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RELATING LEADERSHIP AND COUNSELING: AN EXAMPLE FROM THE GREEK EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

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Abstract
Contemporary educational leaders must manage complex school community processes in which many factors are involved, such as students, teachers, parents and the social environment, the different disciplines with their specific features, outdated infrastructure, limited financial resources, the relevant legislation, the superior educational authorities, etc. To resolve the problems that arise in a manner ensuring quality management that is not easily quantifiable, apart from the various models of educational administration that have been occasionally proposed, counseling skills can be a valuable asset in a context of multiple authority, as it is encountered in the Greek educational system. The acquirement of counseling skills is a valuable asset for educational leaders, in order to deal with the diversity of the encountered issues that arise within the complex social environment of schools. Therefore, the widely accepted and required skills of a successful educational leader and the relevant skills of a counselor are presented for comparison and linking purposes. The structure of the Greek educational system is also presented in order to demonstrate that educational leaders should acquire counseling skills. Thus, postgraduate studies that prepare teachers for leadership roles should include counseling courses in their curriculum.

Introduction
During the last decades, the interest of scientific research in the field of educational administration focuses on issues relating to the operation, improvement and effectiveness of schools that are treated both as relatively autonomous organizations and as part of a wider educational system. This focus of interest is linked to the educational policy of most countries of the Western world, as the priority of schools is to ensure high educational standards, operational infrastructure and high student performance. These are the conditions for the functional connection of schools to the labor market and knowledge productivity. The realization of such an objective requires both a central planning in the form of necessary adjustments to the content of knowledge, learning and assessment procedures, and adequately trained leaders who will both implement the planned innovations and will also accommodate any practices to the particularities of each school, as part of a broader educational and social environment (Raptis, 2006).
In this context, the educational leaders (directors), both at the school level and at the local/regional levels, are requested to achieve a sense of balance and effective operation, the continuous upgrading of the educational work and provision of educational services, the school's integration in the overall strategic planning of the local community and

its interface with other institutions, such as the society, the labor market and the institutions of knowledge production (universities, research institutes).

As the society and the education system are becoming more complex, in circumstances where the crisis has become a structural parameter of the system, new needs are created to be served timely, accurately and efficiently. Here, the directors are required to perform efficiently multiple roles with appropriate responsibilities, being essentially asked to manage competing interests of different social groups with different cultures and attitudes. This situation results in issues related not only to the training of educational personnel and their ability to exercise power but also to taking a leading role both at school level and particularly at social consultation. Therefore, educational leaders must have increased formal and informal qualifications and of course to be able to manage the complexity of the local system, which are assigned to administrate. In the international literature, the importance of educational leadership emphasizes the effective functioning of the educational units, highlighting it as one of the most important factors of proper educational reality (e.g., Pasiardi, 1993; Bush & Jackson, 2002; Yukl, 2002; Hargreaves & Hopkins, 1991; Sergiovanni, 1994; 1992; 1984). In this context, counseling skills can be proved a valuable asset.

Educational Counseling

Leaders at all levels have a responsibility to assist and develop their team members through counseling and guidance. They also need to be both mentors and trainers. If leaders do not advise the members of their group, they do not do whatever is necessary to develop both the individuals and the team. If leaders fail to give advice, they have failed to fulfill a major leadership responsibility. People expect to hear how do they perform and have the right to ask for help and guidance from their leaders, who, in turn, support their subordinates to learn from the experience and knowledge of their leader. These interpersonal relationships facilitate personal development and better organization and performance of the team. It is an absolute requirement that leaders regularly advise the people that are responsible for their guidance. Counseling requires such actions that demonstrate knowledge, understanding, judgment and ability. They include learning and applying techniques for effective counseling skills that show a caring attitude and sincere interest - the most efficient characteristic of effective counseling. Leaders must practically show their concern for the welfare of their personnel. To be effective, leaders-directors must set an example and be ethical in all personal and professional activities. They need to know their own tasks, the requirements of the working team-members and the possibilities and limitations of the individual members. They need to understand what methods of counseling are the most appropriate. Above all, they must demonstrate the standards of individual behavior and performance expected by their team-members. For developing appropriate attitudes and behaviors, they should be familiar with the specific aspects of effective Counseling. These include:

1. Flexibility: matching the Counseling style to the unique character of each person, depending on the type of the desired relationship.
2. Respect the view of other people as unique persons with their own beliefs, values and norms.
3. Communicate: establishing an open and bidirectional interaction with the team-members, using both verbal and non-verbal communication. Effective counselors listen more than talk.
4. Support: they support and encourage team-members through activities and by expressing an interest while they guide them through their problems.
5. Motivation: they give each team-member the opportunity to actively participate in the

counseling process and teach team-members the value of counseling support. Each team-member will respond differently. Those who need and want advice are more likely to benefit from it, but the focus should be extended on those who need but do not want advice, as well.

6. Purpose: they seek to develop responsible and self-sufficient team-members that can solve their problems themselves.

Effective leaders approach each person as unique and thus the same approach for another team-member is never likely to be used. The general approaches used in counseling are:

(a) The directional (counselor-centered);
(b) The non-directional (individual-centered);
(c) Their combination.

During a counseling session, there should be flexibility in the choice of approach. The personality of the individual, the environment and the time available will influence the chosen approach. Therefore, an effective leader needs to cultivate basic counseling skills that can be generally grouped as follows:

(a) Monitoring and listening;
(b) Responding;
(c) Guiding.

Effective counseling should be done continuously, as part of the educational roles. This necessity has led many researchers (Wingfield et al., 2010; Mason & McMahon, 2009) to consider the relationship between leader and counselor as bidirectional. Namely, the effective leader is a counselor while the counselor has leadership skills, especially those of decision-making and motivation.

Educational Leadership

Given the previous correlation between high quality leadership and effective schools, Bush & Middlewood (2005) raise two key questions:

1. What type of leadership is more likely to produce positive results?
2. What is the best way to create successful leaders?

In order to answer these questions, we need to identify the characteristics of an effective school manager. Baldridge et al. (1978) report that the leader is first among equals in an educational institution, if experts (teachers) manage the foundation and they follow a collaborative process. The features of such a leader are:

(a) to order less and listen more,
(b) to use conciliation and persuasion rather than to command,
(c) to facilitate its partners and
(d) to assemble targeted judgments instead of mainly playing an instructional role.

Several researchers (Everard et al., 2004; Hay, 2003; Everard & Morris, 1990) mention the following features that both the directors and the deputy directors of educational services should have:

- Analytical thinking,
- Challenge and support,
- Self-confidence,
- Development of capabilities,
- Momentum for improvements,
- Responsibility,
- Impact and influence,

- Survey for information,
- Initiative,
- Personal perceptions,
- Respect for others,
- Strategic thinking,
- Teamwork mentality,
- Transformational leadership,
- Understanding of the environment,
- Understanding of others,
- Integrity.

As for the educational administration and leadership models, the evaluative nature of the school differentiates it from other organizations because its orientation has individual and social dimension, since it formulates conceptions and beliefs, molds consciousness and inspires values (Raptis, 2006, p. 33). Therefore, many theorists agree that the concepts of management and leadership mean the same thing when referring to the mission of the head of school (Raptis, 2006, p. 36). However, there is a huge literature referring to the distinct typology of the management and leadership models (Pasiardi, 1993), where a mapping takes place (Table 1) between the six educational management models (Bush, 2003, p. 33) and the nine leadership models (Bush & Glover, 2002; Leithwood et al., 2003):

Table 1.
Typology of management and leadership models

Management Models	Leadership Models
Formal	Managerial
Collegial	Participative; Transformational; Interpersonal
Political	Transactional
Subjective	Post-modern
Ambiguity	Contingency
Cultural	Moral
	Instructional

Given the correlation between management and leadership models (Raptis, 2006, p. 62), which (with the exception of the Collegial management model and the Instructional leadership model) is unambiguous (i.e., a management model corresponds to a leadership model), the selection of management-leadership model creates similar behavior requirements and skills on behalf of the director. As the analysis of each case is beyond the purpose of this article, a brief exemplary reference will follow for the first two cases of the most widely used management models (Formal and Collegial).

According to the Formal model, the director is placed on top of the hierarchy, is assumed the dominant role to set goals, makes decisions and determines policy, while is recognized as leader within and outside the educational agency (Raptis, 2006, p. 65) . In the case of collegial models, the structures are horizontal. The participants have the right to determine the policy and influence decisions without prior acceptance of the director's views. Decisions are made by consensus or compromise. In educational institutions, the application of collegial models is often implemented through committees. There, the decision-making process is considered to be related to equality and the expertise of the participants rather than to the official position of them, thus applying collaborative policies. Accordingly, the director seeks to promote consensus and tries to

adopt strategies for addressing issues that arise from different parts of the organization and are solved through complex interactive processes (Raptis, 2006, p. 69). Coulson (1985) and Glover (1996) argue that the leaders of collegial models are characterized by the following attributes: they seek to create the appropriate opportunities, both for the control and for the specificity of the various initiatives, they show interest in the needs of staff, they encourage innovation, they try to promote efficiency by recognizing the value of specialized knowledge and they use power to facilitate and not to impose.

Campbell and Southworth (1993) argue that: as it is clear from the teachers' comments of an effective school, the image of a good manager is the person who is part of the staff, whose philosophy is clear and shared by other teachers. Regardless of the choice of leadership model, it is recognized nowadays (Brown & Martin, 2012) that modern leadership is: active instead of static; assisting those who do not perform satisfactorily in order to improve themselves and those who are efficient to become even better; practices with works and attitudes instead of words.

That is, leaders make decisions or participate actively in making them and actuate all the stakeholders to achieve the agreed goals by their personal example. Moreover, in contemporary applications of Total Quality Management in education, emphasis is laid on collective processes, focusing on decentralization of decision-making and on the school as a whole instead of a group of classes (Rousi, 2007, pp. 26-27). Since 80% of the problems that are encountered in an educational organization, as well, are due to internal factors (Rousi, 2007, p. 42), the essential skills of an educational director are considered to be the motivation (Rousi, 2007, p. 77), interpersonal communication and collaboration abilities.

In conclusion, it appears that Counseling is a core responsibility and required skill of every leader and an important part of the support of individual members of a group. Such interpersonal relationships recognized and encouraged by the good performance of team members, with the aim of improving prosperity, solving problems, and developing the team members.

Localized Consideration

The necessity of relating leadership and counseling in the Greek educational system will be rather apparent, after the description of the various levels of authorities that are involved in educational management (Karagiannis, 2014, pp. 81-87), being of collegial nature (see Table 1). At the school level, the management is exerted by the school-director, the deputy school-director, who assists the former mainly in administrative duties, and the teachers' council. The latter is responsible for: (a) the protection of pupils, (b) the application of educational policies, (c) the proper overall function of the school, (d) the organizing of various (extracurricular or not) educational activities, and (e) the management of the school resources.

It is obvious that there is not a clear distinction between the duties of the school-director and the teachers' council. The school-director has no substantial authority to undertake creative initiatives (Rousi, 2007, p. 93). In addition, there is the School Council, consisting of the teachers' council and the board members of the school Parents Association. The tasks of the School Council are: (a) the communication with parents, (b) the organizing of speeches and seminars, and (c) the dealing with collaboration problems between teachers, pupils and parents, functional issues like the cleanliness of the school. Both councils are presided by the school-director, whose communicating and counseling skills have to be exceptional in order to manage successfully the diversity of the emerging issues.

At the local administrative level (county), there is the Primary and Secondary Education Directorates, monitoring dozens of schools allocated in different municipalities. The local educational director presides at the local educational council that is mainly responsible for the

service status and duty assignment of the teachers. In every municipality, the School Committee is the local government's service that manages the distribution of funds to the local schools. School-directors are members of this committee, along with other officials of the municipality. The educational authority at the regional level is the Regional Education Directorates that supervise the Primary and Secondary Education Directorates of the 13 administrative regions of the country (Greece). A regional educational council with similar duties to the local ones assists the regional educational director. Both the local and the regional educational councils include two members that are teachers elected by their colleagues. In addition, the regional educational administration is supported by the School Counselors, who are responsible for (teachers') mentoring duties at their respective expertise (e.g., Mathematicians, Philologists, Physicists, etc.) and the pedagogical guidance of the schools assigned to them.

Within the above context, school-directors have to come up to the expectations of teachers, parents, pupils, municipal/local and regional educational authorities. The acquisition of counseling skills is a valuable asset for the successful fulfillment of their diverse duties.

Epilogue

Realizing this bi-directional relationship between an educational leader and a counselor, the global interest in educational administration and leadership is in an orbit of continuous development. There are at least twenty United States tertiary institutions that have discrete Education, Leadership and Counseling Departments, and two offer Masters in Educational Leadership and Counseling:

1. School Counseling and Leadership (Arkansas Tech University);
2. Educational Leadership and Counseling (Texas Prairie View A&M University).

In Greece, there are 14 tertiary institutions that offer 32 postgraduate programs, half in educational leadership and half in counseling, none that combines both of them (Fotiou, 2016).

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