to find appropriate solutions to the issues presented to them (Butler, 2024). A coaching manager is a manager who uses coaching methods in his daily affairs and in his communication with subordinate employees, and the key element of this is, compared to other managers, the way he communicates with employees (Unnu, 2020).

Research Methodology

This research is fundamental in terms of purpose, and exploratory in terms of data collection. The research was conducted qualitatively. Qualitative data was collected using library studies and semi-structured interviews. The statistical population of this research included academic experts, experts at the management levels of education and training, and school administrators; and the theoretical saturation index of data was used to determine the sample size. The sampling method was purposeful and accessible method. By this process, 15 experts were identified as sufficient for interviews.

Research findings

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis method and MAXQDA 20 software. After finalization and consensus of the participants in the final stage, the coaching model for school administrators was developed based on the answers to the research questions. This model was provided to experts and finalized after making amendments. Based on the results of the interviews, 25 themes were identified in the form of 8 concepts of strategic human resource management (employee participation, empowerment, etc.), organizational health (employee responsibility and organizational trust), organizational improvement (employee training, educational planning, etc.), knowledge management (sharing, dissemination and organization of knowledge), organizational support (management of friendly relationships, organizational empathy, etc.), organizational communication management (strengthening communication skills and improving intra-organizational interactions), and organizational ambidexterity (emphasis on organizational productivity, strengthening creativity and organizational flexibility).

Conclusion

The increasing need of organizations for organizational coaching because of reasons such as stagnation due to poor organizational performance and the importance of reducing organizational costs, the lack of responsiveness of conventional training such as face-to-face and one-sided virtual classes and the need to pay attention to feedback and student-centered training, the prevalence of coaching in organizations and the importance of expertise and analysis in them, the purification of organizations from weak forces and the increasing

reliance on valuable forces, the increase in competition and speed in business and the need for change leaders in organizations and individuals adaptable to change, the influx of young and talented people into organizations and the importance of their development needs (talent management), the emergence of the sublime idea of knowledge management and the importance of preserving and expanding organizational knowledge, and the increasing importance of the issue of transforming knowledge into wisdom as a management-cultural category, have led to the importance of the role of coaching in organizations. The results of this study are consistent with the results of the research of Dastgerdi et al., (2021), Qarlaqi et al., (2021), and Ellinger and Ellinger (2020).

According to the results obtained, the following suggestions are made:

-In the organizational decision-making process, the ability of employees should be used more, and a kind of organizational coaching process should be carried out with their participation in important organizational processes.

-Using the organizational coaching process, efforts should be made to increase and improve the adaptability of individuals and employees of the organization.

-Encouraging individuals to carry out activities and team work (becoming extroverted) can increase the spirit of responsibility of individuals and contribute to organizational health.

-Increasing employees' information about coaching using scientific and applicable conferences and workshops.