



Research Article

Perception of Principals about their Leadership Styles at Higher Secondary Level in Rawalpindi City, Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

The major purpose of study was to get opinions of principals regarding their leadership styles as perceived by themselves. Sample of study constituted 12 principals from which six were male and six were female. The researcher used questionnaire based on Likert scale after having validated and checking reliability through Cronbach Alpha after pilot testing. It was concluded that majority of principals were having autocratic style of management. Democratic style of management was also favored by second last majority of principals.

Key words:

INTRODUCTION

It is an acknowledged fact that teacher under visionary leadership is the vital source in changing the lives of individuals. The research in the area of leadership and organizational citizenship behavior is intertwined. Their relevance is vital in strengthening the effectiveness of worldwide educational process. All intellectual development on the globe definitely credited to teachers. Professional competencies, academic skills, and knowledge are optimized with mind satisfaction. Teachers play an essential role in reshaping the economic structure so the state is responsible to motivate the teachers towards the profession with maximum incentives. Many studies have investigated positive impact on the achievement of learners with teacher's cooperation under the participatory vision of principals (Bolam et al 1998; Silins & Murray, 1999). They affect directly organizational and academic performance of teachers which in turn affects students' achievement (Cheng, 2002). The teachers as well as administrators in social organizations also affect the achievement of the students (Wiley, 2001). However, it is obvious from many studies that direct effect of principals on students' achievement is near zero (Bell et al. 2003). It can be achieved only with the help of good behavior of teachers. It is essential to investigate relevant leadership styles for understanding the dimensions of leadership. Prior leaders in education accentuated the task dimension

behavior that was most relevant to autocratic leadership style while others highlighted the consideration dimension that was similar to democratic leadership style. Personal styles of most leaders were expressed as autocratic or democratic, task-oriented or people-oriented, directive or collegial, initiating structure or consideration (Owens, 2004), and directive or participative (Somech 2005). The responsibility of principals is to encourage democratic decisions, improve schools, promotion of self-management, and acquaint themselves with the requirements of market orientation (Caldwell, 1998). Autocratic and democratic leaders are compared by their leadership characteristics.

The autocratic leader centralized authority and depend on his/her administrative power. On the other hand, democratic leader delegates and shares authority as well as power with his followers and encourages their participation in decision making (Daft, 2005). The group led by autocratic leaders performed the tasks well under the presence of leaders only. However, they were displeased with closed autocratic style of leadership. The group performance who was assigned democratic leaders was good and characterized by positive feelings rather than hostility. Under the democratic style of leadership, group members performed well even the leader was absent and left the group on its own (Ubom & Joshua, 2004). The participative techniques used by the democratic leader to train and involve group members

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such that they performed well with or without the leader's presence. These characteristics of democratic leadership explain why the empowerment of lower employees is a popular trend in companies today. Thus leaders are categorized as autocratic (boss centered), democratic (subordinate centered), and combination of both styles. However, while switching from autocratic to democratic or vice versa is not easy.

Their styles may be adjusted to cope with the existing situation (Daft, 2005). In a study conducted Someck (2005) reported that although a democratic style of leadership is more popular than an autocratic style all over the world, managers in all countries tend to prefer directive behaviors over persuasive behaviors. The effectiveness of leadership styles depend on behavior instead of personality trait. Leadership training develops suitable behavior. Unfortunately, in the present situation, where everyone is trying to make its both ends meet, the teacher is especially a victim of such malicious circumstances. The world is too acquisitive. The teachers who entered in the profession by chance and not by choice feel more satisfaction in government schools as there is less pressure of work, high payment, low supervision, automatic promotion, and mostly home station enjoyment. The most important factor of their satisfaction is job security. Once entering in government job, there are least chances for getting removed (Mehrotra, 2005). Autocratic style deals with severe harshness, bureaucratic style deals with set rules to be strictly followed by head, laissez faire style deals with no involvement of head in any task. Teachers are human beings attached with several personal and family oriented requirements to be met. Unable to complete those necessities resulted in annoyance, detached behavior, and finally they revolted (Ubom & Joshua, 2004). Concentration on these leadership styles was made essential on the logic of sound motives. They are most relevant in optimizing fruitful results (Somech, 2005). They established policy about work and conduct of people (directive leadership), solicited thought provoking teachers opinions (participative leadership), and linked with elevated efficiency. He also assesses the work of teachers under such styles. Finally, they provoke and appreciate teachers' suggestions while working effectively (Sagie, et al., 2002). Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) has been studied since the late 1970s. Over the past three decades, interest in these behaviors has increased substantially. Organizational behavior has been linked to overall organizational effectiveness, thus these types of employee behaviors have important consequences in the workplace. Organizational citizenship behavior of a teacher is defined as the extent to which teachers in a school go out of their way to voluntarily help students, teachers, and others to be successful (Kootley, 2012).

Leadership has been defined by many researchers and practitioners. The definitions of effective leadership are estimated on the ground that every researcher who has studied the concept defined it (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2004). According to Hose et al. (2002) an admitted definition of leadership is, "the ability to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute to the effectiveness and success of the organizations of which they are members".

It is revealed from the literature that leadership is a personal quality and willingness of people to follow a person as leader. It exists only with followers. It is meaningless without adherents. Leadership involves readiness to accept complete responsibility in all situations. Leadership styles may change under different circumstances. Leaders stimulate the followers to strive willingly for attainment of organizational objectives. A leader must have the ability to sway the behavior, attitude, and belief of his/ her subordinates (Sahni, 2004). The success of a leader depends on the acceptance of his leadership by the followers (Khanka, 2007). Bass (2003) proposed that leaders can acquire the best performance from their followers through building relationships with them. He talked about three leadership styles. Further, Bass (2003) emphasized that transformational leadership is characterized by actions and behaviors that are above and beyond the employment contract.

The theories about leadership have direct implication for what the style leader uses in managing employees (Kunwar, 2007). The term style is almost comparable to the manner where the leader influences subordinates (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 1996). The ways in which leaders influence their subordinates are called styles of leadership. There are three basic styles of leadership:

1. Autocratic or Authoritarian Style
2. Democratic or Participative Style
3. Laissez faire or Free rein Style (Khanka, 2007).

Autocratic leadership style

There are several synonymous terms used for autocratic leadership style. Main terms are directive and authoritarian. Autocratic style involves the leader to make decisions, wield supreme power, consign tasks for members, and maintain a master-servant relationship with group members (Omolayo, 2004). In this research synonymous terms are used.

Democratic leadership style

It is also called participative and consultative leadership style. Democratic leadership style prefers consultative approach, encourages members of group to participate in decisions, and maintains a master-master relationship with subordinates (Omolayo, 2007).

Laissez faire or free rein Style

It is called following set rules. Administrator following this style just follows the set rules and makes it obligatory to be followed by all other employees (Mehrotara, 2005).

Objective of the study

The objectives of the study were:

1. To identify the leadership styles of principals of higher secondary level in Rawalpindi City.
2. To give measureable suggestions for future action.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was descriptive in nature. Following methods and procedures will be adopted by researcher for this proposed research:

SR. No.	Statement	SA	A	UD	DA	SDA	Mean
1	I must make decision without consulting my sub-ordinates due to lack of time.	3	5	1	2	1	3.58
2	Questioning to my judgment is not possible.	6	3	0	1	2	3.83
3	Threats & punishment to motivate my sub-ordinates is not a good choice.	2	1	2	4	3	2.58
4	I do not encourage open door policy.	7	2	1	0	2	4.00
5	I don't bother what perception my sub ordinates have about me.	5	4	0	2	1	3.83
6	I keep a close eye on every activity to ensure achievement of goals in specific time.	7	3	0	1	1	4.17
7	I rely on consensus to make a decision.	4	2	1	3	2	3.25
8	I take time to clarify why I want an activity to be done in a certain way when sub ordinates oppose me.	5	2	1	3	1	3.58
9	It is a best way to motivate the sub ordinates by giving them value and respects.	4	3	0	2	3	3.25
10	I make frequent and supportive communication with my sub-ordinates.	3	2	1	2	4	2.83
11	I avoid listening to my sub-ordinates and often impose my own ideas.	2	3	1	4	2	2.92
12	I give clear orders and procedures as per the institute policy.	3	6	2	0	1	3.83
13	I maintain high standards of performing depending upon the observance of fixed rules and regulations.	3	4	0	2	3	3.17
14	Nothing is more valuable than building a great team.	2	3	0	5	2	2.83
15	I don't believe that specific set of procedures is important to get the job done.	3	1	0	5	3	2.67
16	There should be formal hierarchy (Chain of Command) within the institute that clarifies who is to report whom.	2	2	1	2	5	2.50
17	Clearly defined hierarchical structure (Chain of command) often slowdowns the decision making process.	8	2	0	1	1	4.25
18	I lay down fix rules that everybody must follow.	4	2	1	2	3	3.17
19	When sub ordinates fail to meet set criteria, I calmly but firmly let them know the reason behind failure.	6	2	1	1	2	3.75
20	I give strict orders to my sub-ordinates what I want to be done.	3	3	1	3	2	3.17
21	I encourage suggestions but I clarify what is to be done by my sub-ordinates.	3	1	2	4	2	2.92
22	I believe in giving rewards for high performance.	6	3	0	2	1	3.92
23	I am likely to blowup without giving warnings without giving warnings if something goes wrong.	2	1	0	6	3	2.42
24	When I ask my sub ordinates to do something unusual, I don't explain why this is required.	7	2	1	1	1	4.08
25	When my sub ordinate suggests alternative to me, I often quickly indicate the alternative I prefer.	2	3	0	4	3	2.75
26	I prefer to initiate work but leave for someone else to supervise it.	3	4	1	3	1	3.42
27	I am in favor of leaving sub ordinate without supervision.	2	1	1	4	4	2.42
28	I give my sub ordinates complete freedom to solve problems on their own.	2	1	1	5	3	2.50
29	It is important to have close supervision where sub ordinates are not skillful.	4	5	0	2	1	3.75
30	I don't let my sub ordinates to interfere in my work.	5	3	1	1	2	3.67
31	Sense of ownership motivates the sub ordinates to do their best.	3	4	0	2	3	3.17
32	Sense of trust motivates the sub ordinates to put in their best.	3	5	0	3	1	3.50

Population

All the principals of govt. colleges for women and boys and all higher secondary schools for boys and girls of Rawalpindi City constituted population of study.

Delimitations

The study was delimited to: The autocratic, democratic, Laissez-faire leadership styles of school heads.

Sample

Twelve principals of six government colleges (3 male, 3 female) and six principals of higher secondary schools (3 male, 3 female) were randomly selected from 12 institutes of Rawalpindi city.

Research instruments

One questionnaire for heads to assess their leadership style developed and validated through pilot testing was used as research instruments of the study.

Data collection

The researcher personally the sampled population of the elementary schools of Rawalpindi City for collection of data.

Data analysis

Data collected was scored, tabulated and analyzed by using mean, as test of statistical significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The above table shows that the majority (75%) of respondents agreed with the statements that questioning to their judgment is not possible, they do not encourage open door policy, they don't bother what perception their sub ordinates have about them, they give clear orders and procedures as per the institute policy, they believe in giving rewards for high performance, they do not explain the required information to the subordinates and the importance of having close supervision where sub ordinates are not skillful. Mean values are 3.83, 4.00, 3.83, 3.83, 3.92, 4.08 and 3.75 respectively. But they disagreed with the statement that they likely to blowup without giving warnings if something goes wrong with the mean value of 2.42 respectively.

It delineates that 66.67 % of respondents agreed upon that they must make decision without consulting their sub-ordinates due to lack of time. When sub ordinates fail to meet set criteria, I calmly but firmly let them know the reason behind failure. I keep a close eye on every activity

to ensure achievement of goals in specific time. Mean values are 3.58, 3.75 and 4.17 respectively. The same percentage of respondents disagreed with the statement that they are in favor of leaving sub ordinate without supervision, they give their sub ordinates complete freedom to solve problems on their own, they don't let their sub ordinates to interfere in their work, sense of trust motivates the sub ordinates to put in their best, they don't believe that specific set of procedures is important to get the job done. Mean values are 2.42, 2.50, 3.67, 3.50 and 2.67 respectively.

Table describes that the fifty percent of respondents agreed with the statement that they rely on consensus to make a decision, they lay down fix rules that everybody must follow and they give strict orders to their sub-ordinates what they want to be done. Mean values are 3.25, 3.17 and 3.17 respectively. While, fifty percent of respondents disagreed with the statement that they make frequent and supportive communication with their sub-ordinates, they avoid listening to their sub-ordinates and often impose their own ideas and they encourage suggestions but they clarify what is to be done by their sub-ordinates. Mean values are 2.83, 2.92 and 2.92.

Table represents 58.33 % of respondents agreed with the statement that they take time to clarify why they want an activity to be done in a certain way when sub ordinates oppose me, it is a best way to motivate the sub ordinates by giving them value and respects, they maintain high standards of performing depending upon the observance of fixed rules and regulations, they prefer to initiate work but leave for someone else to supervise it and sense of ownership motivates the sub ordinates to do their best. Mean values are 3.58, 3.25, 3.17, 3.42 and 3.17 respectively. Further, it depicts that 58.33% of respondents disagreed with the statement that threats and punishment to motivate their sub-ordinates is not a good choice, nothing is more valuable than building a great team, there should be formal hierarchy (Chain of Command) within the institute that clarifies who is to report whom and when their sub ordinate suggests alternative to them, they often quickly indicate the alternative they prefer. Mean values are 2.58, 2.83, 2.50 and 2.75 respectively.

Table illustrates that the large number (83.33%) of respondents agreed with the statement that they keep a close eye on every activity to ensure achievement of goals in specific time. Mean value is 4.17.

The leadership is a process in which the manager of organization attempts to facilitate the responsibility fulfill to reach the organizational aims by motivating and making an effective relationship and convince the staffs do the jobs willingly (Ali and Waqar, 2013). In this research, in order to evaluate the leadership styles, Fiedler leadership style was used. Fiedler attempted to determine the most effective leadership style (work-oriented or relation-oriented) for different situations. The relationship-oriented leader is characterized by fulfilling their duty, the accurate organizational patterns, communication channels and approaches of successful work, and the work-oriented leader is characterized by the open communication channels, emotional and psychological supports, active listening and facilitating behaviors (Daft, 2005).

Conclusions

1. Majority of principals were having autocratic style of management,
2. The second last majority occupied democratic style.
3. Very few were laissez faire.

Recommendations

1. Training is needed for principals
Principals should be inspired and trained to become democratic leaders as to get maximum results and for enhancement of effective school environment.

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