

# Danping Peng: Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Pedagogical Leadership in Schools Providing Compulsory Education

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Danping Peng: *Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Pedagogical Leadership in Schools Providing Compulsory Education*. Palacký University Olomouc, 2017. ISBN 978-80-244-5258-6.

Danping Peng has published her first monograph entitled “Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Pedagogical Leadership in Schools Providing Compulsory Education” after her several-year doctoral research. Danping Peng was born in 1988 in Sichuan province of China, studied Master’s Degree at the Sichuan Normal University, Faculty of Education, and in 2017 she completed the doctoral study program Pedagogy at the Faculty of Education, Palacký University in Olomouc, where she now works as an assistant professor at the Institute of Education and Social Studies.

The main topic of her monograph is pedagogical leadership as a summary of actions that motivate participants in the learning process and facilitate the acquisition of new knowledge, skills and beliefs. Pedagogical leadership is primarily based on how head teachers define and then monitor educational goals, observing educational programs, and provide feedback to teachers, ensuring quality not only in teaching but also in the learning process. For this reason, the author’s book is primarily intended for school head teachers and departments in schools, teachers and staff developers who deal with this issue and want to make their situation in their workplace more effective.

In the first two chapters, the author advances from general to concrete, introducing the reader to the concept of leadership, leading, instructional and distributed leadership in the context of pedagogy. It further defines the role of head teacher and teacher, their professional development and their role in the pedagogical leadership.

The third chapter deals with a detailed description of the methodology of this research. At the beginning of this chapter, the author explains that she has chosen a qualitative design that has enabled her to analyse not only the characteristics and dimensions of pedagogical leadership but also the behaviour of the people involved in this research. She proceeded according to the grounded theory by Corbin and Strauss (2015), thus emphasizing the up-to-date and modern approach of her research and analysis. Five schools in the Olomouc Region were involved in the research including one headmaster and one teacher from each school. In this section, the author describes the data analysis, using open, axial and selective coding. At the end of the chapter the author deals with the description of the triangulation of her research.

In the fourth and most extensive chapter, the author describes two developed paradigms, one of which is dedicated to the head teachers and the second to the teachers. Both deal with the characteristics of pedagogical leadership from the perspective of different stakeholders and analyze the factors influencing the pedagogical leadership in the Czech schools as well as the characteristics of a good teacher and a good head teacher from the perspective of different stakeholders. The results of the first part show that, from the teachers' point of view, the political influence and the school content can be both facilitators as well as barriers. Peer leadership is considered the most common method of improving teaching skills which, among other things, helps fill the gap between the theory and practice of novice teachers. High degree of autonomy and responsibilities and unreadiness of teachers were considered as the casual conditions of pedagogical leadership from the teachers' perspective.

High level of autonomy and responsibility of head teachers, high expectations toward head teacher and head teacher's lack of focus on leading teaching and learning were considered as the casual conditions from the perspective of head teachers. Financial limitations of schools, excessive workload and teacher retention and recruitment were considered as the barriers. The characteristic of a good teacher from the head teachers' perspective should include the ability and willingness to learn. A good headmaster should be charismatic, self-confident and experienced according to the teachers' point of view.

Both parts are complemented by the quotations and tables, which the author very clearly presents and comments. At the end of this chapter, the author comes up with a model to make the pedagogical leadership more effective in practice in the environment of the Czech Republic.

The fifth and final chapter is devoted to the sophisticated discussion, the limitations of this study, and recommendations. It highlights, in particular, the problematic parts

of the pedagogical leadership, such as the very low linkage of pedagogical leadership with assessment of a teacher, as well as obstacles to successful pedagogical leadership implementation which the author sees in the hierarchical distribution of schools, distribution of responsibilities and in further teachers' education. The chapter continues by verifying the triangulation performed within this research and the data obtained. The last part of this monograph contains a recommendation where the author emphasizes the need for regular training for all staff within the school, while underlining the need for diversity in the process of implementation of pedagogical leadership.

We consider the book to be of great benefit, especially in terms of its up-to-dateness and topicality. In spite of the author's recommendation, we would also recommend this monograph to the students of Education Management, or to the students of pedagogy in general, since they will certainly meet during their future practice.

In the future, this model might be further developed with a comparison of these issues in schools in larger cities in the Czech Republic and abroad.

## Reference

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