

Leadership behaviour among the heads of schools

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Abstract

*The effective functioning of the school mainly depends on school Heads who plays a vital role in improving the image of the school. The position that school Heads hold depends to a large extent on the capacity that he/she practices over his/her teachers, the pupils, their parents and community. In a school setting the effectiveness of the leadership behaviour is revealed through the workforce productivity and student productivity. Multiple encounters faced by schools these days, is crucial for the heads to solve school issues efficiently and make the most of their abilities for the benefit of the school. Therefore, an effort has been made by the investigator to ascertain the leadership behaviour among the heads of schools. **Objectives of the study** is to measure the level of Leadership behaviour among school heads and to find out whether the select independent variables influence the leadership behaviour among school Heads. **Methodology:** Survey method has been adopted by the investigator for the purpose of the study. **Sample:** A sample of 175 Heads of schools which includes Headmasters, Headmistress and principals of High schools and Higher secondary schools in and around Madurai, Virudhunagar and Dindigal districts, constituted with due representation given to the variables, viz. Gender, Age, Qualification, Experience, Marital status, Family type, Family income, Subject studied, Nature of employment, Location of the school, School kind etc. **Tool:** Leadership Behaviour Rating Scale developed by Sathiyagirirajan.S.. (2015), was used for data collection. **Findings:** The level of leadership behaviour among the school heads is found to be significantly high and Leadership behaviour among the school heads is found independent of the select variables except of School Kind. The Leadership behaviour among the school head is found to be dependent of School Kind.*

Key words: Leadership Behaviour, School Heads

Introduction

According to New Education policy 2020, Education is the basis for achieving the full human potential, for evolving an equitable and unbiased society and promoting national development. The Education system must aim towards having less content, but move towards learning to think creatively and critically and developing coping skills to face the reality without any difficulty. Education involves the coordination of the educator, educand and the social factors. Education aims at developing holistic personality in an individual. Education develops life skills in the individuals, thereby gives strength to face day to day challenges of life. The main purpose of 3

education is to create a good human being and a responsible citizen who can lead a happy life. The outcome of education should be seen in the attitude and behaviour of the individual. Thus Education is a process which helps in the modification of the behaviour of the individual. It brings out the innate powers of the individual.

According to New Education policy 2020, the education system strives to develop human beings who are rational in thought and action, having empathy, courage, possessing compassion and scientific temper. The national goals of a country can be realised by making the Education as a powerful instrument of social, cultural and economic transformation. Education must help every individual towards the attainment of self-actualisation. One of the objectives of education is to create effective leaders.

Education is a powerful instrument of social, economic and cultural transformation necessary for the realization of national goals. Educational institutions are the most important organisations of any nation as they have impact on the issues of national agenda. Education is the orderly training of individuals to take happiness in the active construction work to achieve the common goal of strengthening the character and intelligence development. Education is not teaching the students what they don't know, rather education means to teach them how to behave when they do not behave appropriately. Education is to create realisation among the students about their worthiness, commitment in their life and help them to take up responsibility for their life and the society. Education acts as the basis for the enrichment of individual's life, mobilisation of society and progress of the nation. Education helps people to take appropriate decisions in life and to differentiate between good and bad. Education helps to develop and improve general academic knowledge, technical, vocational skills, attainment of cultural practices of individuals in a community. It is a journey of assisted discovery where we are helped, nurtured and treasured in our natural quest to understand about ourselves, our ethos and the world, our personality and welfare and to discover the actual purpose of life. Education contributes not only to economic and social welfare but also it aims towards the development of human beings.

Mukhopadhyay (2001) has said about education as an instrument which helps for social change as it brings out the hidden intellect in the students, which helps to create a society with a set of social attributes and human values. National Policy on Education (1986/92) predicted that education is an investment not only in the present but also for the future. It emphasised that education is a must for everyone and is fundamental for holistic personality development of the individual.

1. Leadership behaviour

The term Leadership has figured conspicuously in research on school administration from 1960s. Leadership can be defined as the ability to persuade other and to lead them in the direction in which the leader wants them to proceed in order to achieve the goal of the organisation. It unites a group together and motivates it towards common goal.

Leadership behaviour has various dimensions and they vary according to the personality of the leader, the requirements of the work to be achieved by him and his group members, the attitudes, expectations and needs of his followers and the physical and organisational environment in which the leader and followers operate. 4

Leadership behaviour is positively linked to personality factors such as intelligence, openness, assertiveness and emotional stability.

“Commitment unlocks the doors of imagination, allows vision, and gives us the right stuff to turn our dream into reality.”-James Womack. Keeping this in view, educational institutions require school heads who are committed professionals, looking into the well-being of their students which is most important.

Leadership is not identified from the title, designation or through qualification rather leadership is about inspiration, influence and impact. Leadership plays a vital role in the learning organisation where the leader motivates the individuals, the leaders of tomorrow towards a shared vision to foster an environment of learning.

The leader is not a person who distributes the work but shoulders the responsibility with empathy and compassion. He manages the Time, the speed of the work and the perfection of work. He leads the path which is not laid but yet paves way for others to trod upon. A good leader can understand others style of work and use his emotional intelligence to uplift his organization.

Ekman, 2003, views that “A true leader can widen a school role in the world beyond its walls and improve the internal dynamics of the school, maintaining harmony among its staff. Thus, leadership is the activity of influencing people to cooperate towards some goal which they come to find desirable.

Leadership Behaviour of school heads play a crucial role in the effectiveness of an educational institution. It is necessary to recall the words of Cheng and Townsend (2000) who stressed the important role of a school Heads/Principal in bringing change and effectiveness.

Effective school leadership provides a clear vision and sense of direction for the school. The major qualities a school head must possess are Integrity, Resilience, Ability to delegate, Decisiveness, Positivity, Ambitious, learning skill, Interpersonal skills, Non-Judgmental, Rewarding, Motivating, Counselling, Empathetic etc

2. Qualities of a School Head

Integrity

The school head needs to be honest and show a strong moral and ethical values. He needs to create trust, pride and responsibility and generate confidence.

Resilience

The leader holds the ability to withstand adversity and bounce back from difficult life events. Being resilient does not mean that people don't experience stress, emotional upheaval, and suffering. The leader needs to have emotional resilience, so that he can tap into realistic optimism, even when dealing with a crisis.

Ability to Delegate

The leader recognizes his employers' talents and assigns the responsibility accordingly. The leader ensures accountability and liability on his employers. 5

Decisiveness

Decision making is a prerequisite skill to accomplish his goals. The leader gives ears to others' suggestion and brings out the best decision as a whole.

Positivity

Positive attitude inculcates a healthy environment and the leader sets an example for it. A positive attitude is essential to happiness, joy, and progress in life. This state of mind brings light, hope and enthusiasm into the life of those who possess and also gets transferred to others.

Learning ability

The leader becomes more effective if he adapts, and evolves to changing technologies and processes. Learning ability should be a continuous process for any successful school head.

Interpersonal skills

It is necessary for the Head to have a good rapport with the parents, students, Teachers, and other stakeholders in the organization to be a successful leader.

Healthy environment

The principal should carry out the physical mental and social health for a successful maintenance of an institution. He is the harbinger of their Health for a notable change.

Efficiency

A leadership quality that goes hand in hand with organization is the ability to operate efficiently. Smart work and hard work are the need for today's dynamic leadership. Quick and prompt decisions are very much essential for a leader in this digital competitive ambience. Efficiency, in simple terms, means completing the work with optimum utilization of the available resource.

Rewarding

A successful leader should reward and applaud his employees suitably. This motivation will encourage the employees to work with passion and enthusiastically.

Counselling

The principal should counsel his employees and see to it they are comfortable and stress free to their place. The leader should hug and pat his employees as needed.

3. Need and significance of the study

The field of leadership research has changed drastically in how one thinks about, studies, and defines leadership (Hunt and Ropo, 1995; Bryman, 2004) 6

The definition of leadership research has changed drastically in the course of time. According to Bryman, a number of factors have contributed to the study of leadership with increased optimism. A true leader has the confidence to stand alone, the courage to make appropriate decisions and the compassion to listen to the needs of the others.

Schools are the basic formal unit of the society. The prime value of quality school education is related to the national development index of a country to achieve national objective for every country.

The framework of national policy of education 1986 and POA (Plan of Action) 1992, clearly states the main role of school heads to work upon the quality and excellence in the school education at micro level in school context. “The role expectations of principals and teachers will explicitly include developing a caring and inclusive culture at their schools, for effective learning and the benefit of all stakeholders” – (NEP 2020, 5.13 pg21).

The responsibility of the school head demands great talents to bind the staff, parents and students to go along with a definite objective to achieve the desired goal. The prime responsibility of the school head is not only directing the employees towards the task but to know how to get the work done with utmost perfection. An efficient school head inspires and empowers the teachers and the parents with clear vision. He looks forward and foresees every situation with clarity in his thoughts and has a sheer passion for a winning attitude.

The success of educational institutions relies on the leadership quality of school heads. The school head is responsible for the effective general management of the school, for ensuring the provision of academic leadership and strategic vision and for the quality of the student experience. The school heads need creativity and skill competency for working efficiently. They need to develop a culture of collaboration and teamwork among staff. The school heads develop standardised curriculum assess teaching methods, monitor student achievement, encourage parent involvement, revise policies and procedures and also to develop a culture of collaboration and team work among staff. Being a reputed personality, he needs to earn respect from his colleagues and to improve his problem-solving capabilities for meeting diverse challenges which the school faces in day to day activities.

In this pandemic situation, and technology explosion, several challenging situations are to be handled by the school heads in rural and urban areas. Children and teachers do not have personal contact during teaching learning transaction. Teachers do not have control over the students to have a check regarding the level of understanding of the subject by the students. However, the expectation of the parents and the institution needs to be fulfilled keeping in mind the hurdles in the process of curriculum transaction during the pandemic situation affected by Covid-19.

The role and responsibilities of school heads have changed significantly in the present scenario. School heads like any other educational leaders must have a vital role in developing, learning school communities for both teachers and students. School heads should be knowledgeable, creative, engaging, encouraging, dedicated, inspiring, motivating and helpful because they have to work not only on goals that includes school activities, approaches, strategies employed for the schools but also the behaviour of the school community. As a result, the role of the school heads also underwent great transformation with the development and expansion of the education system in recent days. If the school principal is strong, motivated and good manager who clearly outlines expectations for staff and students, then the school tends to make progress. Therefore, school heads should have the desired skills and competencies to facilitate educational change, 7

transform the constraints and develop desirable school climate for teachers and students to work and learn and develop effectively. Schools cannot exist without head/principal. The Head of the school is the principal and the functioning of the school eventually depends on him/her. (The Secondary Education Commission report 1952)

The heads of schools have started to concentrate on new leadership theories according to the rapid and complex changes prevailing in the present scenario of organisation. Heads of schools today are motivated to use new methods of leadership, to adopt new managerial methods to achieve set goals. Effective principals work persistently to improve the quality of education. A supportive principal can make all the difference for a teacher. The relationship between a teacher and a principal has to be built on a foundation trust.

A true school leadership requires the knowledge and understanding of the managerial and other skills along with the personal ability to effectively implement these skills.

The most crucial factor in any school is the leadership behaviour that may reflect on teacher's effectiveness and success of the school as a whole. Hence the investigator has undertaken to study the leadership behaviour of the heads of the schools.

4. Review of literature

Shelat (1974) found that HH pattern of leadership behaviour was manifested by the principals of large sized High schools and LL pattern of leadership behaviour was manifested by the principals of small sized High Schools. However, HL and LH pattern of leadership behaviours were manifested proportionately by principals of both large sized and small sized schools. The studies carried out by **Darji (1975)** on the leadership behaviour of school heads and its correlates in the Secondary schools of Panchmahal's District revealed that the leadership behaviour dimensions and patterns were significant in relation to innovativeness, morale and climate.

Darji (1975) conducted studies on the leadership behaviour and its correlates and found that most of sampled schools showed LL(36%), HH (44%) patterns of leadership behaviour which was distributed fairly among the schools of rural areas whereas, in urban areas around 50% had HH pattern.

Paul (1976) in his studies on the leadership role of principals of upper secondary schools of Sweden, concluded that the self-perceived leadership behaviour factors of 'initiating structure' and 'consideration' were almost equivalent on the LBDQ-real and LBDQ-ideal version.

The studies by **Singh (1978)** on the Leadership Behaviour of Secondary school Heads in Haryana and its correlates revealed that the leadership was significantly related to the four personality factors such as intelligence, emotional stability, assertiveness and outgoingness. The leadership behaviour of school heads in Haryana was not related to sex, academic qualification, teaching and administrative experience.

King (1978), found that the principals of female elementary schools were perceived as being authority oriented in their leadership style than of male principals. Taking into 'consideration' the needs and interest of the teachers, female principals were less oriented than male principals. The morale of professional performance of teachers was not related to the sex of the principals in schools and sex factor of teachers did not have any impact on how the principals were perceived.

Bartholome (1980), conducted a study on the relationship of Superintendent's and teacher's perception towards the principal and found that superintendents rated the principals higher than of the teachers.

Kappelman (1981) found that the perception of teachers on female and male principals revealed manifestation of both 'person-orientation' and 'task orientation' among the principals. The study further revealed that in the perception of teachers, no difference was found between female principals' and male principals on the bases of power.

Dhanosobhan (1982) conducted a study to identify the leadership styles of secondary school principals and teachers on the basis of Demographic Data Questionnaire and LEAD (Hersey and Blanchard). It was found in his studies that principals and teachers were found frequently perceived more by themselves utilizing Leadership Behaviour (HL). The working experience, educational background and sex did not have effect on the perception of the secondary school principals on their leadership style.

Mahdi (1984) made a study on the leadership style of elementary school principals as perceived by themselves with LBDQ (Form XII) and their teachers. He found that the perception of leadership behaviour by the principals was higher than that of the teachers

Studies by Pandey (1985) revealed that there was no much difference in the leadership behaviour of rural and urban principals and schools in urban areas were more open than rural areas.

Ara (1986) findings revealed that skilled leadership of principals bring about a higher degree of conformity and unskilled leadership of principals generate low degree of conformity in the teachers.

Ara (1986) also revealed that the leadership behaviour of the principals was positively related to teacher's job satisfaction. However, the urban and rural location of the schools had no relationship on the perception of the teachers about the leadership behaviour of the principal. In a study carried out by **Carr (1987)** found that female and male secondary school principals of California, USA were similar in their attitudes. But there was no significant impact on the leadership attitudes of the principals based on the variables such as age, education and experience of secondary public-school principals.

The research findings undertaken by **Bala (1990)** in Haryana suggested that school heads had been rated high on all the dimensions of leadership behaviour when studied individually, such as initiation, persuasiveness, integration, demand reconciliation, tolerance of uncertainty, representation consideration, predictiveness etc.

The leadership behaviour of the principal is evenly distributed on all proportions of leadership and it is not mainly related to personality features such as administrative experience, sex, age, and teaching experience. (**Bala, 1990**).

Study by **Nanda (1992)** identified that there was no significant difference between Leadership behaviour of female and male heads of Primary School Headmasters of Cuttack City. Further the study revealed that the experience and age variable were not the contributing factors in leadership behaviour amongst the Primary School Head Masters of Cuttack City. 9

A study conducted by **Diwan (1993)** comparing the leadership behaviour with the value patterns in the institutional context of principals from senior secondary schools of Delhi and the various private management institutions, found that the value patterns of the principals depend upon their disliking and liking of certain things. The findings added that all the principals showed remarkably the leadership behaviour in conformism with the values they possessed and the satisfaction of principals depended upon the value they expressed effectively in their day to day life.

Govinda & Tapan, (1999) found that the progress of the learners can be accepted as the final indicator of the achievement of the work done by the school heads.

"Another research in Shiraz showed that there existed significant difference between the leadership behaviour of men and women heads (**Javdane, 2002**). " It was further mentioned in that research study that women school heads were more transformational in leadership behaviour than men school heads.

The research done by **Mundanmani (2003)** pointed out that the leadership behaviour of school heads was equal to that of an ambitious leader. The principals/school heads were found to possess managerial capabilities and were ready to face the challenge of leadership.

Leithwood and Jantzi (2006) concluded that the teaching and learning was improved by the school leaders indirectly and powerfully having high influence on staff motivation, working conditions and organisational commitment. School heads motivate teachers work behaviour and learning outcomes of students by developing a optimistic school climate that inspires the teachers.

In the research by **Gupta (2009)**, it was found that government schools possessed structural school climate but private schools possessed controlled climate. It was further found that there was no significant relationship between values or the modernization and the vidyalaya's organisational climate.

Barber, Whelan & Clark (2010) did a research on the importance of school leadership among various countries and found that the without the leaders schools cannot be improved. It was also found that school leadership had connectivity to student outcomes. It was emphasised in the study the leaders of the school must focus on the achievement of the student, they need to be determined in achieving their goals, they need to be resilient and flexible to the situation and the persons they work with, have willingness to have deep understanding of the situation and people, and they must have awareness about themselves and need to be ready to learn and should be enthusiastic and positive.

Day et al., (2010) found the key dimensions of successful school leadership as, setting directions, defining vision and values, building trust, reshaping factors for teaching, enhancing the quality of teacher, enriching the curriculum, building collaborations both with outside community and internally, improving the quality of learning and teaching, redesigning leadership roles, restructuring the organisation and responsibilities. The main source of leadership in the schools are their school heads, their insightful strategies, their educational values, leadership practices describe the internal processes which leads to better student outcomes. 10

Barber et al., (2010) found that the principals who were performing high were motivated by their capability to make difference, they found joy in teaching, they paid more attention on instructional leadership and in people development, they spent equal number of hours as other principals, spent adequate time with their staff members. They were spending sufficient time in mentoring the teachers, interacting with students, parents and officials of their higher ups.

Diwan (2011) revealed in his study that the improvement of the school largely depends on the effectiveness of Heads of the School, their vision, self-confidence, interpersonal relations and professional competence.

Tyagi (2011) in his study conducted in the selected private aided, government, private senior secondary schools in Delhi, Uttarakhand and Chhattisgarh found that it was the effective instructional leadership of school heads which encouraged the teachers to integrate and involve in the school grounded activities of professional development.

OECD's TALIS (2013) found that pivotal and multifarious role is played by the head of schools in setting directions and in creating optimistic and productive work in schools for teachers and in creating vivacious environment for students.

Van Maele & Van Houtte (2015) revealed in his studies that the Head of the Schools have major role in preventing emotional burnout and in creating favourable climate for teachers. The research findings by **Sudheep A.S & Dr.Narayanawamy M (2016)** revealed that there was no significant relationship between leadership behaviour of school heads and commitment of secondary school teachers.

5. Statement of the problem

*The purpose of the study is to know the **LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOUR AMONG THE SCHOOL HEADS***

6. Objectives of the study

1. To measure the level of Leadership behaviour among School Heads.
2. To find out whether the select independent variables influence the leadership behaviour among School Heads

7. Hypotheses of the study

1. School heads have High level of leadership behaviour.
2. Gender do not exert a significant influence on leadership behaviour among School Heads.
3. Age do not exert a significant influence on leadership behaviour among School Heads.
4. Qualification do not exert a significant influence on leadership behaviour among School Heads.
5. Experience do not exert a significant influence on leadership behaviour among School Heads.
6. Marital Status do not exert a significant influence on leadership behaviour among School Heads.
7. Family type do not do not exert a significant influence on leadership behaviour among School Heads.

8. Family Income do not exert a significant influence on leadership behaviour among School Heads.
9. Subject studied do not exert a significant influence on leadership behaviour among School Heads.
10. Nature of Employment do not exert a significant influence on leadership behaviour among School Heads.
11. School Kind do not exert a significant influence on leadership behaviour among School Heads.
12. School locality do not exert a significant influence on leadership behaviour among School Heads.

9. Methodology

9.1. Variables of the Study

The variables involved in the study are as follows:

Dependent Variable:

Leadership behaviour

Independent Variables

1. Gender : Male / Female
2. Age : up to 50 / 51 and above
3. Qualification : B.Ed. / M.Ed.
4. Experience as school Head : up to 5 years / 6 and above years
5. Marital status : Married / Unmarried
6. Family type : Nuclear/ Joint
7. Family income : Adequate / Inadequate
8. Subject studied : Arts / Science
9. Nature of employment : Govt/ Private
10. School kind : Mixed / Unisex
11. School locality : Rural / Urban

9.2 Operational Definition

Leadership Behaviour: refers to process of social influence in which one person can enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task possessed by the school heads.

Heads of Schools: refer to a person who are working as Headmaster / Headmistress or Principal in the high or higher secondary schools in Madurai, Dindigul, and Virudhunagar Districts in Tamil Nadu. 12

9.3 Sample size

A stratified representative sample of 175 Headmasters / Headmistress / Principals of high or higher secondary schools in Madurai, Dindigul, and Virudhunagar districts constituted with due representation given to the variables, viz. Gender, Age, Qualification, Experience, Marital status, Family type, Family income, Subject studied, Nature of employment, School kind and Locality. Schools included Tamil Nadu State government schools, Management Aided schools, Private schools, and schools affiliated under CBSE.

9.4 Tool

Leadership Behaviour Rating Scale developed by **Sathiyagirirajan.S.. (2015)**, was used for data collection.

9.5 Technique

Survey was the technique employed. The investigator prepared the Leadership Behaviour Rating scale of Sathiyagirirajan.S. (2015) in a Google form along with questions on personal data based on select independent variables. The permission letter was obtained from the Chief Education Officer of the Education Department of Maurai District and with the help of four Education Officers the Google form was sent to the Heads of the govt and private schools of Madurai, Dindigal and Virudhunagar districts and data was collected. SPSS software was used for statistical analysis of the data.

9.6 Statistical Treatment

- (i) 't' – test between the means of large independent samples.
- (ii) Pearson's Product Moment Correlation 'r'.

1. Analysis and interpretation of data

10.1 Leadership Behaviour Among School Heads

The empirical average score of Leadership behaviour among school heads involved in this study is found to be 92.48, while the theoretical average is 50 only. Hence the Leadership behaviour among school heads is found to be significantly high. To put it differently, School Heads' leadership behaviour is found extremely favourable.

10.2 Leadership Behaviour and Independent Variables

The details of results of test of significant difference between the mean scores of Leadership behaviour in terms of Independent variables are given in table. 13

TABLE 10.3: Statistical measures and Results of test of significan ce of difference between the means of leadershi p behaviour : independe nt	Sub-Varia bles	N	Mean	SD	't' - Value	Significan ce at 0.05 level
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variables

– wise

Variable

Gender	Male	76	93.4868	5.30281	1.745	Not Significant
	Female	99	91.7172		8.07622	
Age	Up to 50	91	92.3626	7.71509	0.242	Not Significant
	51 and above	84	92.6190		6.28232	
Qualification	B.Ed.	94	92.4468	6.06349	0.077	Not Significant
	M.Ed.	81	92.5309		8.07479	
Experience as School Head	Up to 5 years	81	92.3333	7.65343	0.262	Not Significant
	6 years and above	94	92.6170		6.51402	
Marital status	Married	133	92.6319	7.03953	0.913	Not Significant
	Unmarried	42	90.5000		7.11592	
Family type	Nuclear	116	92.0690	7.65873	1.212	Not Significant
	Joint	59	93.3051		5.61787	
Family Income	Adequate	157	92.6497	7.05279	0.913	Not Significant
	Inadequate	18	91.0556		7.00817	
Subject Studied	Arts/commerce	60	91.4167	8.64025	1.303	Not Significant
	Science	115	93.0435		6.01663	
Nature of Employment	Government	111	92.4144	7.64136	0.188	Not Significant
	Private	64	92.6094		5.92444	
School kind	Mixed	141	92.0728	7.05512	2.073	Significant
	Unisex	34	95.0833		6.53364	
School Locality	Rural	127	92.6220	7.32351	0.444	Not Significant
	Urban	48	92.1250		6.30645	