

Exploring Educational Administrators' Opinions about Roles and Functions of Distributed Leadership in Higher Education

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Abstract

Distributed leadership is one of the styles of effective leadership that has also been considered in the field of education. However, the status of leadership in higher education and the understanding of university administrators about the duties, functions, and performance of leadership is not well known. To address this issue, a qualitative approach was adopted and data were collected through interviews with 16 university leaders in Alborz province. The data were analyzed in three stages of open, axial, and selective coding. The findings led to the emergence of five main themes: defining the concepts of leadership, the nature of distributed leadership, expectations and demands, skills and competencies, and development and progress. The findings showed that the administrators participating in the study had a good understanding of the role and duties of distributed leadership in higher education. At the same time, they considered themselves bound by the framework of the existing educational system and the procedures specified in educational policies. They also emphasized the importance of formal mentoring through training and informal learning through sharing experiences and networking with colleagues, and were well aware of the social dimensions of educational leadership.

Keywords: educational leadership, educational management, higher education, distributed leadership

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