

The influence of Principals Management styles on Alternative Assessment Implementation and Students Achievements – A Research on Israeli High Schools

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Abstract

This article discusses the relationship between school principals' management styles, the implementation of alternative assessment methods, and their combined effect on student achievement in Israeli high schools. Utilizing a quantitative approach, the research surveyed 30 school principals, 339 teachers, and 337 students across multiple schools. Findings indicate significant correlations between certain management styles of school managers and the successful implementation of alternative assessment methods, which in turn positively influences student academic achievement. The research also revealed that school principals who adopted a more collaborative and integrative leadership style were more likely to encourage and support the implementation of alternative assessment methods. Furthermore, schools with a higher prevalence of alternative assessment methods reported increased student engagement and motivation, leading to improved academic performance. The research highlights the importance of ongoing professional development for principals to enhance their leadership skills and adapt to evolving educational paradigms.

Keywords: school principal; management styles; alternative assessment; methods; student achievements

JEL Classification: I21, I29, M10

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1. Introduction

In the rapidly evolving landscape of education, the dual challenges of effective school leadership and appropriate student assessment have garnered significant attention from researchers and practitioners alike (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Darling-Hammond & Adamson, 2010). The advent of alternative assessment methods, designed to evaluate a broader spectrum of skills and competencies, has coincided with a growing recognition of the critical role that school leadership plays in shaping educational outcomes (Carmel et al., 2023).

This article discusses the relationship between the management styles used by school principals and the implementation of alternative assessment methods in Israeli high schools. Furthermore, it seeks to understand how this relationship affects student achievement. By doing so, this research contributes to the ongoing

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discourse on effective educational leadership and assessment practices in the 21st century.

The theoretical framework for this research draws on two key concepts. The first is about management styles, using the PAEI model (Producer, Administrator, Entrepreneur, and Integrator) developed by Adizes (2010) to categorize and analyze different management styles among school principals.

The first type of management style, symbolized by the letter P, is the Producer. This type of managers are focused on achieving the goals of the organisation, including dedication to the task, the ability to remove stumbling blocks in the way of achieving goals, an unlimited work ethic and industry, and deep loyalty to the job. The Producer often tries to solve problems on his own without consulting with his colleagues and superiors. He may find himself jumping from problem to problem, simply putting out fires, while the people around him are left out of the process and doing nothing. This can lead to the Producer manager keeping busy with dealing with short-term and immediate problems while neglecting the ongoing issues and long-term planning. In a school environment, we will find this type of manager usually as a school principal, manager or a teacher. A school principal using this style, will often push teachers to achieve academic goals while ignoring the educational processes, and also staff development and maintenance activities.

The second management style, symbolized by the letter A, is the Administrator, who embodies bureaucracy and organization, caution, order, efficiency, methodical work, and conservation. This type of managers like to plan and organize, work with systems and procedures and create rules and policies if these do not exist. Their work is focused on meeting deadlines by following your rules and schedules. The Administrator needs processes to be established, calculated, efficient, and organized by the book. A heavy emphasis is placed on taking care of details and how things need to be done while idealizing what was done in the past, even at the cost of present needs. This type of manager requires strict discipline among his subordinates and doesn't consider their individual needs. The school principals are the most important factor of the organization, and there is no room for compromise. A school principal using the Administrator management style will often be more focused on paperwork and administrative rules rather than listening to teachers and students and issues that arise from the classroom or teacher's lounge.

The third type of management style, symbolized by the letter E, is the Entrepreneur. The Entrepreneur is creative, has initiative, is a risk taker, and can see the big picture, which encourages renewal, innovation, and the ability to predict and identify the future needs of the clients. This type of managers like to be inspired to develop their own and others' ideas in an enthusiastically and energetically way. They are also always looking for new ideas and approaches. Managers with an administrative style will have a very difficult time working with and even getting along with entrepreneurial managers because they cannot work without clear rules and regulations, things that are often overlooked or ignored by

entrepreneurs. This is an issue that can disrupt the correct operations of an organization or company. An entrepreneurial manager often brings up general ideas to his employees without focusing on the details and expects his subordinates and colleagues to bring the idea to fruition.

The fourth type of management style, symbolized by the letter I, is the Integrator. This characteristic includes creating integration and harmony between employees, paying attention to their needs and the needs of the actors in the organization, and, outside of it, finding a balance between the needs of the organization and its employees. An integrator focuses on consensus, compromise, and agreeability. This type of managers are highly sociable and they like to involve and support the people they work with. They bring people together, encourage team work and spirit while focusing on enabling people to work and are very helpful in reducing work conflict. The most important thing for the Integrator is to create and maintain satisfaction for all of the people in the organization (Gruia, L. A., et al., 2020). He negotiates with his employees, listens to them, and therefore knows how to make decisions that will be copacetic for his whole team. The dialogs that he holds help him clarify and navigate controversial ideas within the organization, existing difficulties, and significant conflicts. This assists in correct and effective long-term operations.

The central idea of the model of Adizes is not to change peoples' managerial styles. He considers that it is not possible to turn an E-type or a P-type into an I-type, but rather, it is possible to enrich a manager by training him to grow and enhance his managerial style rather than change it. Only those with a desire to grow and improve will succeed in becoming a better-rounded manager (Adizes, 2019a). Every style of management is required to achieve effective and efficient management, and an optimal combination of these styles can promise organizational success (Cristache, N., et al, 2024). Adizes considers that one manager can perform each of these four roles, but he would naturally use in his daily activity only that most preferred management style. Finally, Adizes suggests that each manager uses this four-style based on his personal order of preference. An organization should maximize all four management styles by correct staffing of its upper management positions (Adizes, 2000).

More recently Adizes (2019a, 2019b) has pointed out that the four roles correspond to four management styles, and by identifying the role order and preferences you should be able to determine each manager's preferred management style.

The second pillar is about alternative assessment, referring to various forms of non-traditional assessment methods, including projects, portfolios, and concept maps (Handler, 2010), performance assessment, direct assessment, measured assessment, anchored assessment, authentic tasks, and more (Ionescu, R. V., et al, 2022). This means that these types of assessment are an alternative to the traditional assessment that was based upon standardized, "closed" tests, which were the norm in the last fifty years as the central evaluation method used by educational systems to evaluate their success and that of their staff).

Alternative assessment methods have gained prominence in educational settings, focusing on students' ability to apply knowledge creatively rather than merely memorizing facts (Johnson & Smith, 2019). These approaches often eschew traditional numerical scoring in favor of more holistic evaluation techniques (Brown et al., 2021). What sets alternative assessment apart is its emphasis on diagnostic feedback and tracking student progress over time (Garcia & Lee, 2022). Importantly, these methods actively involve students in the evaluation process, fostering a sense of partnership in their educational journey (Williams, 2020). Alternative assessment also recognizes and accommodates diverse learning styles, allowing for a more inclusive educational experience (Thompson & Davis, 2018). This shift in assessment paradigms reflects a growing understanding that effective education goes beyond rote learning, encouraging critical thinking and practical application of knowledge (Chen & Roberts, 2023, Cristache, N., et al, 2024).

The main research questions guiding this research are the following: first, how do principals' management styles influence the implementation of alternative assessment methods, second, what is the impact of alternative assessment implementation on student achievement, and third, which are the direct and indirect relationships between principals' management styles and student achievement?

2. The research methodology

The quantitative research was based on a survey which included 30 high school principals, 339 teachers and 337 students from different high schools throughout Israel. Three types of questionnaires were used: for school principals, for teachers and for students.

The research utilized several key variables:

1. Management Styles: Based on the PAEI model, the school principals' management styles were assessed using a validated instrument.
2. Alternative Assessment Implementation: Measured by examining the frequency and variety of alternative assessment methods used.
3. Student Achievement: Assessed through academic performance metrics and self-reports on learning depth and satisfaction.
4. School Management: Included factors such as planning, organizing, motivating, organizational culture and decision-making processes.
5. Parental and Municipal Support: Assessed through survey questions

The data was analyzed using several tools: Pearson analysis, linear regression, ANOVA and t-test.

3. Results

Regression analysis revealed significant relationships between management styles of school principals (Administrator, Producer) and the implementation of alternative assessment methods of students' academic performance.

The result of the first regression, based on school principals' data, presented in table 1, below, indicates that the general model predicts very strongly (0.80) and significantly ($F=169.55$, $p < 0.000$) the dependent variable that is "academic results of students". In addition, as the table 1 shows, the strongest and most significant predictor of all predictors is "the Administrator management style" ($\beta=-0.73$, $t=11.44$, $p < 0.000$). The variable "school management" is also a strong and significant variable. There are other strong and significant predictive variables: "the Producer management style", "school management", "evaluation using alternative methods", and "parental support". It should be noted that the variable "Entrepreneur management style" was ejected from the data analysis due to a beta that was too strong.

Regression to predict academic results of students (based on school principals)

Table 1

	B	β	T	F	R ²
				169.55 ***	0.80
Producer management style	-0.01	-0.47	-6.52 ***		
Administrator management style	-0.03	-0.73	-11.44 ***		
Integrator management style	-0.01	-0.08	- 1.23		
School management	-1.85	-0.50	-9.78 ***		
Parents support	0.15	0.08	2.07 **		
Municipal and school inspector support	-0.04	-0.03	-0.99		
Teaching and learning with alternative methods	0.12	0.10	0.99		
Assessment of performance using alternative methods	0.19	0.15	2.80 **		

Source: Authors' own processing

The result of the second regression, presented in table 2, below, based on teachers' data, also shows that the general model is a very strong and significant predictor of the dependent variable which is "academic results of students" ($F=413.8$, $p < 0.000$). In addition, the strongest and most significant predictor of all predictors is school management ($\beta=0.92$, $t=3.88$, $p < 0.000$). Other significant predictors are "parental support" and "municipal and school inspector support."

Regression to predict “academic results of students”: based on teachers

Table 2

	B	β	T	F	R²
				413.80***	0.86
School Management	1.24	0.92	-3.88 ***		
Parents Support	0.23	0.09	14.90 ***		
Municipal and School Inspector Support	-0.01	-0.01	3.74 ***		
Teaching and learning with alternative methods	-0.04	-0.02	-0.23		
Assessment of performance using alternative methods	-0.10	-0.04	-0.57		

Source: Authors' own processing

The result of the third and final regression, presented in table 3, below, based on students data, indicates that the general model is a very strong and significant predictor of the dependent variable “academic results of students” (F=585.29, p <0.000). The two predictive variables, "teaching and learning using alternative methods" and "assessment using alternative methods," are of medium predictive intensity ($\beta = 0.55$; $\beta = 0.36$) and significant and positive (t=7.10, p <0.000; t=10.93, p <0.000).

Regression to predict “academic results of students”: based on students data

Table 3

	B	β	T	F	R²
				585.29 ***	0.78
Teaching and learning with alternative methods	0.64	0.36	7.10***		
Assessment of performance using alternative methods	0.50	0.55	10.93***		

Source: Authors' own processing

4. Discussion

The findings of this research provide valuable insights into the complex relationships between management styles, alternative assessment implementation, and student achievement in Israeli high schools.

The research conducted by Reichel, N. and Shanan-Altman, J. (2019) showed that a participatory and supportive management style is positively associated with the successful implementation of alternative learning and assessment methods. Also, Reichel and Shkedi (2017) examined how managers' perceptions of meaningful learning influence the adoption of alternative assessment methods. The research showed a positive correlation between managers' innovative perceptions and willingness to implement alternative assessments. Managers who viewed meaningful learning as a process that encouraged critical thinking, creativity, and active learning were more open to using alternative assessment methods. research highlighted the central role of school principals in promoting pedagogical changes and the importance of advanced educational concepts in leading changes in assessment methods.

Liu and Zhao (2021) investigated the relationship between managerial management style in China and the adoption of innovative assessment methods. They found that managers with a more democratic and open approach to change were more likely to support alternative assessment. A significant positive correlation was found between a democratic management style that is open to change and a willingness to adopt alternative assessment methods. Democratic-minded school principals were more likely to encourage teacher collaboration in developing innovative assessment tools. Managers who emphasized continuous learning and innovation were more open to experimenting with alternative assessment methods.

Fullan (2020) surveyed global trends in student assessment and linked them to Fullan's educational leadership styles. One of the leading researchers in the field of educational leadership and organizational change. He argued that the successful implementation of innovative assessment methods largely depends on educational leadership style. Fullan emphasized the importance of systemic leadership in this context. According to Fullan, systemic leadership includes a holistic view of the education system, the ability to identify and navigate complexities, capacity building at the individual, team and organizational level, and creating a culture of continuous learning in the school.

The strong negative relationship between the Administrator style and student success suggests that an overly bureaucratic or rigid management approach may hinder student achievement. This aligns with Adizes' (2000) assertion that no single management style is universally effective, instead advocating for a balanced approach incorporating elements from different styles.

The significant differences in perception regarding the implementation of alternative assessment methods among students, teachers, and principals highlight a potential communication gap within schools. This discrepancy could indicate a need for better alignment and communication of assessment practices across all levels of the school community, as suggested by Hargreaves and Fullan (2012).

The positive relationship between alternative assessment methods and student success supports the theoretical benefits of these approaches, aligning with previous research highlighting the benefits of diverse assessment methods in promoting student engagement and learning (Darling-Hammond & Adamson, 2010).

5. Conclusions

This research provides evidence for the significant impact of school principals' management styles on the implementation of alternative assessment methods and, ultimately, on student achievement in Israeli high schools. The findings suggest that a balanced approach to school leadership, combined with the effective implementation of alternative assessment methods, may be most conducive to student success. The cross-sectional nature of the data and the focus on Israeli high schools limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research could address these limitations by conducting longitudinal studies, expanding into different educational contexts, and investigating the specific mechanisms through which management styles influence assessment practices and student outcomes.

Based on these findings, we recommend educational policymakers and school administrators to promote balanced leadership approaches that incorporate elements from different management styles, such as producer, administrator and integrator. Second, school principals should enhance communication and alignment of alternative assessment practices across all levels of the school community and provide professional development opportunities focused on effective implementation of alternative assessment methods. Third, school principals need to foster stronger partnerships with parents and local authorities to support educational initiatives. The final recommendation is to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of assessment practices and their impact on student achievement. By addressing these areas, schools can create more effective learning environments that support student achievement in the context of 21st-century education.

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