

The impact of school heads' demographic characteristics on their leadership styles

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ABSTRACT

The concept of leadership is as old as the emergence of the universe. The leadership role of school heads is to promote the vision of intellectual understanding by motivating the employees for the progress and benefit of the organization. The current study aims at exploring the impact of school heads' demographic characteristics on their leadership styles. Sixty-six school heads were selected randomly from secondary schools in district Faisalabad and the instrument used for data collection was Leadership Styles Survey [LSS]. The results revealed a non-significant distinction for male and female heads for autocratic, democratic, Islamic Model, and laissez-faire styles of leadership. Age was found to create significant effect on democratic, Islamic Model, and laissez-faire styles of leadership but an autocratic style of leadership had a non-significant effect. A significant impact of age on headteachers' leadership styles for the democratic leadership style for Islamic Model and laissez-faire styles leadership was recorded while there was a significant effect of age on headteachers' autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire styles of leadership. There was a significant effect of experience on headteachers' democratic and for laissez-faire style. It is recommended to improve the leadership style of the heads with updated training and technology.

Keywords: Leadership, autocratic, Islamic model, democratic style

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INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY

The concept of leadership is as old as the emergence of the universe. The leadership role of school heads is to promote the vision of intellectual understanding by motivating the employees for the progress and benefit of organization. Leaders have vision and courage to inculcate the vision to their subordinates. The greatest leader of the world is our beloved Prophet Muhammad PBUH. The sayings of Almighty Allah SWT is, "And We have sent you as the mercy for all mankind". The Islamic Model of Leadership get direct enlightenment from the Holy Quran and Sunnah of the Prophet SAW. The role of educational leadership is to improve schools' performance, upgrade of self-management, and to aware themselves for market alignment (Elliot, 1992; Silins, 1994). There are prominent leadership styles. Among them most used leadership styles are Islamic Model, democratic, autocratic and laissez-faire. The autocratic leaders had the authority in their hands and depend on their administrative powers (Owens, 2004). The democratic leaders delegate power and authority to their subordinates and encourage their participation while making the decision (Daft, 2005). A group of employees under autocratic leader had the fear to fire and work for the time being so that they get rid of the leader. The performance of group led by democratic leader was worthwhile. In the absence of leader, the followers performed better by their own (White & Lippitt, 1960). The Islamic Model of leadership is the best leadership as the leader has an innate God Fearing attitude and he/she cooperates his/her subordinates to please Allah Almighty. The laissez-faire is free leadership style and had the philosophy as live and let live (Khanka, 2007; Mullins, 1999; Omolayo, 2004).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Various styles of leadership are being used in today world with prime features in different nations and countries. Some styles are particular to specific nations and religions. Some are totally used and in some circumstances few features are being used by the leaders in high ratio and some in low ratio. The main aim of using leadership styles is only to improve the performance of an institute. Different researchers have highlighted many leadership styles based upon the specific circumstance and situations. Different types of leadership styles and their significance is being presented in the next paragraphs briefly. The studies showed that majority of teachers did not match their instructional styles with preferred learning styles (Khalid, Hashmi, & Iqbal, 2020).

Islamic Model of Leadership Style

The Islamic model of leadership styles is derived from Quran and Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Here are some salient features of this model for the success of leaders in the world while making the decisions and the world

hereafter.

Involvement in decision-making

The mandatory responsibility of the head to invite subordinates in decision making. It is also evident from the Quran verses as:

وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ
Allah
SWT

says in Quran, and seek consultation from them in the assignment. And after you have finalized decision, then trust in Allah (Al-Baqrah, verse-159).

The joint cooperation and mutual discussion with subordinates is of vital importance to complete a task to work effectively in organizations (Okumbe, 1998). It is normally a characteristic of sharing decision making style as well as an example of Islamic leadership styles.

Democratic Leadership Style

According to Chandan (1987), the democratic leadership styles are used where subordinates are trusted and consulted in matters of routine tasks. Leaders as teachers play a significant role in improving the intellectual aspect of state by promoting vision and knowledge sharing among students with motivation of teachers in teaching profession. The head teachers who were working out stations used democratic leadership style that has an impact on students' performance (Iqbal, Shah, & Ali, 2020). The researchers have examined greater impact on the performance of learners by utilizing proper leadership styles with teachers' cooperation especially in democratic leadership (Bolam, et al., 1993; Silins & Harvey, 1999). The affect in an organization is measured directly with students' performance (Cheng, 2002; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2002; Starrett, 1993).

Goleman (2000) introduced the idea of democratic leadership that is supported through consensus and collaboration. This leadership philosophy brings subordinates and leaders together in sharing the ideas and enhanced communication selecting the best and effective approach to organization. Goleman hypothesized that this notion will create an atmosphere where employees are appreciated, committed and achieve organizational goals. Goleman discovered six leadership styles. They were commanding, affiliative, visionary, pacesetter, democratic and coaching (Goleman, 2000). The examples of Nelson Mandela, Jung Kim, and Walesa are considered as exemplary democratic leaders (Choi,

2007).

Male heads and female heads were different in demonstrating leadership styles. The teachers have shown more satisfaction when they work under democratic leadership style than working under an autocratic style (Iqbal, 2011). Female teachers were more satisfied under democratic style of leadership (Iqbal, 2011).

Autocratic Style of Leadership

This style is largely seen and practiced in Asian and mostly in developing countries like Pakistan. In this style, the leader did not get any consultation from his subordinates and did not like any influence and any involvement while making a decision. The performance of the organization is solely depending on the vision and strategy of the leader which sometimes lead to wrong decisions.

Laissez Faire Style of Leadership

The laissez faire leadership style is the outcome of IOWA Leadership Studies started by Lippit and White with the headship of Lewin during 1930s. The laissez faire style give complete autonomy to workers in the group. The leader did not provide any leadership. The laissez faire strategy of leadership produces a great aggressiveness among group members (Sahni, 2004). This style of leadership also called a free rein style as suggested by Khanka (2007). This style is opposite to autocratic leadership style. The leader did not indulge in subordinates' work and let them to decide. The leaders fully assign the power to decide to employees. Workers are knowledgeable and competent to an extent. Organizational duties and goals are delivered to employees. This style produces chaos and maladministration in making the decisions (Khanka, 2007). The employees are reluctant to complete the task. They are self-confident, committed, and knowledgeable but are needed to encourage.

Objectives of the Study

The study planned to achieve the objectives as under:

1. To explore the distinction in the use of leadership styles of school heads.
2. To examine the impact of age in the use of styles of leadership by head teachers.
3. To trace out the impact of qualification in the use of styles of leadership by head teachers.
4. To fine out the impact of experience in the use of styles of leadership by head teachers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

All the secondary school heads and respective working in public sector secondary schools in Faisalabad distt. were population of study. Sixty-six school heads were selected randomly among 300 secondary schools in district Faisalabad. They were further categorized in thirty male heads and 36 female heads. The seventeen heads had MA M. Ed. or MA Education degrees, sixteen school heads had MSc M. Ed. qualification. There were twenty-nine heads had MPhil qualification and Four heads were PhD degree holder. Seventeen heads had age up to thirty-five years. Twenty-two heads fall between the ages 35 to 50 years and thirty-seven heads had above fifty years of age. As well as experience of the school heads is concerned, twenty heads had less than fifteen years of experience, nineteen heads had experience between fifteen to thirty years, twenty-seven heads had experience above thirty years.

The study was descriptive in nature; hence the survey techniques was used. The instrument, Leadership Style Survey [LSS] was used. It was adapted from the studies of Iqbal (2011). Four variables, Autocratic, Islamic Model, Laissez-faire and Democratic were used. There were 38 items. The instrument was validated by three experts in the education field. The reliability analysis was computed and the value of Cronbach was .855. It is appropriate for research (Gay, 1999). The items were distributed as Islamic model 10 items, democratic style 10 items, autocratic style 10 items, and laissez-faire style 8 items.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data were analyzed using SPSS. The descriptive tests like mean and sd were used and inferential tests like ANOVA and t-tests were applied.

Ho1: There is not an apparent distinction in the use of leadership styles of male and female school heads.

Table 1: Gender Difference in using Leadership Styles by Heads

Gender of Head		N	Mean	sd	t	p
Autocratic Styles	Teacher					
	Male	30	3.68	.398		
	Female	36	3.82	.489	1.247	.217
	Male	30	4.18	.499	.463	.645

Democratic	Female	36	4.11	.643		
Styles						
Islamic Model	Male	30	4.34	.357		
	Female	36	4.49	.321	-1.772	.081
Styles						
Laissez-Faire	Male	30	4.48	.322		
	Female	36	4.55	.337	-.875	.385
Styles						

The result of t-test showed that male and female head teachers had same types of leadership styles. There was a non-apparent difference for male head teachers ($M = 3.68$, $SD = .398$) and female head teachers ($M = 3.82$, $SD = .489$; $t(64) = -1.247$, $p = .217$) for autocratic style of leadership. There was a non-apparent difference for male heads ($M = 4.18$, $SD = .499$) and female heads ($M = 4.11$, $SD = .643$; $t(64) = .463$, $p = .645$) for democratic style of leadership. There was a non-apparent difference for male heads ($M = 4.34$, $SD = .357$) and female heads ($M = 4.49$, $SD = .321$; $t(64) = 1.772$, $p = .081$) for Islamic Model style of leadership. Also a non-apparent difference for male heads ($M = 4.48$, $SD = .322$) and female heads ($M = 4.55$, $SD = .337$; $t(64) = -.875$, $p = .385$) for Islamic Model style of leadership. So, the null hypothesis about an apparent distinction in the use of leadership styles of male and female school heads was accepted. Female and male heads were using same styles of leadership in secondary schools.

Ho2: There is not an apparent impact of age in the use of leadership styles of school heads.

Table 2: Age Impact on Leadership Styles of Head Teachers

		SS	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Autocratic Styles	Between Groups	.232	2	.116	.560	.574
	Within Groups	13.067	63	.207		
	Total	13.300	65			
Democratic	Between Groups	5.761	2	2.880	11.310	.000**
	Within Groups	16.044	63	.255		

Styles	Total	21.804	65			
Islamic Model	Between Groups	1.109	2	.554	5.299	.007**
Styles	Within Groups	6.592	63	.105		
	Total	7.701	65			
Laissez Faire	Between Groups	.997	2	.499	5.165	.008**
Styles	Within Groups	6.081	63	.097		
	Total	7.079	65			

**P<0.01

An ANOVA test was used for comparing the impact of head teachers' age on the use of different leadership styles. The age was categorized in years. Seventeen heads had age up to thirty-five years. Twenty-two heads fall between the ages 35 to 50 years and thirty-seven heads had above fifty years of age. It found a significant effect of age on the use of all leadership styles except for autocratic style of leadership. It was non-significant as $F(2, 63) = .560, p > .05$. There was a significant effect of age on head teachers' leadership styles as $F(2, 63) = 11.310, p < .01$ for democratic leadership style, $F(2, 63) = 5.299, p < .007$ for Islamic Model leadership style, and $F(2, 63) = 5.165, p < .008$ for laissez-faire leadership style. So, the null hypothesis about an apparent impact of age in the use of leadership styles of school heads was partially rejected.

Ho3: There is not an apparent impact of qualification in the use of leadership styles of school heads.

Table 3: Qualification Impact on Leadership Styles of Head Teachers

		SS	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Autocratic Styles	Between Groups	4.042	4	1.011	6.659	.000**
	Within Groups	9.257	61	.152		
	Total	13.300	65			
Democratic	Between Groups	5.146	4	1.287	4.711	.002**
Styles	Within Groups	16.658	61	.273		
	Total	21.804	65			

Islamic Model	Between Groups	1.064	4	.266	2.444	.056
Styles	Within Groups	6.638	61	.109		
	Total	7.701	65			
Laissez Faire	Between Groups	1.428	4	.357	3.855	.007**
Styles	Within Groups	5.650	61	.093		
	Total	7.079	65			

P<0.01

An ANOVA test was used for comparing the impact of head teachers' qualification on the use of different leadership styles. The qualification was categorized as the seventeen heads had MA M. Ed. or MA Education degrees, sixteen school heads had MSc M. Ed. qualification. Twenty-nine heads had MPhil qualification and Four heads were PhD degree holders. It found a significant effect of qualification in using all leadership styles except for Islamic model of leadership styles that was non-significant as $F(4, 61) = 2.444$, $p > .05$. There was a significant effect of age on head teachers' leadership styles as $F(4, 61) = 6.659$, $p < .000$ for autocratic leadership style, $F(2, 63) = 4.711$, $p < .002$ for democratic leadership style, and $F(2, 63) = 3.855$, $p < .007$ for laissez-faire leadership style. So, the null hypothesis about an apparent impact of qualification in the use of leadership styles of school heads was partially rejected.

Ho3: There is not an apparent impact of experience in the use of leadership styles of school heads.

Table 4: Experience Impact on Leadership Styles of Head Teachers

		SS	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Autocratic Styles	Between Groups	.319	3	.319	1.572	.214
	Within Groups	12.981	63	.203		
	Total	13.300	66			
Democratic Styles	Between Groups	2.408	3	2.408	7.944	.006**
	Within Groups	19.397	63	.303		
	Total	21.804	66			
	Between Groups	.224	3	.224	1.914	.171

Islamic Model	Within Groups	7.478	63	.117		
	Total	7.701	66			
Styles						
Laissez Faire	Between Groups	.663	3	.663	6.619	.012*
Styles	Within Groups	6.415	63	.100		
	Total	7.079	66			

An ANOVA test was used for comparing the impact of head teachers' experience on the use of different leadership styles. The experience was categorized as the twenty heads had less than fifteen years of experience, nineteen heads had experience between fifteen to thirty years, twenty-seven heads had experience above thirty years. It was found a significant effect of experience on the use of all leadership styles except for Islamic model $F(3, 63) = 1.914$, $p > .171$, and autocratic leadership styles that was non-significant as $F(3, 63) = 1.572$, $p > .214$. There was a significant effect of experience on head teachers' leadership styles as $F(3, 63) = 7.944$, $p < .006$ for democratic leadership style, and $F(3, 63) = 6.619$, $p < .012$ for laissez-faire leadership style. So, the null hypothesis about an apparent impact of qualification in the use of leadership styles of school heads was partially rejected.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

There was a non-apparent difference for male heads and female heads for autocratic style of leadership. There was a non-apparent difference for male heads and female heads for democratic style of leadership. There was a non-apparent difference for male heads and female heads for Islamic Model style of leadership. Also a non-apparent difference for male heads and female heads for Islamic Model style of leadership. Female and male heads had using same styles of leadership in secondary schools. Prior studies revealed that male head teachers used task-oriented leadership styles and female heads used people-oriented leadership styles (Shanmugam, Amaratunga, & Haigh, 2007). Male and female leaders have different leadership styles. Male leaders lead aggressively, authoritatively and logically and independently while female leaders lead emotionally, cooperatively and warmly in a submissive way (Park, 1996).

Age had an effect on the use of all leadership styles except for autocratic style of leadership that was non-significant. There was a significant effect of age on head teachers' leadership styles for democratic leadership style for Islamic Model leadership style, and for laissez-faire leadership style. According to Eagly and Carli (2003), women leaders lead in a democratic way of leadership styles than men.

A significant effect of qualification on the use of all leadership styles except for Islamic model of leadership styles was non-significant. There was a significant effect of age on head teachers' leadership styles for autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire leadership styles. It found a significant effect of experience on the use of all leadership styles except for Islamic model and autocratic leadership styles that was non-significant. There was a significant effect of experience on head teachers' leadership styles for democratic and for laissez-faire leadership styles. The heads of institutions are needed to get training of the proper use of leadership styles. The implication of current study may be used for improving the performance of head teachers when suitable style of leadership is used.

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