

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP PRACTICES AND SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS: FROM SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS PERSPECTIVES**

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**Abstract**

*This study aims to examine the relationship between secondary school head teacher's leadership practices and school effectiveness. The study also investigates the differences between the perceptions of government secondary school head teachers and teachers about principals' leadership practices and school effectiveness. Quantitative research approach was used to test the hypotheses. Descriptive method was used to collect the data from 100 head teachers and 500 teachers of government secondary schools in district Dir lower through self-developed questionnaires. Data were analyzed by using mean, standard deviation, t-test and Pearson product moment correlation. It was found that statistical significant differences were found between the perceptions of secondary school head teachers and teachers about principals' leadership practices and school effectiveness. A positive moderate significant relationship exists between the perceptions of secondary school head teachers' leadership practices and school effectiveness. The study recommended that secondary school head teachers must set directions, involve teachers in decision making process, adopt distributive leadership styles, establish different committees for various tasks, maintain good relationship with students, teachers, parents, and community, and provide a trustworthy, supportive, and pleasant environment for teaching-learning process to ensure the maximum learning of the students at school.*

**Keywords:** Leadership Practices, School Effectiveness, Head Teachers, Teachers, teaching-learning Process

**Introduction**

The role of school principal in school improvement is undoubtedly significant. Effective school leadership plays significant role in successful and effective schools. School leadership is the second important factor after classroom management, which affects the learning of the students in the classroom (Leithwood, Harris & Hopkins, 2008). The same authors Leithwood, Harris and Hopkins (2020:2) verified, re-evaluated, validated and revised their claims about school leadership as "School leadership has a significant effect on features of the school organization which positively

influences the quality of teaching and learning. While moderate in size, this leadership effect is vital to the success of most school improvement efforts". Alqahtani, Noman and Kaur (2021) mentioned five core leadership practices exhibited by secondary school principals in United of Kingdom Saudi Arabia include setting achievement goals, developing teachers, building strong relationship with parents, focusing on academic excellence and developing school climate. They believed that school principals enacted these practices in a variety of ways to bring improvement in the school affairs. Similarly, Leithwood *et al.*,(2008) listed four major leadership practices of successful school leader which included establishing a clear vision and directions for school, building relationships among school personnel and developing their capacities, redesigning the organization to support the desired practices and improving and managing the instructional programmes.

Salfi (2011) found that majority of head teachers in successful schools developed a culture of mutual trust, support and collaboration and have a shared school vision, mission and objectives. These head teachers empowered their subordinates through shared leadership practices, ensured the involvement of different stakeholders in decision making process, tried to developed and maintained good relationships with inside and outside the school personnel, focused on professional development of the teachers and their selves, involved parents and community in school improvement process. He proposed that all these practices lead to improvement in teaching-learning process. He recommended that head teachers may improve the effectiveness of school by using their leadership qualities.

Riaz and Sultan (2017) found that there are some positive aspects of school leadership among head teachers in Pakistan which included having strong moral commitment towards inculcation of citizenship tact and patriotism among students, sharing of responsibilities among staff members to encourage group cohesiveness, delegation of tasks among staff, maintaining and caring school plant, regularly monitoring of school activities, and ensuring active participation of students in co-curricular activities. However, there were some aspects of leadership which were neglected by the head teachers and act as hindrances in successful school included less focusing on academic development, less collaboration among teaching staff, providing less opportunities for staff professional development, lack of development of school strategic planning, lack of parental and community involvement in school affairs, less opportunities to participate in curriculum enrichment activities, lack of attainment of students' outcomes, lack of support from high ups, adopting inappropriate leadership styles and unable to promote conducive environment for teaching-learning process. These shortcomings showed a clear absence of academic leadership qualities among the secondary school principals. They recommended further research which may highlight the challenges and issues faced by school leadership.

Hughes (1993) observed that "there may be some bad schools here and there with good head teachers but I have never seen an effective school that had a bad head teacher". This proved that importance of school leadership in school effectiveness and school effectiveness cannot be ignored. Many researchers have found that possessing good leadership qualities is significant predictor of effective or successful school (Dinham, 2005; Hargreaves, 2012; Leithwood *et al.*, 2020; Selfi, 2011; Townsend, 2007). It is found that quality of leadership in school affect the teachers' level of commitment, motivation and turnover in school (Day, Sammons, Hopkins, Harris, Leithwood, Gu, & Brown2010). Hopkins (2001) argued that school leadership affects the school effectiveness and the quality of teaching-learning process. Wallace (2002) declared that quality of school leadership has significantly affected the school improvement and school effectiveness. In the same many researchers have found that school leadership has significant effect on students' academic

achievement (Bishop, 2004; Leithwood *et al.*, 2020; Mulford, Kendall, Edmunds, Kendall, Ewington, & Silins, 2003). Similarly, Leithwood and Jantzi (2006) found that school leadership has strong and indirect effect on school effectiveness and school successfulness and also on students' academic achievement. In the same way, Caldwell (1998) also stated that head teacher play important role in bringing reforms in teaching learning process and students' academic achievement. Another important aspect for quality leadership is establishing a culture in the schools which motivate and encourage the teachers to teach effectively. These qualities produce a sense of belongings and empowerment among the teachers which make a difference to students' academic achievement (Ainley, 2012). On the basis of above discussion, it is evident that leadership is a key significant factor that makes a difference in the successful schools and school effectiveness. There is a strong association between effective leadership and school effectiveness and school successfulness (Salfi, 2011). Therefore, the researchers intended to find out the relationship between school principal' leadership practices and school effectiveness in district Dir lower. The study tries to seek the answers of the following objectives.

### **Research Questions**

1. Do the government secondary school principals and teachers perceive principals' leadership practices similarly?
2. Do the government secondary school principals and teachers perceive school effectiveness similarly?
3. What is the relationship between school principals' leadership practices and school effectiveness from principals' perspectives?

### **Hypotheses of the study**

Following hypotheses were formulated to achieve the above stated objectives

1. There is no statistical significant difference between the perceptions of government secondary school principals and teachers regarding principal' leadership practices.
2. There is no statistical significant difference between the perceptions of government secondary school principals and teachers regarding school effectiveness.
3. There is no statistical significant relationship between school principals' leadership practices and school effectiveness from principals' perspectives.

### **Research Methodology**

The researchers used quantitative research approach to testify the hypotheses of the study. For collection and analysis of data descriptive (survey) design was used by the researchers. All government boys' and girls' secondary school head teachers and teachers of district Dir lower constituted the population of this study. Stratified random sampling method was used to select sample of the study. Out of the 108 boys and 71 girls' schools, the researchers selected 60 (56%) boys and 40 (56%) girls' schools through proportionate stratified random sampling method. From each school a principal and five teachers were selected conveniently. Thus a total number of 100 head teachers and 500 teachers were selected randomly as the sample of the study. The researchers prepared 600 survey packets consisted of covering letter, stamped self-addressed envelope and questionnaires. The researchers personally visited the sampled schools personally and distributed the questionnaires among the principals and teachers. Some principals and teachers filled the questionnaires on the spot while others promised to send the questionnaires via mail. The

researchers finally received 90 usable questionnaires from school principals and 426 usable questionnaires from school teachers. The response rate was approximately more than 85%.

### Research Instrument, validity and reliability

The researchers developed two questionnaires based on five points rating scale ranging from always to never. The first questionnaire consisted of eleven factors / constructs / attributors related to leadership qualities of school principals consisting of 61 Likert type scale items while the second questionnaire consisted of seven factors / constructs / attributors related to school effectiveness consisted of 45 Likert type items. The school leadership was confined to eleven constructs include consultant, negotiator, inspiration, being in on, stability, adaptability, strategic planner; promote discipline, manger, sociability and instructor. The school effectiveness was delimited to seven important areas including school vision, mission and values; policies and strategies; professional development; community involvement; in-service training opportunities; evaluation and school environment. Both the questionnaires were validated through a panel of experts who had sufficient experience in teaching, administration and leadership at school and university levels. After their valuable suggestions the questionnaires were modified and piloted to school principals and teachers to check the reliability and clarity of the questionnaires. The Cronbach alpha values for the questionnaires were found .84 and .81 which were found satisfactory.

### Results

**Table 01: Comparison between the perceptions of principals and teachers regarding different constructs / attributes of leadership**

Constructs	Principals			Teachers			Comparison	
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	t	p
Consultant/Organizer/Coach	90	4.64	.330	426	4.25	.463	3.51	.000
<b>Negotiator</b>	90	4.58	.429	426	4.28	.451	2.66	.001
Motivator/Inspiration	90	4.60	.411	426	4.29	.399	3.10	.000
Being in on /Sharing Knowledge	90	4.49	.460	426	4.30	.430	1.69	.000
Stability in Performance	90	4.68	.314	426	4.22	.385	4.88	.003
Adoptability/Innovator	90	4.58	.464	426	4.26	.427	3.01	.001
Strategic Planner	90	4.69	.278	426	4.24	.413	4.48	.004
Principles or Discipline promoter	90	4.62	.423	426	4.31	.642	4.35	.000
Manager/Arranger	90	4.72	.342	426	4.44	.425	4.83	.000
Sociability	90	4.52	.342	426	4.76	.423	3.46	.000
Instructor	90	4.85	.425	426	4.82	.342	3.12	.000

The above table shows the comparison between the perceptions of Government girls' secondary school principals and teachers about different attributes of school leadership. The value of t statistics were found less than that of .05 level of significance, which shows that there is significant difference between the perceptions of school principals and teachers regarding consultant; negotiator, motivator, sharing of knowledge, stability in performance, innovator, strategic planner, disciplinarian, arranger, sociable and instructor. Principals believed that they act as a consultant at school, negotiate issues with teachers, motivate teachers and students for work, share knowledge and experiences with colleagues, showing stability in performance, brings changes and innovations, make strategies for future, maintain discipline in school, arrange academic and non-academic

activities, socially acceptable and instruct new teachers, although teachers didn't agree with their perceptions regarding all these attributes.

**Table 02: Comparison between the perceptions of principals and teachers regarding different constructs / attributes of School effectiveness**

Constructs	Principals			Teachers			Comparison	
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	t	p
School vision, mission	90	4.60	.342	426	4.29	.463	3.48	.004
Policies and strategies	90	4.54	.416	426	4.22	.451	2.56	.012
Professional staff development	90	4.63	.419	426	4.20	.399	1.70	.032
Community involvement	90	4.47	.437	426	4.34	.430	4.23	.023
In-service training	90	4.61	.323	426	4.28	.385	3.14	.009
Evaluation program	90	4.55	.475	426	4.24	.427	4.32	.005
School environment	90	4.68	.272	426	4.25	.413	4.38	.010

The above table shows the comparison between the perceptions of Government girls' secondary school principals and teachers about different attributes of school effectiveness. The value of t statistics were found less than that of .05 level of significance, which shows that there is significant difference between the perceptions of school principals and teachers regarding school vision and mission; policies and strategies; professional staff development; community involvement; in-service training; evaluation of programmes; and school environment. Principals believed that they have framed school vision and mission; formulate policies and strategies for school, arrange professional staff development, involve community in school related matters, organize in-service training and workshops for teachers; evaluate school programmes, and maintain conducive environment in the school, although teachers didn't agree with their perceptions regarding all these attributes.

**Table 03: Relationship between principal' leadership practices and school effectiveness**

Variables	N	M	SD	r	p
School Leadership	90	4.3231	.329	0.64	.000
School Effectiveness	90	4.3207	.334		

The above table shows the relationship between principals' leadership practices and school effectiveness. The value of co-efficient of correlation between the two variables was found significant at .05 level of accuracy. The value of co-efficient of correlation (r) was found .64 which shows that there is moderate positive significant relationship between principals' leadership practices and school effectiveness. The increase in leadership practices accompanies with the increase in school effectiveness. As the school principals practiced leadership practices the school effectiveness increases.

## Discussion

The major aim of the study was to examine the relationship between government secondary school head teachers' leadership practices and school effectiveness. The study also sought to find the differences between the perceptions of secondary school head teachers and teachers about leadership practices and school effectiveness. The researchers found the views of head teachers and teachers about leadership practices adopted by head teachers at school and how these

leadership practices ensure school effectiveness. The study results revealed that both head teachers and teachers perceived leadership practices as significant contributor for school effectiveness and school successfulness. However, head teachers believed that they practiced leadership activities in the schools through their action but teachers didn't agree and perceived that head teachers fail to exhibited leadership practices at school to make school effective and successful. A moderate positive significant relationship was found between the head teachers' leadership practices and school effectiveness. As the head teachers exhibited leadership practices it accompanied with the improvement and successfulness and effectiveness of school.

Being an innovator or adaptor a head teacher tried to bring changes in curriculum through research, and organize refresher courses for their staff to enrich their knowledge and skills. These aspects of leadership practices have also been proposed by many researchers who believed that such kind of practices ensure for the achievement of school vision, mission and goals (Macgilchrist, Myers & Reed, 2004; Harris & Lambert, 2003). Being a strategic planner head teachers set directions for their staff and hoped that their staff will strive for the achievement of these goals and formulate policies that take care of present and future needs of stakeholders and students (Khan, Saeed & Fatma, 2009). Head teachers tried to formulate rules and regulations to maintain disciplines at school. Therefore, they hoped that they should develop social and moral values and take care of social and moral training of the students and promote discipline in school (Saleem, 2010, Danielson, 2007; Harris, 2003). Head teachers assigned responsibilities and distributed work among staff on just basis and empowering colleagues through delegating authority to them and act after consulting colleagues (Harris & Lambert, 2003). Helterbran (2010) suggested that head teachers must try to fulfill the needs and provide required resources to the staff to accomplish their responsibilities in a sophisticated way. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) stated that school principal fulfill the needs of the learners and staff members to improve the teaching-learning process. Therefore, head teacher should play the role of negotiator to fulfill the needs of the students, teachers and other stakeholders. For this purpose they should approach to the high ups to provide resources for the achievement of school goals. Mangin and Stoelinga (2011) recommended that head teachers must motivate and inspire the students and teachers through their actions. For this purpose they must provide constructive feedback to the students and teachers on their performance, arrange various types of curricular activities for the overall personality development of the students and provide opportunities to students to take active participation in these activities and give rewards to students and teachers on their best performance. Head teachers should encourage the teachers and students to express their opinions freely for the improvement of the teaching-learning process. Frost (2010) mentioned that head teacher should disseminate information among the staff related to various aspects. They must share their ideas, knowledge and experiences with teachers and students and arrange session for exchange of ideas and information among the students and staff personnel. Being a good manager and planner the head teacher should accept the victory and defeat gracefully, exert the pressure and frustration, make decisions wisely, take initiatives, held frequent meetings with staff, students and community stakeholders for the improvement, arranges seminars, training and workshops for the teachers and students to enrich their knowledge and skills (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009; Phelps, 2008). Head teachers should focus on the social and moral development of the students and teachers and interact with the stakeholders to solve school problems and also to contact with parents to share students' academic performance with them (Gurr, 2015). Saleem and Naseem (2013) suggested that head teachers must set directions, provide conducive environment for teaching learning process, observe teachers performance in daily activities and use sense of humor while talking with staff and students to feel them as they are part of the organization. All these

practices show that for effective leadership head teachers must possess these qualities, so that they can execute it and make school effective and successful.

### **Conclusions**

The study results revealed that statistical significant difference was found between the perceptions of secondary school principals and teachers regarding leadership practices. School principals believed that they enacted the leadership practices to make school successful and effective but teachers didn't agree with the principals perceptions. Principals believed that they act as consultant or coach for their teachers, negotiate with staff when problems or conflict emerges, motivate and inspire the staff, share knowledge and experiences with their staff, remained stable in his performance, initiate new ideas, make strategic plans for the organization, promote discipline in school, arrange different activities in school, remained sociable with staff and students and teach and guide staff in teaching learning process but teachers didn't agree with the principals and believed that their principals didn't play leadership roles effectively and efficiently.

The study results revealed that statistical significant difference was found between the perceptions of secondary school principals and teachers regarding school effectiveness. Secondary school principals believed that they have set directives and established school vision, mission, values and objectives, they formulated policies and procedures for the achievement of school vision through various activities, they take care of the professional development of their staff and try to enrich their knowledge and skills through in-service training opportunities, they tried to involve all the stakeholders in decision making process, they introduced different programmes for the performance evaluation of the staff and tries to provide conducive and supportive environment for teachers and students to work effectively. On the other hand secondary school teachers didn't agree with the perceptions of school principals regarding school effectiveness.

The study also found that a moderate positive significant relationship exist between principals' leadership practices and school effectiveness. The increase in leadership practices guaranteed the school successfulness and effectiveness.

### **Recommendations**

1. It is recommended that secondary school head teachers may involve teachers and other staff in decision making process, delegate them authority and responsibility, and provide them a sense of ownership to carry out their responsibilities effectively. This may be possible by introducing shared and distributive leadership styles in the school by head teachers. These practices will surely guarantee for school improvement and effective schooling.
2. It is suggested that head teachers should establish various committees in the school to carry out different activities. These committees must be consisted of both senior and junior staff members. They may be assigned different roles in the committees so that their leadership abilities may be developed and perform leadership roles in future effectively.
3. The head teachers should try to maintain good relationships with parents and community stakeholders to make school successful. They should involve them in decision making process and formulating of school vision, so that they may cooperate in achieving the school goals.
4. Head teachers must try to provide a collaborative, cooperative, coordinative, supportive, pleasant, encouraging, trusting and motivating atmosphere in the school, so that teachers can teach effectively and strive for the achievement of school goals and ensure students' success.

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