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A Comparative Study of Leadership Skills of Principals Working in Government and Private Secondary Schools

Iram* & Dr. Shalini Singh**

Ph.D. Research Scholar, Department of Education, CCS University, Meerut

Associate Professor, Department of Teacher Education V.M.L.G College, Ghaziabad

ABSTRACT

Leadership is one of the important factors that influence the operations, growth and educational climate of educational institutions. The principal, the head of the school in terms of its educational and administrative work, is required to offer guidance, to encourage teachers and students, to organize the action of the school and to foster the climate of learning. The present study is focused on leadership ability of the principals in government and private secondary school in Ghaziabad city. Leadership is studied as a multi-dimensional phenomenon which includes communication, honesty and integrity, decision making, vision and innovation, motivation, administration, cooperation and empathy, and stress management. It also explores the leadership competencies in relation to two variables, type of school and gender. From the review of the literature, it is observed that there are some dimensions of school functioning that are related to leadership effectiveness such as school effectiveness, teacher effectiveness, academic achievement, school climate and school professional development. From the literature reviewed, however, it is discovered that there is a need for systematic comparative study of leadership skills at both the government and private secondary schools as well as between male principals and female principals. The present study aims to do that by investigating the above mentioned elements of leadership in the case of secondary school principals of Ghaziabad.

Keywords: Leadership Skills, Principals, Secondary Schools, Government Schools, Private Schools, Gender.

INTRODUCTION:

For any organization to function well and grow, the factor of leadership is one of the vital aspects. Within the education context, leadership is especially relevant as the school principal is expected to not only ensure the school runs properly, but to foster a school environment that is conducive to teaching, learning and school development. The principal shall give teachers and all staff direction, plan and organize school functions, communicate with parents and other

interested parties, and help achieve school's academic objectives. The paper defines leadership to be a process of inspiring, motivating and influencing people to obtain shared objectives and specifies attributes like integrity, confidence, resilience, adaptability, creativity, cooperation, empathy, vision, motivation and stress management as significant characteristics of good leadership.

The literature reviewed in the paper identifies the role of the principal as one of defining and articulating school goals, monitoring teaching and learning, providing feedback, supporting professional development and making resources available. For instance, Lineburg's model consists of communicating goals, supervising instruction, promoting professional development, providing resources, and providing incentives, all of which are important aspects of principal leadership.

Leadership effectiveness therefore is a multi-dimensional phenomenon. For the purposes of the present study, there are eight aspects of Leadership Skills that are investigated: Communication, Honesty and Integrity, Decision Making, Vision, Innovation, Motivation, Administration, Cooperation and Empathy, and Stress Management.

The place of secondary education in the educational system is very significant and the role of the principal is more highlighted at secondary education. The paper highlights the importance of good educational leadership in enhancing school management & development. The results of a study of this type could be valuable to educational authorities, to inspecting officers and principals in developing their understanding of leadership roles and the aspects that need to be developed or trained.

The present study is in this context, so as to explore the leadership skills of the principals working in the secondary schools of government and private schools of Ghaziabad city. It also examines whether there are any variations in these skills by school type and gender.

The following points are given to emphasize the importance of the study:

The study results are key to many stakeholders in the education field. District education officers and inspecting authorities can use this information to gain a better understanding of the purpose. Furthermore, principals can benefit, as they have the opportunity to consider their interactions with parents, teachers, students, and staff in light of the supervisory role that they play in school development. School principals can utilize the results of the study to make qualitative changes that advocate for the school and school's student. Moreover, the results of the research made the teachers and authorities aware of the need for organizing training for teachers to build professional growth in the fraternity. The information can be utilized by the policy makers to improve the competence of school principals and by curriculum developers in planning learning activities in in-service training. Lastly, the study offers suggestions for future

research and continuous improvement in the field of educational leadership.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

Leadership Skills: Leadership skills are the strengths and abilities that individual demonstrate which help to oversee a process, guide an initiative and steer teachers towards the achievement of goals. Some of the important leadership qualities are:

- Communication: Effective articulation of ideas, vision and expectation.
- Strategic thinking: Planning and executing for goals.
- Decision-making: making informed, timely and decisive decisions.
- Problem Solving: Seeking innovative solutions to problems.
- Emotional Intelligence: Understands and manages his or her feelings and those of others.
- Delegation and letting others take responsibility (Empowerment).
- Collaboration: Developing and sustaining relationships.
- Adaptability: Adapting to new situations and priorities.
- Coaching and development: Developing/helping team members to learn and improve.
- Accountability: to be responsible for actions and results.
- Visionary thinking: Envisioning and shaping the future.
- Integrity – displaying ethical and moral values.

Principal: The head of a school or chief executive of the school. They have the general responsibility of managing the school's overall operations such as academic programs and curriculum, student affairs and welfare, teacher management and evaluation, and strategic planning and development.

Government Schools: Public schools or government schools are funded and run by the government. Typically, government schools are financed by taxes and government funding, and are subject to government regulations and curriculum standards. Government schools are also known as State schools, National schools, Municipal schools and District schools in many countries.

Private Schools: Independent Schools, or private schools are not operated by the government, nor are they reliant on government funding. Most of the time they are financed with the tuition that parents pay for their children, and also by donations, endowment, and other private sources.

Secondary Schools: Secondary schools are the schools that provide classes up to 12th grade in India. The primary goal of a secondary school is to give students the knowledge and

skills they need to go to college or enter the job market. Students receive a certificate/diploma upon completing secondary school that is accepted by universities and employers throughout the country.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Desale MK (2005) found that head teachers exhibited task-oriented, nurturing, and participative leadership styles, with the nurturing style being dominant and correlated with school effectiveness. Iqbal (2005) study found no difference in leadership style between public male and female heads, while private school male heads were more people-oriented and democratic compared to their female counterparts. Russel D Souza (2006) found no significant differences in leadership behaviour based on age, gender or experience. Ahari Karmeli (2007) found higher levels of leadership behaviour in female trainees and those from self-financed colleges also that there was no significant difference in leadership behaviour based on the type of institute. Riti (2010) found a strong relationship between school climate and teacher effectiveness, as well as between school climate and administrative behaviour, and administrative behaviour and teacher effectiveness. Soma Banerjee (2013) findings revealed a strong relationship between school performance and the managerial effectiveness of principals, with the latter being a key driver of the former. Bakare, Eb, & Oredein, AO (2021) concluded that though there are significant differences in the leadership styles adopted by the school principals, there is no one best leadership style, and recommended that principals of both school types should blend and adopt styles that best fit the situation at hand. Kumari, S. & Goel, R. (2024) revealed significant differences in the perception of Leadership styles between private and government school principles. Gupta, C. (2025) found that Private school principals make more participative and innovative decisions due to open climates, while government school principals are constrained by rigid bureaucratic climates.

It can be concluded from the perusal of the above studies that various leadership skills have significant impact on the principals working in secondary schools based on their age, gender and type of schools.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study has following objectives: -

1. To compare the various leadership skills of principals (both male and female) with respect to type of school (government and private).
2. To compare the various leadership skills of principals working in government secondary schools with respect to gender.
3. To compare the various leadership skills of principals working in private secondary schools with respect to gender.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

Following hypotheses were framed with respect to the objectives of the study.

1. **HO1** :There is no significant difference between the various leadership skills of principals (both male and female) with respect to type of school (government and private).
2. **HO2**:There is no significant difference between the various leadership skills of principals working in government and private secondary schools with respect to gender.

2.1: There is no significant difference between the various leadership skills of principals working in government secondary schools with respect to gender.

2.2: There is no significant difference between the various leadership skills of principals working in private secondary schools with respect to gender.

RESEARCH METHOD USED FOR THE STUDY

Descriptive Survey Method has been adopted in this study to statistically analyze the various leadership skills of principals working in government and private secondary school of Ghaziabad city.

POPULATION OF THE STUDY

All the secondary schools affiliated to various educational boards and of public and government sector in Ghaziabad has been taken. The list of schools collected from DIOS office shows that there are 240 schools in Ghaziabad district. These 240 schools are considered as a population for the present study.

SAMPLE USED FOR THE STUDY

Stratified random sampling technique is used in this study, to divide the Ghaziabad District into eight administrative divisions i.e. East, North-East, North, North-West, West, South-West, South and Central. Considering the nature and purpose of the study, the proportionate number of schools have been sampled using sampling technique. It was of a random and purposive nature. A total of 40 schools which included 20 government secondary schools and 20 private secondary schools from all the regions of Ghaziabad selected. There are 10 male and 10 female principals (5 from each government and private secondary schools) to balance the gender.

VARIABLES USED IN THIS STUDY

A. Dependent variable:

Leadership Skills (Communication, Honesty and Integrity, Decision Making, Vision Innovation, Motivation, Administration, Cooperation & Empathy, Stress Management).

B. Independent variables

Type of school: Government and Private

Gender: Male and Female

RESEARCH TOOL USED FOR THE STUDY

The standardized test used for the present study is “Teacher's Leadership Skills Test” (2000) developed by Dr. Sushma Talesara & Dr. Akhtar Bano. The final test was comprised of 26 various statements (both positive and negative). The scoring of the test for positive statements was 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 and for negative statements it was 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. The score varied according to the answer given in the test from 25 to 130.

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED FOR DATA ANALYSES:

Mean, standard deviation and t-test are used as statistical techniques for the analysis of data.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

● Testing Hypothesis 1

Table 1 Showing the comparison of various leadership skills of principals (both male and female) with respect to type of schools.

Leadership skills	Type of School	N	M	SD	DF	Calculated t-value	Level of Significance	
Various Leadership skills	Government	20	99.7	5.69	38	0.06	At 0.05 level	At 0.01 level
	Private	20	105.4	11.97			1.686 *not significant	2.429 *not significant

Result and Discussion: Table 1 shows that mean score of various leadership skills of principals of private school is 105.4 followed by the principals of government schools 99.7, the obtained standard deviation is 11.97 and 5.69 respectively with their calculated T value 0.06, whereas the tabulated critical t-ratio is 1.686 at 0.05 level of significance and 2.429 at 0.01 level of significance for degree of freedom 38.

As the calculated t-value is found to be lesser than the tabulated critical t-ratio at both 0.05 and 0.01 levels of significance. Therefore, there is no significant difference found between the various leadership skills of principals (both male and female) with respect to type of school. Hence the null hypothesis HO-1 is accepted.

● Testing Hypothesis 2

Table 2 Showing the comparison of various leadership skills of government school principals with respect to gender.

Leadership skills	Gender	N	M	SD	DF	Calculated T value	Level of Significance	
Various Leadership skills	Male Principals of Government School	10	99.9	6.83	18	0.31	At 0.05 level	At 0.01 level
	Female Principals of Government School	10	99.5	4.64			2.10 *not significant	2.88 *not significant

Result and Discussion: Table 2 shows that the mean score of male principals of government School is 99.9 followed by female principals of government schools 99.5, the obtained standard deviation is 6.83 and 4.64 respectively with their t-value 0.31, whereas the tabulated critical t-ratio is 2.10 at 0.05 level of significance and 2.88 at 0.01 level of significance for degree of freedom 18.

As the calculated t-value is found to be lesser than the tabulated critical t-ratio at both 0.05 and 0.01 levels of significance. Therefore, there is no significant difference found between the various leadership skills of male and female principals of government schools. Hence the null hypothesis HO-2.1 is accepted.

- **Testing Hypothesis 3**

Table 3 -Showing the comparison of various leadership skills of private school principals with respect to gender.

Leadership skills	Gender	N	M	SD	DF	Calculated T value	Level of Significance	
Various Leadership skills	Male Principals of Private School	10	96.3	8.70	18	1.37	2.10 *not significant	2.88 *not significant
	Female Principals of Private School	10	114.5	6.55				

Result and Discussion: Table 3 shows that the mean score of female principals of private School is 114.5 followed by male principals of private schools 96.3, the obtained standard deviation is 6.55 and 8.70 respectively with their t-value 1.37, whereas the tabulated critical t-ratio is 2.10 at 0.05 level of significance and 2.88 at 0.01 level of significance for degree of freedom 18.

As the calculated t-value is found to be lesser than the tabulated critical t-ratio at both 0.05 and 0.01 levels of significance. Therefore, there is no significant difference found between the various leadership skills of male and female principals of private schools. Hence the null hypothesis HO-2.2 is accepted.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- The dependant variable i.e. various leadership skills of principals (both male and female) shows no significant difference with respect to type of school .
- The principals working in government secondary schools shows no significant difference in their leadership skills with respect to gender.
- The principals working in private secondary schools shows no significant difference in their leadership skills with respect to gender.

CONCLUSION :

In the present study, it was revealed that there was no significant effect of type of school on the leadership skills of principals. Private school principals show no higher leadership skills than government school principals. Desale M K and Soma Banarjee revealed a strong relationship between school performance and the managerial effectiveness of principals, with the latter being a key driver of the former. Also the recent studies by Kumari S & Goyal R and Gupta C Clearly indicate that the type of school plays a decisive role in shaping leadership styles.

Whereas Ahari Karmeli (2007) study showed no effect of type of school on the leadership of school principals which was supportive to the results of the present study. In this study gender exhibited no significant impact on various leadership skills and its components among male and female principals. Same result was supported by the results of the study conducted by Russel D Souza (2006) and Iqbal (2005) which showed no effect of gender on the leadership skills.

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