

# My experience and view as Principal

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## *ABSTRACT*

The most important administrative officer of a college is the Principal. Principal is the men in continuous motion, in daily contact, on the job in busy days of duty, on hand where the decisions are taken. The execution of the university policy is with him; he contributes much to the growth and development of the university. In an Indian university, the Vice-Chancellor is the prime policy-maker and the Principal plays the role of an important officer of execution. He is responsible for making the university apparatus move. He assists the Vice-Chancellor in running the administration. He is a 24 hours servant of the university always at his job early and late, going through the files even at home. He is an officer appointed by the Syndicate usually given more than full time work. Experienced and Senior academicians who have served the university for several years are generally appointed as Principals. He has a high standing in the society.

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The Principal's onerous responsibility is the day-to-day administration of the college. His duties are innumerable: answering enquiries, writing letters and carrying on the correspondence, , preparing admissions, arranging selection, ordering supplies, collecting fees, making payments, signing cheques, conducting elections to the authorities, preparing the budget, managing the finances, supervising the college office, fixing the duties of the subordinate officers and assistants, ordering payment to the establishment, holding conferences. Important things are usually left to the Principal even by an alert Vice-Chancellor. They are to meet each other often for exchange of information and decisions on university affairs. The Vice-Chancellor and the Principal must work together and have total trust in each other failing which the University and the college suffers. The Principal is sure to have his own ideas, his own convictions but they are sometimes blunted by the nature of his office. In most of the universities of Bihar a principal does not speak in public in the meeting of the Senate, and the Academic Council and he is not given an opportunity to express his views. He is only a mouthpiece of the decisions taken by the Syndicate and the Vice-Chancellor. The policy and the initiative is left to the

Vice-Chancellor. One can even say in the Indian context the people, the non-teaching staff of the university have to lean heavily on the Principal whose work is not to innovate but to keep things in proper shape and get things done efficiently. As a man with experience and potentialities, he is an adviser even to the Vice-Chancellor because he is the man always on hand.

A Principal is most properly a recorder of events and activities and an observer of rules and regulations and a listener to various views of the authorities. He should be very persuasive and see that enough agreement is reached among the diverse interests of the university.

The Principal does play a key role in the administration of the university by being almost ever present in the campus. He is always encircled by piles of files and some of them rumpled and frayed with use and constant handling. He becomes so familiar with his files that he can scan through them and make quick flick of initials and signatures. Professors, PAs, assistants, superintendents move in and out of his room delivering and removing papers, conveying scraps of information and making in requests of assorted varieties.

Almost everything in the university passes across his table at some time or another. Not a thing is discarded and is screened. There is no intermediary to decide what is important enough to go to him. He knows thoroughly his office, its strength and weaknesses. He is always aware of the limitations of the subordinate officers who do not wish to dispose of their work, on their own. So, his job is a tiring and time-consuming which involves careful scrutiny and continuous supervision. He listens in on and records work of all the authorities and he is an ever-present observer, a silent man who watches, learns and communicates. It is expected of a Principal not to disclose too much because he is occupying the university's second highest practical office.

An educational administrator (Principal is one) has to be an artist in human affairs. If he only deals with the files, let him go and join the department of statistics. Those who deal with the young students and mature teachers must have very large reserves of patience, understanding, love and hope. In human affairs 2 and 2 do not always make four. They may make a hundred or a zero. Routineness is a crime against education today. A dynamic educational administrator must hold the scales of justice even between teachers and the students, between the students and assistants, between students and non-teaching staff. In all these matters, his approach should be not only justice is done but also appears to be done. He must frame fair and just rules to guide him and put a stop to any environment. One can send a teacher to his class punctually, can even make sure that he stays there for the entire period but cannot ensure that he will teach his inspired best, unless he is urged to do so by proper environment. Fool-proof methods of recruitment based on merit and fair rules of transfer and promotion can create a feeling of just treatment and give the teachers necessary fillip to do their best.

Education is nothing but humanisation and the university is the abode of unending research-teaching-research continuum through which the understanding of the being as becoming is being perpetually deepened.

In modern days the management and administration of schools and colleges has become an important issue which should be taken into consideration by all concerned persons in the field of education. The administration of all types of educational institutions indicates that, the educational administration is a field of study as well as a field of practice. So it has become essential to study the educational administration' as a special subject which deserves special attention. In the beginning of 20th century the study of educational administration emerged; first at the Teachers College of Columbia University and followed shortly thereafter by graduate programs at Stanford University, the University of Chicago and other universities. It should be noted that, educational administration is an applied field and not a discipline. But it is also true that it is built upon a number of basic disciplines such as Sociology, Psychology, Political Science, Economics and Commerce. Since educational administration is a broad field of practice and study, there are various career positions in this field. At school level, there are Principals, Supervisors, Superintendents etc. At the college level, there are Principals, Heads of the Departments, and many others. At the university level there are Heads of the Departments, Deans, Vice-Chancellors and Pro-Vice-Chancellors.

#### **Problems in Educational Administration:**

As there are problems in every field of management, there are also some problems in educational administration. These problems are too varied, too dependent on local conditions in and out of the Colleges. The Principals or Heads of the educational institutions are held responsible to face and solve these problems. In modern times the following are the main problems faced by them

- i. Social and political pressures for admission to the students,
- ii. Deciding and applying criteria for admissions,
- iii. Conducting examinations and maintaining discipline at the time of examinations,
- iv. To get the work done through teachers and other staff members in the educational institution.

Ensuring attendance of students in the classroom  
**To Enhance Teaching and Learning:**

The basic purpose of administration is to enhance teaching and learning process in colleges. Teachers deal directly with the students so it is easy to see how they may contribute to teaching and learning. But the administrators of the colleges may not directly deal with the students. So it is comparatively difficult to evaluate their performance.

**Human Relations Skills:**

The Principals should possess the human relations skills for performing their functions well. At times they must work with the teachers, at times with the students, at times with parents, at times with government officers and at times with the interest groups in the community. In order to deal with all these sections of the Society successfully the Principals are required to possess the knowledge and skills of human relations. If the above given points are considered, it will definitely help the educational administrators to assess the nature of administrative work realistically.

**Conclusion :**

Normally an Indian Principal is more an administrator and has only a routine contact with most of the staff and students. But now-a-days there are Principals with an academic touch who would like to have an exchange of ideas with the academic men on the campus. Sometimes the Principal is thoroughly a

non-academic and completely an administrator. On such occasions, there is not much respect between the Principal and the teachers as there is a disinterestedness in each other's work. A Principal normally makes himself available to the senior staff, faculty members and other academic officers on matters of official business. The top men (Heads of Departments) insist on dealing with him personally more often without prior appointment. He tries his best to solve their problems and redress their grievances as far as he can. The delicate and important problems are passed on to the Vice-Chancellor for solutions. In times of crisis, his work becomes increasingly heavy and very difficult to handle as he does not have the position to command the influence of the state government and the top. The Principal is in constant touch with the Vice-Chancellor as the first confidential advisor. It is this function of his by means of which he affects policy. The two talk together frequently on policies and programmes, administration, finance and facilities. It is customary for the Principal to follow the lead of the Vice-Chancellor, docilely to accept his fault in public. Usually the influence of the Principal is strong though intricate. He has the advantage of continuity and thorough knowledge of university affairs. He travels very little and leaves the station very rarely. The great bulk of the work in the university is monotonous and repetitive. Still the morale of the Principal is high and he quite enjoys his work in spite of his grumble about its voluminous quantity.

