CHAPTER IV

PRINCIPAL-TEACHER RELATIONS
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For all practical purposes, the principal is a member of the teaching community, although he has additional responsibilities as an administrator and supervisor. He has to work with a large number of teachers. Much of his success depends upon his relations with various teachers and the teacher community as a whole.

A good climate in the school is necessary. Such a wholesome climate, provides as Wiles says, 'happy, hard working and enjoyable situation', while the absence of it makes school a 'dull and disagreeable place'.¹

Good climate implies good relationship between the principal and the teachers. Such relations are to a greater extent under democratic and not under autocratic administration

Tompkin's study revealed that democratic administration was reported by three-fourth of the schools as a method of establishing good relations.

The responsibility of establishing and maintaining this positive relationship lies with the principal.

Tompkins in a study found that the principal was regarded as the mainspring of democratic administration.

What constitutes democratic administration?

Democratic school administration, is administration shared by all. The teachers participate in policy framing and taking all such decisions which have a bearing on school life. Even students, wherever possible are called upon to participate in this process. Spears defines democratic administration as an active participation of the teaching staff in the process of decision making for the school. He advocates participation of the students in this process as well but only 'whenever it is apparent that the latter can profit educationally through such action'.

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Tompkins in a study found that the term sharing was most frequently used to describe as technique in achieving democratic administration. In contrast to this, the principal with authoritarian attitude acts as a dictator, supreme law giver, and does not confer with or obtain suggestions from the staff.

Koopman, Alice and Misner describe the following points both for democratic and authoritarian administration are reproduced below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Autocratic Administrator</th>
<th>The Democratic Administrator</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Thinks that he can sit by himself and see all angles of problem.</td>
<td>1. Knows the potential and power of thirty or fifty brains.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Does not know how to use the experience of other.</td>
<td>2. Knows how to utilize that power.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Cannot bear to let any string of management slip from his fingers.</td>
<td>3. Knows how to delegate duties.</td>
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<td>4. Is so tied to routine details that he seldom takes his larger job.</td>
<td>4. Frees himself from routine details in order to turn his energy to creative leadership.</td>
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5Ellsworth Tompkins, op.cit., p.252.

5. Is jealous of ideas.
Reacts one of several ways when someone else makes a proposal.
(a) Assumes that a suggestion implies criticism and is offended.
(b) While seeming to neglect it, nearly captures the idea and restates it as his own, giving no credit to the originator of the idea.

6. Makes decision that should have been made by the group. Refers to the group all matters that concern the group.

7. Adopts a paternalistic attitude towards the group 'I know best'.

8. Expects his workship, giggles of delight at his attempts at humor and so forth.

5. Is quick to recognise and praise an idea that comes from someone else.

7. Maintains the position of friendly helpful adviser both in personal and professional matters.

8. Wishes to be respected as a fair and just individual as he respects others.
9. Does not admit even to himself that he is autocratic.
10. Sacrifices everything, teachers, students, progress to the end of a smooth-running system.
11. Gives to others as few opportunities for leadership as possible. Makes committee assignments, then outlines all duties and performs many of them himself.

9. Consciously practices democratic techniques.
10. Is more concerned with the growth of individuals involved than with freedom from annoyance.
11. Believes that as many individuals as possible should have opportunities to take responsibility and exercise leadership.

It is evident from the above that democratic supervision can help teachers find true growth in permissive climate. Autocratic supervision stifles personality and therefore, hampers their real growth.

Educationists abroad have been of the opinion that preservation of democracy depends upon the opportunities that are offered to the children in the class-room. Shane and Yauch observed that democracy 'must be exemplified in all the
practices in the school. Courtis, Swain and Morrison assert that the only way to prepare the incoming generation to live successfully in democracy is to give them the opportunity to practise democracy in the classroom. They are of the opinion that it will be possible only if the school system operates democratically from top to bottom.

It must be made clear that democracy in a school supervision does not so much depend upon the formal structure of the organisation as on the attitudes. The formation of committees to give the school a look of democratic organisation will not be synonymous with democratic supervision unless the same is backed by democratic spirit and for greater productivity, more important is the climate than the form. This contention was supported by the following study.

Jenkins and Blackman studied the relationship between administrative behaviour of elementary school principals and

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productivity of teachers in curriculum development. While many of the findings were inconclusive, it was noted contrary to expectations that there was no relationship between the way faculty was organised to do curriculum work and productivity of the teachers. Small or large groups, grade level or special interests approaches were not significant variables.

So, to help the teachers give the best of themselves, the principal has to create an appropriate environment in the school.

Some educationists are of the view that authoritarian attitude results in more of efficiency in the school work. But others argue that under autocratic administration, it is impossible to bring into true rapport the best elements in the personality of a teacher with those in the principal and education stands to lose a great deal from this.

Griffith[^9] tested a number of hypotheses in connection with the practice of successful and unsuccessful superintendent. He found that the successful superintendent employs more democratic processes, deals more capably with the personal

problems, delegates authority more often, uses his faculty more fully and employs more administrative practices designed to develop long range policies than does the unsuccessful superintendent. Of these categories of administrative practices on which successful and unsuccessful superintendents differ significantly, the most significant deal with human relations and the least significant deal with the more technical and non-personal areas of administration.

From the above, it is clear that autocratic supervision can neither be useful nor efficiency-oriented. The democratic supervision, therefore, is the requisite alternative.

**IMPLICATIONS OF DEMOCRATIC SUPERVISION**

The various points that this study covers refer to the principal's personality, his attitudes and behaviour with the teachers as individuals and teachers as a group.

In view of the complexity of human relationship, the various aspects given under principal-teacher relations overlap and it is not possible to classify them exclusively under one category. However, overall implications of the democratic concept of supervision as enumerated in the questionnaire are as follows:

The aim of supervision is to ensure better school instructional programme. This partly depends on principal's
realising the potential power of each staff member and also placing him in school life in such a way as is likely to get maximum out of him. Every teacher is a unique personality with different capacities, capabilities, tastes, aptitudes and attitudes and as far as possible, the principal should place each teacher in the light of these differences.

This will keep out irritations caused as a result of misplacement. Teaching is an intangible process and to motivate each teacher to discharge his duties efficiently, the principal should be one of them and work with them. He should be friendly to the teachers, easily accessible to them and also help and guide them not only professional but personal level as well.

Weber believes that the principal should make teachers feel that the former is their real friend:

'School employees should feel that their leaders are concerned with employees problems in their intricate details, they should feel that their leaders are able and eager to help them solve problems, they should feel that their leaders are their friends. An effective leader should always act so that his co-workers may clearly understand that he honestly believes his own interests are identical with those of each member in the school system, they will serve'.

As a result, the teacher will repose confidence in him and feel least hesitant to go to him to discuss his problems. This will improve staff effectiveness.

Democracy implies the sharing of the decisions. The principal should consult as far as possible the members of the staff for framing school policies. But that does not mean consulting only a few members of the staff. Selective consultation is an unsound policy. That will result in arousing hostility of the members who are not consulted.

Weber in this connection says:

"Where administrators and a few members of the staff initiate new procedures in a school without united and coordinated action of most of the professional staff, their plans are attacked behind doors."\textsuperscript{11} Such a situation is likely to create mutual jealousies and lead to the formation of a group of disgruntled people who are on the look out to create unwholesome school climate.

The principal should try to be fair and just to all of them, not only in respect of giving share to each of

\textsuperscript{11}Ibid., p.4.
them in the framing of school policies but also in respect of allotting work load etc. Such an attitude of the principals will help teachers identify themselves with the school and its policies and work more enthusiastically. This will also eliminate mutual jealousies of the members of the staff and help them in the process of better group feelings.

The teachers should not be silent spectators but they should be encouraged to think for the betterment of the school. This will positively affect their loyalty to the school, and their efforts for its improvement. New techniques and methods for experimentation can be encouraged in this way.

Teaching is not a static process. There is a great scope for improvements in various dimensions of this process. The teacher's work is limited by his competencies. If the same are improved, they are likely to enable him for more efficient discharge of his duties. So, the principal has to think of and plan for the growth of the staff (more a part of academic leadership). But there is greater need to stimulate teachers for growth. That greatly depends upon the school climate and attitude of the principal and various teachers.

As already mentioned, the teacher's work is intangible and cannot be mathematically measured. The efforts of the
principal should be geared to having all faith in the ability of teachers and letting them to do their work in good faith. This will be a positive stimulus. Not only that, the teachers should be co-partners in the joint venture of running the school. Participation in making decisions is only the first step. With responsibilities, power also needs to be delegated to them.

The principal has a great reformative role. The teachers can make various mistakes in teaching situations. A democratic principal will criticise them for the sake of reforming them and not opposing or insulting them, constructive criticism will help teachers grow professionally.

If a member suffers from some inefficiencies and if, the principal acts to reform him, improvement is likely to take place. Such a member needs to be given a sense of success on the job so as to enable him to put in his best possible in his work.

The various other points refer to his giving a fair trial to a decision jointly taken by the staff, so as to give school a sense of stable direction, thus avoiding fluctuating school situations, avoiding putting on rough attitudes by the principal in his enthusiasm to bring improvement at a fast speed and taking criticism from teachers gracefully and without losing temper.
All the points mentioned above, are likely to bring about wholesome school climate and afford teachers job satisfaction and high morale, making it convenient for them to derive full benefit from educational leadership and putting their wits for the development of the children in the desired directions.