



## COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF LEADERSHIP ROLES OF SECONDARY SCHOOL HEADS IN DISTRICT DIR LOWER

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**Abstract-** School leadership plays significant role in enhancing students' achievement and making teaching-learning process more effective at school. School principal galvanizes the whole efforts and development of the school including educational environment, infrastructure, modern technology, finance, boosting teachers' morale and root out chaos and confusion from school life. This study aims to compare the perceptions of school principals and teachers regarding leadership roles in district Dir Lower. A self constructed questionnaire consisted of 61 items was distributed among 50 school principals and 200 school teachers. The responses of principals were crossed checked through teachers' responses. A significant difference was found between the perceptions of school principals and teachers regarding leadership roles. No significant difference was found between the perceptions of male and female principals regarding leadership roles. It was recommended that pre and in-service trainings, seminars and workshops could be worth mention strategies to enhance the leadership and managerial skills of the secondary school principals to act as motivator, negotiator, consultant, knowledge distributor, strategic planner, evaluator and sociable.

**Keywords:** School Principal, Leadership Roles, Gender, leadership Skills

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### I. INTRODUCTION

Efficient principals are the central agents of change in the education system for improving school performance. Secondary education is the most crucial and important stage in students lives and this is the stage where desirable skills, attitudes and thinking are promoted among the students. An effective and efficient principal is an important and precondition for bringing positive change in the behavior of the students. Today school principal is much more responsible than the past to run the school effectively. Indeed a principal's leadership qualities set the tone for the working environment of the school, professionalism attitude among the teachers and supporting staff, boosting the teachers and students morale, bring up to date changing in the curriculum, maintain good relationships among staff and students and provide a congenial environment for teaching-learning process in the school (Shakir, 2013). Due to this changing role, Leithwood, Harris & Hopkins (2019:06) rightly made a popular claim about school leadership as "School Leadership is second only to classroom teaching as an influence on pupil learning". Leadership plays an important role in school success. Earth (1999) declared that leadership is the key to a good school and further stated that if you are in search of good school then you should search the good leaders first, because good school are due to good leadership.

In the last thirty years school leadership have been extensively investigated as it is considered as one of the important factor which affect the teaching-learning process and student' achievement in the school (Day, Gu & Sammons, 2016; Dhuey & Smith, 2014; Heck & Hallinger, 2014; Mulford, 2008). Additionally, Hallinger's (2010) review of empirical research on school leadership inferred that leaders can have indirect or mediated positive effects on student achievement by building a collaborative organizational learning culture, and helping to develop the leadership capacities of staff and community. These stakeholders such as parents and teachers can then assist with the creation of a positive school climate that promotes teaching and learning, and consequently student's achievement.

The school principal's job is very complex and multifarious. Principal has to perform many tasks and responsibilities. In this context Campbell and Williamson (1991) has given a brief summary of the roles and responsibilities performed by school principals. They stated that secondary school principals have

multitasked responsibilities including coordinating different academic and non-academic programmes at school; providing a sound educational curriculum; boosting teachers' morale; maintain school discipline; ensuring high academic achievement of students; maintain a positive learning environment at school; evaluating both teachers and students performance; providing an authentic leadership; and have to establish a strong relationship with community. During this, they face conflicts and confrontations which they need to solve skillfully. Now-a-days, school principals feel much pressure both from within the school and outside the school from community because of continuous rapidly changes in policies from government side, increasing intensity of political interference, demand for increased academic performance from the parents, government officials and community. They consider their selves more accountable than ever before. Therefore, they will have to play multi roles and fulfill their responsibilities more effectively as compare to before to ensure the maximum achievement of the students. If school principals become successful to provide a congenial environment and educational climate at their schools, then he would be successful to ensure the greater achievement of students.

Ghavifekr and Ibrahim (2014) stated that school principals in Pakistan are facing great problems in performing leadership role effectively. One of the important tasks of school leadership is to improve the performance of the subordinates. This challenge is central to the school leadership, because it influences the employees' beliefs, knowledge, skills, values and motivations and the working environment (Mendels & Mitgang, 2013). So, the school leadership has to care of all these aspects which are responsible to increase the teachers' performance. Similarly, Yukl (2012) suggested that leader should motivate his colleagues for the achievement of shared purposes of the organization, because shared purposes act as stimulant for one's work. He believed that by fostering shared vision and common goals, the employees will work hard for achieving these. Further, he suggested that in this the leader may be able to motivate and inspire the employees, clarify the roles and responsibilities to the employees, and plan and organize the activities to achieve the organizational goals. The other qualities of the employees which need to be focused include building employees understanding and polishing their capacities through organizing training, so that they may be able to contribute to the organization. This may be possible if the school leader provide continuous support, act as mentor, give rewards and recognize employees' efforts individually and in gathering (Gray, 2002). It is imperative for the school leadership to redesign the culture of the school by initiating and implementing new ways of communication and adapting transformational leadership style as it will help ensure the establishment of productive working conditions for the teachers (Foster & St Hillarie, 2004; Ross & Glaze, 2005). Khalil, Iqbal and Khan (2016) concluded that transactional leadership style is the most popular and emerging leadership style among the secondary school administrators as compared to transformational and laissez fair leadership styles. One of the successful leadership practices in the school is formulating highly accountable policy for the employees as well as for the students (Day & Leithwood, 2007). School leaders need to look after the school's infrastructure, provide staff to different teaching activities, constantly monitor school academic and non academic activities, and protect staff from distraction from their work (Dukem, 2004). Yukl (2012) believed that monitoring is the key characteristics of the successful leadership behaviour. School leadership should take care of teaching learning environment in the school (23). Leithwood *et al.*, (2008) claimed that successful leaders "improve teaching and learning indirectly and most powerfully through their influence on staff motivation, commitment and working conditions." (p. 33). The school principals must delegate authority and responsibilities among the staff to ensure their active participation in decision making process and adopt the democratic leadership style (Spillance, 2006, Ensley, Hmieleski, & Pearce, 2006). One of the most important characteristics of effective school leaders are to work effectively in hardy and tough situation (Zaccaro, Kemp, & Bader, 2004). Physical and mental traits also are an edge to successful leaders in school. They prove themselves to be an effective leader when they work in a stressful situation (Shakir, 2013). Great leaders learn from their failure as well as benefited from the experiences of others (Jacobson, Johnson, Ylimaki, & Giles, 2005). Ng and Szeto (2016) recommended professional development program for newly appointed school principals, so that they can be equipped with administrative skills, like human resources management, handling effectively underperforming teachers, financial, having knowledge about school management law, provide instructional leadership and effectively implementing curriculum. In this way they may be able to perform their leadership role effectively. Adams and Muthiah (2020) found that school principals face three types of problems and challenges related to personal, school context and stakeholders. Personal challenges include lack of knowledge and skills related to leadership, school context consisted of lack of trained staff and insufficient facilities and resources and stakeholders challenges consisted of negative attitude of parents and sufficient interference of ministry and political personnel. They concluded that school principals face internal as well as external challenges in performing their leadership roles effectively. To overcome both internal and external challenges, school principals should equipped there selves with personal and professional administrative skills to handle these challenges effectively.

Many researchers believed that there is strong relationship between school leadership and school effectiveness. If the leader play active role in school, the teaching learning will occur effectively. School leadership is actually a process of influencing the subordinates'behaviourtowards the achievement of common goals (Adeyemi&Bolarinwa, 2013). The common goal in school is ensuring the maximum leaning of students through effective teaching in a congenial environment. The performance of leadership role has strong relationship with students' learning and teachers' performance. To the researcher best knowledge, no research study has been carried out in Dir Lower district to examine the effectiveness of leadership roles performed by school principals and how leadership roles are interpreted by principals and teachers. To fill this gap, the researcher decided to assess the leadership roles of secondary school principals in district Dir Lower.

### Objectives of the study

The present study has two following objectives:

1. To analyze the difference between the perceptions of school principals and teachers regarding leadership roles.
2. To find out the difference between the perceptions of male and female principals regarding leadership roles.

### Hypotheses of the Study

Following hypotheses were formulated in order to achieve the aforementioned objectives.

1. There is no statistical significant difference between the perceptions of school principals and teachers regarding leadership roles.
2. There is no statistical significant difference between the perceptions of male and female principals regarding leadership roles.

## II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study was based on quantitative (descriptive survey) research design. The population of the study consisted of all the government secondary school principals including both male and female (77+51= 128) in district Dir Lower affiliated with Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE) in the session 2018-19. A sample of 50 school principals and 200 school teachers was selected from Government secondary schools of district Dir Lower. Through purposive sampling technique 50 school principals were selected in the sample from five tehsils of district Dir Lower. Out of total teachers of the sampled school, five teachers were selected from each sampled school through convenient sampling technique. The researchers developed a five point rating scale ranging from "always does so" to "never do so". The scale has 61 items and eleven dimensions including consultant, negotiator, motivator, sharing of knowledge, stability, adaptability, strategic planner, disciplinarian, manager, sociable and instructor. The researchers distributed the questionnaires by their selves, explained the purpose of the research and requested the school principals and teachers to fill the questionnaire. Some respondents filled the questionnaires on the spot and some promised to fill it later on at their homes and will send it to the researchers' address. Finally, the researcher obtained a total of 240 filled questionnaires which were used for data analysis. The researcher analyzed the data by using different descriptive and inferential statistics tests through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 22. The findings of the study are discussed as under:

*Table 01: Differences in perceptions of school principals and teachers regarding leadership roles*

Research Variable	PrinPrincipals(n = 48) = Teachers (n = 192)				t	p Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Leadership Roles	3.57	.590	3.50	.529	1.099	.04

Notes:  $p < 0.05$ ;  $df = 238$

The above table depicts the differences between the perceptions of school principals and teachers regarding leadership roles. As the value of  $p < 0.05$ , was found statistically significant at .05 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis "there is no statistical significant difference between the perceptions of school principals and teachers regarding leadership roles" was rejected and the alternate hypothesis "there is statistical significant difference between the perceptions of school principals and teachers regarding leadership roles" was accepted.

*Table 02: Differences in perceptions of school principals and teachers regarding leadership roles*

<i>Research Variable</i>	<i>Male Principals (n = 28)</i>		<i>Female Principals (n = 20)</i>		<i>t</i>	<i>p Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Leadership Roles	3.75	.754	3.63	.728	1.338	.22

Notes:  $p > 0.05$ ;  $df = 46$

The above table reveals the differences between the perceptions of male and female principals regarding leadership roles. As the value of  $p > 0.05$ , was found statistically non significant at .05 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis “there is no significant difference between the perceptions of male and female principals regarding leadership roles” was accepted.

### III. DISCUSSION

This study has found significant difference between the perceptions of school principals and school teachers regarding performing different roles in the school. Principals believed that they perform different roles in the school efficiently and effectively as a leader, although, school teachers were disagreed about the performance of leadership roles and responsibilities by the principals. They perceived that school principals did not perform these leadership responsibilities as much efficiently as they were supposed to. It was found that both male and female school principals perceived that they performed leadership roles and responsibilities up to the mark.

The study results show significant difference between the perceptions of school principals and teachers regarding leadership roles. This difference may be due to expected set of behaviour. School principals may look and understand leadership roles differently while teachers look and understand leadership in their own context. Additionally, no pre-service training programme has been arranged by the government for the newly appointed school principals. They have just observed their own principals and run the school on trial and error basis. They may not be too much visionary and appointed on seniority basis, that's why their school teachers have different opinions about their leadership roles. The results of this study are consonance with the findings of many previous researches (Shakir, 2013; Khan, 2012). The results of some studies are contradictory to the findings of this study. Principals who fulfilled their responsibilities honestly have greater job satisfaction, enhanced performance, holds positive attitude towards job, experienced less stress, feel healthy, being hardy at workplace and experienced increase work commitment. On contrary, principals who did not fulfill their assigned duties and responsibilities feel stress, dissatisfaction with job and experienced low level of performance. Principals through their exemplary behaviour can change the culture of the school. Tingle, Corrales and Peters (2017) suggested that school leaders should be trained in the areas of instructional leadership, strategic operations, human capital, executive leadership and school culture. In this way they may be able to play leadership role effectively. Gentilucci, Denti, and Guaglianone (2013) mentioned that principals need to cope with stress, manage their time effectively and efficiently, create positive working relationships and desiring for additional mentorship and support. They stated that in spite receiving some sort of training or having some prior administrative experience, they often lack the skills, knowledge and dispositions necessary to meet demanding challenges due to the multifaceted roles. They also suggest that principals should be trained in both soft and hard skills. Soft skills include active listening and building trustworthy relationships with others, while hard skills include dealing with finance, rules and regulations and programme evaluation.

The study found no significant difference between the perceptions of male and female school principals regarding leadership roles. The reason for the insignificant difference between the perceptions of male and female principals regarding leadership roles may be due to their level of job satisfaction, improved commitment to duties and responsibilities, being hardiness at workplace shown by both the male and female school principals (Shakir, 2013).

### IV. CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of findings, following conclusions can be drawn;

1. It was concluded that secondary school principals believed that they perform leadership roles effectively and efficiently. They performed the roles as consultant, negotiator, motivator, sharing of knowledge, stability, adaptability, strategic planner, disciplinarian, manager, sociable and instructor at the school, although teachers did not agree with their perceptions. Teachers believed that school principals did not perform their leadership roles effectively.

2. There was no significant difference between the perceptions of male and female school principals. Both the genders believed that they perform leadership roles up to the mark. Gender has no significant effect on performing leadership roles of secondary school principals.

## V. RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study led to a number of recommendations related to school principals, teachers, policy makers and to the Ministry. It is recommended that continuous leadership development programmes for school principals to enhance their knowledge, skills, understanding and capacity may be a worthwhile strategy to support and build trustworthy relationship with their staff members. In this way they can become the agent of change. Thus government should invest in training and development programmes of school leaders to increase the academic achievement of students and to meet the changing role of leaders in school. The training may be given in the area of understanding the curriculum, building relationships both inside and outside the school, increasing operational and management skills, involving staff, parents and community members in decision making process and increasing the academic success of the students. These inconsistent and contradictory findings indicated that there is a need of in depth studies to clarify the role of gender on the effectiveness of school principals.

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