

A Comparative Study of the Professional Performance of the Heads of Higher Education Institutions in Public and Private Sectors in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

By

M. Qamar-ud-Din, M. Naseer-ud-Din, Ishtiaq Hussain, Maqsood Ahmad and Sarfraz Ahmed

¹naseer.kust@yahoo.com, ²qamar.uddin@yahoo.com, ³ishtiaq@kust.edu.pk, ⁴maqsood517@yahoo.com, ⁵Sarfraz206@yahoo.com

Abstract

The overall purpose of this study was to investigate the professional performance of the heads of higher education institutions in public and private sectors in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Objectives of the study were to: study the professional performance of the heads of higher education institutions of public and private sectors and compare the professional performance of the heads of higher education institutions of public and private sectors. Population of the study included all the principals and teachers of higher education institutions of both the sectors in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. 40 principals (20 Public and 20 Private), 80 teachers (40 Public, 40 Private) were taken as sample of the study. The sample was taken from district Bannu, Kohat, Peshawar and Lakki Marwat. Researcher personally visited and administered the questionnaires to the principals and teachers respectively. To achieve the objectives of the study two questionnaires A & B were developed: Questionnaire A for principals and B for teachers containing 10 items, (01-10). Data was collected, tabulated, analyzed and interpreted by using Mean, Standard Deviation and T-Test.

Keywords: *Performance, Public, Private, Heads, Sectors*

1. Introduction

Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary defines performance as the ability to operate efficiently and react quickly. An educational leader has to perform various activities and tasks daily. He has to tackle various issues daily ranging from institutional level to community and political level. He has to show his persistent commitment in making teaching- learning process a top priority, he is also to struggle hard in convincing his high ups to provide sufficient resources to his institution for managing several academic projects, he is to communicate with political management regarding educational issues of his institution, he is also to prepare and promote a clear agenda that advances student achievements, he is to support his teaching staff to search and implement effective educational methods, he is also to make crucial administrative and academic decisions that are based on research and proven successful methods to settle down various problems, he is to provide and organize regular and scheduled opportunities for educational officials and community members to discuss key educational issues, he is to create linkages with other heads of educational institutions to improve academic environment of college and to create maximum and timely opportunities for college officials to meet and discuss the things they share in their work that can support college achievements.

Objectives of the Study

Objectives of the study were to:

- i. investigate the professional performance of the heads of higher education institutions of public and private sectors.
- ii. compare the professional performance of the heads of higher education institutions of public and private sectors.

2. Review of Related Literature

The conjectures of performance of a leader differ from one leader to another. The criteria selected to evaluate the performance of leaders highlight a researcher's clear or contained conception of leadership. The majority of the evaluators review leadership performance in terms of the leader's action for followers and other organization stakeholders. Different types of outcomes have been used, involving the performance and growth of the leader's group or organization, its consideration to organizations' deal with challenges or crises, adherent happiness with the head, follower's responsibility to the group objectives, the psychological well being and development of workers of the organization, the leader's maintenance of high status in the group and the leader's advancement to higher positions of authority in the organization (Bass, 1985).

The major approximation of leader's performance is the degree to which the leader's secretarial element performs its assignment creatively and attains its targets accomplishment. Some other subjective measures include ratings of effectiveness obtained from the leader's superiors, peers or subordinates. The attitude of the staff members of the leader towards him is another significant gauge of the performance of leader. Up to what extent a leader satisfies the needs and expectations of his subordinates is also another salient feature of a leader's performance? If followers like, respect and admire the leader in his absence and presence? If followers are strongly dedicated and devoted in carrying out the leader's aspirations or they resist, disregard or destabilize the progress of work? The attitude of the staff members is normally measured with the help of carefully planned questionnaires or interviews. Such dimensions of the attitude of the followers also provide an indicator of discontent and resentment toward the leader. Examples of such indicators include regular absentees from work, work shirking or voluntary delayed in responses, grievances, and complaints to higher level of management, hurried and constant requests for transfer, work slowdowns and deliberate damage of equipments and facilities (Forsyth & Tollerico, 1998).

Leader's performance is infrequently measured in conditions of the leader's input to the excellence of group processes, as supposed by staff members or by external observers and evaluators. If the leader enhances group integration, cooperation of members, members' motivation, problem solving approach and strategy, thoughtful decision-making and settlement of conflicts among staff members? It is also postulated that leader contributes to the performance of role specialization, the organization of activities, the accumulation of resources and the eagerness of the group to deal with change and crises in the tasks of the organization. Does leader improve the quality of work life, build self-confidence of followers, increase their skills and contribute to their psychological growth and development? All these aspects invariably play an important role in improving and declining the performance of a leader (Cheng, 1994).

It is considered quite difficult to evaluate the performance of a leader when there are so many alternative procedures of measuring effectiveness and it is not apparent too, which gauge is most relevant. Some researchers endeavor to combine several measures into a single one but this approach requires subjective judgments for assigning a weight to each measure. Multiple criteria are in actual fact wearisome when they are pessimistically correlated. A negative correlation means that there are trade-offs among criteria, such that as one increases, others decrease. For example, growth in sales and market share (e.g. by reducing price and increasing advertising) is sometimes achieved at the cost of lower profits. An increase in production output (e.g. by inducing people to work faster) is sometimes achieved at the cost of lower product quality. Rapid growth is sometimes achieved (e.g. financing expansion with excessive debt) at the cost of a weaker financial condition that may result in bankruptcy if economic conditions suddenly become worsen. Performance may be increased (e.g. by using more specialization) at the expense of flexibility (Yukl, 1998). The responsibility of being a leader in the school rests with the principal only. The potential of the head of the institution determines the success of a school to accomplish tasks and attain the desired outcomes in specific time period. Principal is also to direct and lead teachers and other workers to help him in the successful culmination of some critical tasks. Leading tendency is one the basic demanded attribute of a principal in the administrative set up of the institution. Planning provides directions and guidelines for the attainment of desired goals; organizing enables principal to collect and utilize resources to execute the plan; leading

A Comparative Study of the Professional Performance of the Heads of Higher Education Institutions in Public and Private Sectors in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

capacity enables principal to make determinations and commitments to discharge activities and enthusiastic approach is an attribute that is desired to motivate workers to culminate the tasks; and controlling enables principal to make sure that the things are following the intended lines. Lipham, (1981), stated that planning, organizing, commanding or leading and controlling are major duties, functions and responsibilities that are to be carried out by leaders. Kotter, (1990) suggested that the fundamental responsibility of a leader is to formulate the aims and mission of an organization. He also narrated that leader is also to devise a strategy to achieve the goals and mission of the organization. The most important function of leadership is to bring a positive change in the organization through the efficient use of available resources in specific time period (Yuki & Van, 1998).

3. Research Methodology

Population

The population of the study comprised all the principals and teachers of Higher Education Institutions of Public and Private sectors in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Delimitation of the Study

The study was delimited to four districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa which were Bannu, Kohat, Peshawar, and Lakki Marwat.

Sample

Out of the above-stated population category-wise sample was drawn using stratified random sampling technique.

- i. Twenty colleges from public sector and twenty colleges from private sector were randomly selected as the sample of the study.
- ii. All the heads of the sampled public and private colleges were included in the study.
- iii. Two teachers from each selected public and private college were taken at random for the sample.

Research Instruments

Two Questionnaires (one for heads of higher education institution and other for teachers of higher education institutions) were used as research instruments for data collection.

4. Data Analysis

The data collected through questionnaires was tabulated, analyzed and interpreted in the light of the objectives of the study. The responses obtained through the above mentioned research instruments were scored before statistical analysis and interpretation. The items were given by rating the responses on five point rating scale (i.e., Likert scale). The following scoring procedure was adopted:

Almost does so	5
Frequently does so	4
Occasionally does so	3
Rarely does so	2
Never does so	1

After scoring the items, the scores of the individual items were added to get the sum of overall scores. The most suitable statistical tools mean, standard deviation, standard error of mean, t-test and Pearson product- Moment Coefficient of Correlation (r) were applied.

Table 01: Take on difficult issues, regardless of political and administrative pressure.

Respondents	N	Mean	S D	S.E _D	T	P
Principals Public	20	4.10	3.870	0.491	2.13	S*
Principals Private	20	3.05	0.96			

***Significant** **df = 38** **t- value at 0.05 level = 1.960**

Table 01 indicates that the calculated value of t was found to be statistically significant at 0.05 levels. Therefore, both the Public sector heads and Private sector heads disagreed on the statement that they “**take on difficult issues, regardless of political and administrative pressure**”. More inclination to take on difficult issues regardless of political and administrative pressure by public sector heads reflects that their performance regarding this point was better than private sector heads.

Table 2: Communicate with political representatives on educational issues.

Respondents	N	Mean	S D	S.E _D	T	P
Principals Public	20	3.90	3.250	0.459	2.290	S*
Principals Private	20	2.85	0.96			

***Significant** **df = 38** **t- value at 0.05 level = 1.960**

Table 02 indicates that the calculated value of t was found to be statistically significant at 0.05 levels. Therefore, both the Public sector heads and Private sector heads disagreed on the statement that they “**communicate with political representatives on educational issues**”. More inclination to communicate with political representatives on educational issues by public sector heads reflects that their performance regarding this point was better than private sector heads.

Table 03: Struggle for allocation of adequate funds for college.

Respondents	N	Mean	S D	S.E _D	T	P
Principals Public	20	4.10	3.870	0.493	1.928	S*
Principals Private	20	3.15	0.99			

***Significant** **df = 38** **t- value at 0.05 level = 1.960**

A Comparative Study of the Professional Performance of the Heads of Higher Education Institutions in Public and Private Sectors in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Table 03 indicates that the calculated value of t was found to be statistically significant at 0.05 levels. Therefore, both the Public sector heads and Private sector heads disagreed on the statement that they “**struggle for allocation of adequate funds for college**”. More inclination to struggle for allocation of adequate funds for college by public sector heads reflects that their performance regarding this point was better than private sector heads.

Table 04: Make decisions that are based on research and proven successful methods.

Respondents	N	Mean	S D	S.E _D	T	P
Teachers Public	20	3.80	2.970	0.443	2.033	S*
Teachers Private	20	0.95	0.95			

***Significant df = 38 t- value at 0.05 level = 1.960**

Table 04 indicates that the calculated value of t was found to be statistically significant at 0.05 levels. Therefore, both the Public sector heads and Private sector heads disagreed on the statement that they “**make decisions that are based on research and proven successful methods**”. More inclination to make decisions that are based on research and proven successful methods by public sector heads reflects that their performance regarding this point was better than private sector heads.

6. Results and Discussion

It was found that most of the public and some private heads take on difficult issues regardless of political and administrative pressure. Public sector heads performed these duties better as an administrative and managerial expert. The efforts of public sector heads reflect that their performance regarding this point was better than private sector heads.

It was revealed that the majority of the heads of public sector and very few heads of private sector communicate with political representatives on educational issues. Heads of the public sector were more successful in this aspect than private sector heads because they demonstrated more commitment towards this aspect which reflects that their performance was better than private sector heads.

It was found that most of the public and some private heads struggle for allocation of adequate funds for institution. Public sector heads exhibited more positive response towards this statement than private sector heads. The more commitment of public sector heads towards this statement reflects that their performance was better than private sector heads.

It was disclosed by the study that most of the public and some private heads make decisions that are based on research and proven successful methods. Public sector heads performed these duties better as a true and enlightened educational leader. The efforts of public sector heads reflect that their performance regarding this point was better than private sector heads.

7. Conclusions

In the light of statistical analysis of the study, the following conclusions of the study were drawn.

- The results of the study disclose that the performance of public sector heads to provide opportunities for college officials to meet and discuss the things they share in their work and that can support college achievements was comparatively better than private sector heads.
- The results of the study brought to light that the performance of public sector heads to create linkages with other heads of educational institutions to improve academic environment of institution was better than private sector heads.

- The results of the study reflect that the performance of public sector heads to make decisions that are based on research and proven successful methods was better than private sector heads.
- The results of the study reveal that the performance of public sector heads to communicate with political representatives on educational issues was comparatively better than private sector heads.

8. Recommendations

In the light of conclusions of the study, following recommendations were made.

1. It had been observed that the performance of public sector heads was better regarding communicating with political representatives on educational issues as compared to private sector heads. It is recommended that private sector heads should also communicate with political representatives on educational issues so that politicians may take great interest in promotion and dissemination of education in their constituencies. Private heads must know that every educational plan or project is a political document and without the desires of politicians no educational plan or project can be successfully accomplished.
2. It was revealed in the study that majority of the heads of public sector and some heads of private sector make decisions that are based on research and proven successful methods. Public sector heads performed these duties better as a skilful educational leader. It is therefore recommended that heads of private sector should also make decisions that are based on research and proven successful methods so that the functions of the institution may run effectively. It is to be remembered that any decision that results in deteriorating the working atmosphere of the institution may affect the pace of work to accomplish tasks.
3. It was highlighted in the study that majority of the heads of public sector and very few heads of private sector create linkages with other heads of educational institutions to improve academic environment of institution. It is therefore recommended that private sector heads should also create linkages with other heads of educational institutions to improve academic environment of their institutions. This activity will help heads to share the experiences and ideas of each other which will definitely enlighten them to improve the work atmosphere of the institutions.

References

- Bass, B. M. (1985), 'Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectations', New York: free Press
- Cheng, Y.C. (1994), 'Principal's leadership as a Critical Indicator of School performance: Evidence from Multi- levels of Primary schools', *School Effectiveness and School improvement: An International Journal of Research, Policy and Practice*
- Forsyth, P. B., & Tallericao. (1998). Accountability and city school leadership. *Education and Urban Society*, 30(4).
- Kotter, J.P. (1990), 'A Force for Change: How Leadership Differs from Management'. New York: The Free Press
- Lipham J.A. (1981), 'Effective Principal, Effective School'. American Association of Secondary School Principals, Reston, VA. Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary
- Yuki, G., and Van Fleet, D.D. (1998), 'Theory and Research on Leadership in Organizations'. In Dunnette, Marvin D. and Hough, Leatta (Eds), *Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*. Mambai: Jaico Publishing House, Vol. 3