Interplay Of Students’ Academic Achievement And Leadership Styles Of College Leaders

Rabeea Maryam¹, Shaista Ejaz², Ijaz Ahamd Tatlah³

¹M.Phil. Scholar, University of Education, Lahore.
²Ph.D. Scholar, Fatima Jinnah Women University, The Mall, Rawalpindi.
³Associate Professor, University of Education, Lahore.

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to find the effects of Principals’ leadership style on Students’ Academic Achievement at higher secondary level. The present study also compares the autocratic leadership style and democratic leadership style of college principals. Moreover, this study aimed to find the correlation of leadership style towards students’ academic achievement. This study falls in positivist paradigm and accordingly it is a quantitative approach. The sample comprised on thirty principals and students from thirty colleges, one thousand four hundred twenty-eight students that are selected from all the three tehsils of the selected district. From selected sample, data was collected through the research tool. The T-P leadership questionnaire was administered to collect data from the principals, which was comprised of thirty-five items. Students’ academic achievement was calculated through 12th grade students’ marks obtained in Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education annual examination 2021. Statistical analysis was run and Pearson correlation coefficient applied to find out the correlation between principals’ leadership style and students’ academic achievement. Descriptive statistics was used to measure the prevailing leadership style of principals. Furthermore, t test was applied to compare the differences among the leadership styles of principals. Results show that there is significant correlation between the leadership style of principals and students’ academic achievement. While Autocratic leadership style used by principals had a significant correlation whereas, democratic leadership style of principal had a little correlation with students’ academic achievement at higher secondary level. Prevailing leadership style of principals was also analyzed. Autocratic leadership style is mostly dominating in the principals’ leadership behavior. Democratic leadership style is also been used at higher secondary level to get the success in students’ academic achievement. Moreover, there is significant difference between the autocratic leadership style of principal and the democratic style of leadership on students’ academic achievement. Both the styles had their own respective effects on students’ academic achievement.
Keywords: leadership, Styles, Autocratic, Democratic, Students’ achievement.

Background of the Study

Education is acknowledged for generating social revolution in addition to national growth. In order for a country to be socially and economically developed they require to encompass a skilled and educated people. Prevalent political, socio-cultural, and fiscal shifts in the environment in which school are situated, along with massive changes in the education system as whole, including the manner institutions are tended, necessitate the development of well-prepared educational leaders to confront the needs of the 21st century (Northouse, 2010) Research has repeatedly emphasized and highlighted the pivotal role of school principals in boosting the effectiveness of institutions, teachers, and pupils (Al-Omari, 2008; Dimmock et al., 2003).

According to Alageheban (1997), the Principal's leadership style has a significant effect on the effectiveness and efficiency of staff performance. The research reinforces the importance of leadership style of principles in the educational institutions for improved and efficient functioning of the college, personnel, as well as pupils (Al-Omari, 2008; Dimmock et.al., 2003). Leadership's role in the field of education is widely recognised, although at times it appears to become the sole choice which dictates ultimate success or failure of any academic institution, despite the level of institution (Simkins, 2005).

Leader is characterized as someone who has the job for persuading one or even more people while leading individuals towards accomplishing a certain goal. By doing so, the leaders need to be aware of all of his subordinates’ strengths also make recommendations for improvement (Winston & Patterson, 2006). To be more effective, a leader should be able to modify his or her leadership style dependent on the scenario, concentrate on assisting subordinates, and earn their trust and respect (Hall, 2007). According to the studies, the fundamental ingredients for a leading organisation include appropriate leadership style with expertise (Turner & Muller, 2005). Following are the five primary leadership functions (DiGirolamo, 2010); to make a goal and stick to it, build a greater team, maintain group cohesiveness, make a consistent connection with others around you to ensure they are familiar with the information required, and engage staff to reduce burnout.

Leadership is more than just a metaphor refers to a person who seems to have dynamic with forceful command on their people, has constructed an efficient emperor, and has transformed the direction of a society. All of this speaks to the significance of leadership in an educational establishment (Yukl, 2002).

This is considered that a leader not only makes a difference, but he also helps people grasp what his intentions are. One of the most essential factors influencing the success or failure of any institution is leadership (Bass, 1990). Overall performance of an organization is determined by the leader, administrator, or principal of an enterprise, including an organization, college, or university. The effect leadership at the organization is remarkable in order to provide trouble-free and maximum achievement.
The leader establishes the institute's objectives as well as the money required to achieve them. As a result, governance in the institution has been viewed as a stimulant in which one person who is the leader pushes others toward the fulfilment of defined institute goals.

Although leadership is seen to be particularly important for improving students’ learning effectiveness, it really has increasingly become the focus of scholars, strategists, even educational establishments, to include courses in leadership, emerging across the globe. Several scholars define leadership like a trait or function, whereas others approach it from a contextual perspective (Northouse, 2010).

Armstrong (2004) describes leadership, which of the authority, prestige, and judicial oversight obtained through a person to successfully reform the institution through the guidance of the most significant corporate resource, intellectual capital, culminating towards the attainment of the stated function. The principal’s successful leadership role will lead to the attainment of the institution's aims and goals. There is also an adage that states, "Get the right man in the leadership, and your problem will be solved."

To successfully lead the schools of the twenty-first century and meet student achievement challenges, administrators must have strong leadership skills. The effect of leadership style on school progress has received a lot of attention in recent educational reform (Harris, 2005).

Leithwood and his colleagues explored successful principal behaviour in the context of five transactional and transformational leadership models. They believe that the 'impact of principals on teachers' coordination has a benefit on directors' and instructors' actions related to college performance (Leithwood et al., 2004).

Authoritarian leaders are traditional as well as absolutist in temperament. The authoritarian leaders demand their staff members to function for them. Historically, authoritarian leaders maintain decision-making powers (Obiwuru et al., 2011). Autocratic dictators compel their people to carry out services and plans in a specific way.

Tannenbanum & Schmidt (2012) interpret democratic leadership that the decision-making is localized and distributed among all workers. The democratic leadership culture has a profound propensity for poor implementation and decision-making. Moreover, democratic leadership believed to push people to accomplish greater by valuing their thoughts and ideas.

Educational attainment of pupils seems to be an ongoing battle for teachers and administrators. A survey of the prevailing research finds thorough investigation on particular leadership actions and styles of leadership that influence educational success; it perfectly indicates that perhaps the principal’s guidance contributes.

Every leadership has an effect on students’ academic achievement, the role of principal may be indirect as he/she is not directly teaching the students but holds an
important position as he/she is responsible of providing quality education with leads students success or failure.

For the sake of this study, leadership is indeed defined as a method and action by which college administrators engage fellow school administrators in terms of achieving the institution's collective interests, which have been largely represented in learners' educational excellence. Furthermore, the current study delves into the previous studies to investigate and examine the effectiveness of a principal's style of leadership on pupils' student achievement at the higher secondary level within Pakistan. Study's objectives are to explore prevailing leadership styles (i.e. autocratic & democratic) among principals, and up to what extend the leadership style (i.e. autocratic & democratic) of principal effects the students’ academic achievement. Moreover, compare the leadership styles (i.e. autocratic & democratic) used by head teachers and their effects on students’ academic achievement.

Empirical Studies Reviewed: Leadership and Students’ Academic Performance

The concept 'academic performance' has already been defined as either an academic's scholastic position at any particular time. It alludes to a person's or female's ability to demonstrate his or her cognitive talents. This scholarly status should be described as the scores obtained in a course or groupings of articles read (Daniels & Schouten, 1970).

Animola (1990) remarked on pupils’ scholarly stance, arguing that actual quality is an amount of outcome and also that the significant outcomes in education are described in aspects of classroom instruction, that really is, modifications in sentient understanding, proficiencies, and perceptions as a consequence of one's personal experience inside the institution's mechanism. Consequently, Daniels & Schouten (1970) stressed usefulness of marks in tests in determining academic attainment and stated that scores might function as prognostic indicators along with evaluative measurements. Results from AI-Shorayye (1995) & Adeyemi (1998) supported the statement.

As a result, student achievement is generally measured using a variety of statistical metrics. STAN (1992) agreed with all of this reasoning and stated that success is the extent of accomplishment of a characteristic in an assessment, that really is, how such a person is able to illustrate his or her skills inside an evaluation. Achievement has long been seen as a proxy for scholastic attainment (Adeyemi, 2006).

The above fact supports Obemeata's (1992) claim of student achievement in board exams in many institutions has already been low due to a lack of professors, limited faculty financing, and a humongous secondary school curricula. In accordance of these results, Animola (1990) said that the poor actual effectiveness of university graduates is already a rising problem for educationists and investors in the education system.

Omotoso (1992) blames the roots of declining aggregate student achievement in schools to the state's poor pecuniary functionality, which has resulted in deficient educational financing. This circumstance has placed a greater load on Professional Learning
communities, which are responsible for paying the preponderance of capital investments in institutions. The Government implemented the Financial Sector adjustment Programme, which resulted in a rise in the value of manuals and supplies in Country.

As a result of the increased cost of living, walking supplies to schools are sometimes delayed and badly inadequate (Ige, 2001). Ibukun (1990) agreed and stated that deleterious differentiated instruction, a shortage of resources, and poor infrastructure frequently culminate in poor academic performance. As a consequence, he said that the schooling institution in country is under critical scrutiny, as several people believe that the intellectual client's popularity is declining in the country.

Due to one's various job functions cohesively, school heads play a significant role in deciding the instructional current effectiveness in higher secondary schools, to regulate their discipline and their instructors establishing to a substantial measure the degree of instructors' input and pupils' instructional accomplishment (Budohi, 2014).

Numerous institutions have faltered in staff management due to several managerial issues relating to proper estimation, social relationships, regulation, classroom instruction, and diversity & inclusion expertise, all of them had an effects on learners' academic success. Several studies have found that kids' educational success is heavily linked to contextual circumstances and non-public aspects of the pupils Okumbe (1998).

Individual characteristics of pupils include intellect, devotion, and ambitions. External factors encompass the headmaster's style of leadership, the number and quality of instructors, as well as the learning supplies Okumbe (1998) & Olaniyan (1999).

Animola (1990) commented on the inefficiency of body functions in institutions, stating that there have been overloaded classrooms halls, particularly in metropolitan institutions, and a lack of clinical laboratories across numerous rural educational institutions, preventing beneficial instructing and obtaining understanding of the concepts. This circumstance has a negative impact on pupils' ultimate scholastic progress of the pupils.

In this regard, Adeyemi (1998) commissioned a survey on institution and teacher factors relating with pupils' academic achievement in higher secondary schools and discovered revealed pupils' achievement in academics is the key issue of the higher secondary school because curriculum had been poor.

Several investigators have demonstrated consistent discoveries (Aghenta, 2000; Ige, 2001). Furthermore, it should be noted that the grading system in the higher secondary school’s degree assessments was formerly such that: Number 1 through Protonation are merit rating categories. As a result, in addition to be admitted to higher education institutions, undergraduate pupils must have good scores in five topics, including English and Maths (WAEC, 2010).

Inability to grasp respective executive positions and a shortage of sufficient initiation on education department are arguably the most often mentioned reasons why several
administrators fail to increase student lesson productivity and targets. Appropriate leadership approach is fundamentally a strategy that administrators must deploy to increase instructors' job effectiveness and, as a result, improve university students' diminishing intellectual overall effectiveness for either internal or external assessments.

**Methodology**

In this study, inferences regarding variable relationships were established without the intervening of variables of the study. Essentially, this form of study is based on a statistical and analytic analysis of direct and indirect factors, with independent variables explored in surveys to seek probable and reasonable relationships and effects which independent variables have on dependent variables. Therefore, in this form of research, independent variables are not altered and have already transpired, and are sometimes referred to as attribute variables. Furthermore, this is less expensive and time intensive since developing an induced link is more assumed than exploratory studies, in which the researcher manipulates different factors (Silva, 2010).

The target population included all upper secondary school principals and 12th grade students in Pakistan's District Gujrat. The available population also included male and female public and private higher secondary school principals, as well as students from the Punjab region of Gujrat.

Pervasive literature on principal leadership styles and student academic achievement points to the following data gathering instruments:

1. T-P leadership questionnaire: An assessment of style
2. BISE Gujranwala, Annual Result
3. Students' Academic Achievement

Students' Academic Achievement at the Higher Secondary Level is defined as the marks earned by pupils in the annual examination held either by Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, which is based on yearly examinations for the 11th and 102th grades separately. As a consequence, the accomplishment results of students were derived from the yearly examination results of the Boards of Intermediate and Secondary Education Gujranwala held in 2021.

Cronbach's Alpha value of 47 items is 0.80

**Descriptive Statistics on the Variables Involved in the Study**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership styles</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

2386 http://www.webology.org
Table represents the descriptive statistics of all of the variables involved in the study at hand. Mean score value for autocratic principals was 82.20, while for democratic was 57.76. Mean score achieved by students in 12th grade examination in the Board of Intermediate & Secondary Education was 3.90. Mean score for Leadership style of principals as described by them was 139.96.

Pearson correlation coefficient was run between students’ academic achievement and principals’ leadership style.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Achievement of college</th>
<th>Overall Leadership Style</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Achievement of college</strong></td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>-.381*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>30</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Above table shows that Pearson Correlation Coefficient $r = .038$, is significant at $p < 0.05$.

Pearson correlation coefficient was run between students’ academic achievement and principals’ democratic leadership style.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Achievement of college</th>
<th>Democratic Leadership Style</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership style</strong></td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>- .334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Democratic Leadership Style

Pearson Correlation - .334
Sig. (2-tailed) .071
N 30

Table shows that Pearson Correlation Coefficient $r = -0.334$ and significant at 0.71

According to above table, there is little if any correlation between Students’ Academic Achievement and Principals Leadership Style. Thus, the hypothesis claiming, no significant relationship is therefore, rejected. Hence, little correlation between Students’ Academic Achievement and Democratic leadership style of principal negative relationship exists.

Pearson correlation coefficient was run between students’ academic achievement and principals' autocratic leadership style.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Achievement of college</th>
<th>Autocratic Leadership Style</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Achievement of college Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-.357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.053</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>N</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table shows that Pearson Correlation Coefficient $r = -0.357$ and significant at .055

According to Hinkle, Wiersma & Jurs (2003) scale for interpreting the Pearson Coefficient Correlation, Table above describes the levels of correlation. According to this table there is moderate positive relation between Students’ Academic Achievement and Principals Leadership Style. Thus, the hypothesis claiming, no significant relationship is therefore, rejected. Hence, moderate positive correlation between Students’ Academic Achievement and Autocratic leadership style of principal, exists.
Skewness and kurtosis of democratic leadership style

This histogram displays that the democratic leadership style of principal had the standard deviation of 6.15, mean of 57.77, and for skewness, if the value is greater than +1.0, the distribution is right skewed. If the value is less than -1.0, the distribution is left skewed. For Kurtosis, if the value is greater than +1.0, the distribution is leptokurtic. If the value is less than -1.0, the distribution is playkurtic. Democratic leadership is slightly skewed and playkurtic.

Skewness and kurtosis of overall leadership style

This histogram displays that the overall leadership style of principal had the standard deviation of 139.98, mean of 11.47, and for skewness, if the value is greater than +1.0, the distribution is right skewed. If the value is less than -1.0, the distribution is left skewed. For Kurtosis, if the value is greater than +1.0, the distribution is leptokurtic. If the value is less than -1.0, the distribution is playkurtic. Overall leadership style is normally skewed and normally kurtic.

Independent sample test, Levene’s test for equality of variance.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>T_Autocratic</strong></td>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>T_Democratic</strong></td>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to above table Levene’s test of inferential statistics used to assess the equality of variance for a variable calculated for two or more group. Autocratic and Democratic leadership style of principal had been assessed. Autocratic leadership style had the equal variance of .018 with the significance of .894. Democratic leadership style had the equal variance of 5.35 with the significance of 0.28.

**Conclusion**
The principals’ overall leadership style and students’ academic achievement has a moderate correlation among them. It elaborates the moderate positive effect of principals’ leadership style on students’ academic achievement.

The principals’ democratic leadership style had a little correlation between Students’ Academic Achievement at higher secondary level. It displays that at higher secondary level principal must have a more controlling effect on students’ so that there results could be more successful. The principals had moderate correlation between Students’ Academic Achievement and Principals’ Autocratic leadership style exists. The autocratic leadership style of principal had a positive effect on the students’ at higher secondary level.

Autocratic leadership style had prevailing in the principals’ leadership style that are been practiced towards the students of higher secondary level. It has found that principals’ who are opting this leadership style gets more results.

Democratic leadership style had slightly prevailing in the principals’ leadership style that are been practiced towards the students of higher secondary level. It has found that principals’ who are applying this leadership style slightly lack to get students achievement.

The overall leadership of principal had been greatly prevailing towards the students’ academic achievement at higher secondary level. It has been found that Principals’ leadership style had a great impact on students’ results. It has been found that there is significant difference between the autocratic leadership style of principal and the democratic style of leadership on students’ academic achievement at higher secondary level.
Discussion

The present study looked at the effects of principals' leadership styles on students' academic achievement at the higher secondary level, which is a novel approach in Pakistan. The researcher feels that the findings of this study will greatly enrich the evidence base knowledge.

Several researches had identified leadership as a critical factor in achieving adequate results in terms of students' educational progress. According to Barth (1986), the key duty of principal is either towards staff, for the maintenance the highest standards, oversee the academic curricula, and monitor learner progression, which leads to high student educational success.

In Pakistan, educational success is mostly evaluated by students' academic performance in their annual examinations that are conducted by their respective boards. The finding of the current study, which was done in Pakistan, a developing country, partially support the claim of earlier researchers like Hofstede (2001) and Nguni, & Sleegers (2006).

According to the research, Pakistani principals' Leadership style has a favourable correlation with students' Academic Achievement at the higher secondary level. This is corroborated by scholars such as Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2004).

The most important finding of this research is that every leadership style has its own effect on student’s academic achievement.

References


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