

An Analysis of the Performance and Efficiency of Female Secondary School Heads in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

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Abstract

The focus of this study was to analyze the performance and efficiency of female secondary school heads in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The study objectives were to analyze the performance of female heads in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, evaluate the present status of the efficiency of female heads in public secondary schools and provide recommendations for improving efficiency of the female heads. Of the 490 school heads, the sample included 230 female heads. A questionnaire was developed, validated, tried out and administered. The findings show that female heads help teachers in instructional activities and motivate them for better performance but they do not possess finance management skills. The heads do not maintain liaison with the community and need administrative and managerial training. Female heads may be given administrative and managerial training and the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa may establish an academy for training the school heads in administration and management.

Keywords: Female school heads, Performance, Efficiency, Management, Administration

Introduction

Efficiency is the ratio of input with the output. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the female public secondary schools are not producing desired results and female heads need to improve their efficiency. This study was conducted to analyze efficiency of the

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female heads and to make recommendations for improving their efficiency.

School is an institution where children are imparted education. The level of schooling differs from country to country. In Pakistan, school head is called Headmaster, Headmistress or Principal. School is a place having one or more teachers providing instruction and having an administrator.¹ In general, there are two kinds of schools, public and private. The government owns public schools, where free education is provided to the enrolled students. Principals, Headmasters and Headmistresses – also called Heads – control the overall activities of the schools. Heads provide instructional leadership to the teachers and students in their academic and instructional activities. The study rationale predicated on analysing the efficiency related aspects of female secondary school heads in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. For achieving high level of performance, heads must assume the responsibility of their own performance, growth and development.² In Pakistan, in general, and in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in particular, female education is not up to the mark and female secondary school heads are not producing the desired results. This study, therefore, focused on exploring and analyzing efficiency of female secondary school heads for identifying the causes, which hinder with the efficiency of female heads and make recommendations for improving the teaching-learning process and overall quality of schooling.

Statement of the Problem

School works effectively when the head's performance is good and efficient. In Pakistan in general and in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in particular, the quality of public primary and secondary education is far from satisfactory. School heads need to have greater management and leadership skills to deliver better learning results.³ Sufficient professional training facility may be provided to the school heads in the field of financial management, decision making and maintaining relations with community.⁴ Here, the level of performance and efficiency of the female heads was analyzed.

Objectives of the study

Objectives of the study were to:

- i). Explore the efficiency of female heads of secondary schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
- ii). Analyze the performance of the female heads of secondary schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

- iii). Find out the factors affecting the efficiency of female heads and make recommendations for improving efficiency of female heads in secondary schools.

Delimitation of the Study

This study was delimited to

- i). 08 districts of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (of the given 26 districts), which included 04 districts having the highest literacy rates i.e. Abbottabad, Haripur, Kohat, Nowshera and 04 districts having the lowest literacy rates i.e. Battagram, Kohistan, Shangla and Upper Dir.
- ii). Academic session 2013-2014.

Literature Review

Although there is abundant literature available that has explored the interplay between school heads and their efficiency issues, this literature review focuses on school heads, their functions, and discusses management, and functions of management, efficiency, and factors affecting efficiency of the school heads.

School Head

School head is a person, who plans, organizes and controls the school. School heads are not only responsible for administration they also act as instructional leaders and resolve conflicts within the school. They guide teachers in classroom and lead them in conducting and managing co-curricular activities of the school. School head is therefore referred to as the manager or administrator.⁵ In addition to providing support and guidance in all aspects of the school, the school head interacts with teachers in human relations, decision-making, instructional leadership and control, conflict resolution. Head is responsible for achievement of the targets through the efforts of other people individually, in groups or in an organization. Scholars agreeing upon the role of the school head, which is, of an instructional leader and manager, consider an important segment of instructional leadership.⁶ Heads provide leadership, directions and co-ordination within and outside the school. They concentrate on developing and maintaining effective educational programs within their schools. They organize and plan all the activities of the school and develop the instructional program, assign right job to the right persons and facilitate the overall working of the school.

Functions of School Heads

According to the Directorate of Literacy and Secondary Education Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, secondary school heads have a number of functions, including: i). Internal organization and discipline, ii). Allocation of classes to the teachers, iii). Admission of students, vi). Teachers' attendance register, v). Maintaining log and Order books, vi). Statistical register, vii). Admission and withdrawal of students' admissions, viii). Maintaining the school environment neat and clean, ix). Leave and promotion of students. x). Boarding Houses, xi). Meeting with students' parents, xii). Surprise visits of the classrooms and all the affairs of the school. School head is someone who actively participates in management process through the four functions of planning, organizing, leading and controlling.⁷ Heads coordinate and control organizational resources, lead their people into the future and help the organizations to respond to the growing changes in social expectations and expectations of clients. Heads work as part of the management as educational managers and occupy managerial positions in their schools and perform tasks of assigning duties to their colleagues, solving their problems, maintaining close liaison with the students and their parents. Heads are responsible to administer, supervise, manage and ensure good governance keeping in view the available resources, organizational environment, social and economic condition of the community. They work as a bridge between the higher authorities and their colleagues. Keeping in view the functions of school heads of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and functions of heads determined by various educational experts and researchers, the performance and efficiency of female heads were important to investigate.

Management

School head is an administrator as well as manager of the school. Female school heads get the work done with the help of their teachers and staff. Therefore, management is a social process, designed to ensure accomplishment of pre-determined objectives with involvement of others within the organization. Management is planning, organizing, actuating and controlling, devised and controlled to set and achieve pre-planned objectives of organization through the utilization of available resources.⁸ Management is a social process, designed to ensure the cooperation, participation, invention and involvement of others for the effective achievement of the given objectives.⁹ Educational management is the theory and practice of the organization,

administration of existing educational establishment and system. Monroe considered that educational management is a comprehensive effort, which deals with educational practices, educational institutions and is also concerned with human and material resources.¹⁰ The human elements include students, parents, teachers and other employees. Similarly, management is an exciting subject because it deals with setting, organizing, seeking and getting the objectives.¹¹ Therefore, school management is responsible for manager as well as administrator of the school. He/she has to view him/herself as instructional and administrative leader of the school, responsible for designing, implementing and evaluating the achievements in the context of instructional objectives. School heads occupy managerial positions in their schools and perform various tasks of assigning duties to their colleagues and solving their problems. They work as bridge between the higher authorities and their colleagues. Our secondary school heads are not given proper managerial training. The Government of Pakistan, 2009 National Education Policy supports this assertion, and argues that the Government could not develop a standardized managerial training system for educational managers in general and for secondary school heads in particular at the national level.¹²

In Educational Sector Reforms of the Government of Pakistan, special attention has been given to training for school-based management and providing management training to the secondary school heads for the capacity building.¹³ The head of a secondary school is in a position to influence the attitude, social climate, morale, progress, cooperation and direction of efforts in school.¹⁴ The head has to organize and manage the financial and human resources like managing the teachers' capabilities and qualities. Management of teacher quality is an important pathway through which school heads affect school quality.¹⁵ Therefore, the heads that manage classes well and assign tasks to teachers according to their competence show better performance and efficiency in their schools.

Functions of Management

Efficiency of individuals is determined based on the functions and responsibilities of their portfolios. Functions of management include planning, organizing, leading, controlling, coordinating and directing.¹⁶

Planning

Planning is a scheme, programme or method worked out before for the accomplishment of an objective or systematic arrangement of elements. It is a basic management function, which involves formulation of one or more detailed plans to achieve optimum balance of objectives. Singh has defined planning as the basic managerial function, which deals with forecasting future course of action on the best alternative for achieving the organizational goals.¹⁷ School heads formulate strategies, arrange the means required to plan, implement, direct and monitor all steps to achieve the desired objectives. The process of determining the organization's goals and then following procedures to attain goals is called planning. It predicts/forecasts the future and in planning process, the management looks and devises mechanism to implement the best set of actions to achieve the desired objectives of the organization. The concepts and practices of planning are undergoing dramatic changes in the organization. An organization's performance is badly affected if seniors do planning in isolation and do not involve teachers. In public secondary schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, experience suggests that planning practices are not given due importance and as a result the desired objectives are not achieved.

Organizing

Organizing refers to the process of bringing together all the organizational resources and development of a productive relationship to ensure the achievement of organizational goals.¹⁸ Organizing is the second element of administration as well as management. The school head acts as an administrator and also a manager. Organizing means arranging into a structured whole, organizing lesson in a planned way.¹⁹ Organizing is to coordinate the activities of a person or group effectively or to put together in orderly manner. The school head plans and organizes activities of the school. Singh viewed that Management has the duty to organize an organization to suit the prevailing conditions in the business environment.²⁰ An action plan is needed in which activities are scheduled, targets are set and are easily attained within a short period of time. Heads usually move into the organizing phase once they have established their goals and developed plans. Unluckily, in Secondary Schools of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the school activities are not properly organized as desired.²¹

Leading

Leading is the third function of administration and management. Leading means to provide direction, guidance, influence and inspire the subordinates in a school. Leading is the use of influence to motivate employees to achieve the organizational goals. It is the process of influencing and motivating others to work together to achieve organizational goals.²² Once the organizational structure is in place and people are assigned their tasks, managers work directly with all members of the organization, to help them understand the goals and enable them the best possible contributors. The secondary school head, who is a manager, administrator and an instructional leader, not only concentrates on the procedures, which are concerned with teaching- learning process, but they are also concerned with student academic achievement. They lead their staff in all the activities of the school. School heads act as leaders but practically do not involve their colleagues in achieving the desired objectives. The employees are not motivated to achieve the organizational goals.

Controlling

Controlling is a management function that involves monitoring, comparing and correcting work performance. The main purpose of controlling is to ensure the business operations to the organizational standards.²³ In the management process, management defines goals, plans, controls activities and has the responsibility to achieve the objectives. A school head must ensure the actual performance of the organization according to the performance planned for the organization. Controlling involves setting the standards, monitoring the progress and making the adjustments needed to keep the organization focused on its goals. Managers anticipate, control issues during planning phase at which they determine the appropriate controls for measuring and maintaining performance.

Coordinating

Managing the activities for achieving the desired objectives of any organization is called coordinating. Coordinating is management of the activities related to achieving an efficient use of resources to attaining the organizational goals and objectives.²⁴ School heads coordinate with District Education Officers, colleagues, teachers, parents and community in the teaching and learning activities of the school. Head of the school can be effective and efficient if they

have full coordination with their superiors, colleagues and the subordinate staff. Student academic achievement may not be high if school heads show lack of coordination in their administrative and managerial activities of the school. The form of ongoing communication to reach a goal, tracking activities towards the goal and then subsequent decisions for achieving goals is called coordinating.²⁵ School head has to maintain sound communication system with their superiors as well as their staff. The communication should not be one sided as usually from top to bottom but it should be two way even multi way communication. In public secondary schools, there is lack of coordination in the activities of the school. The school heads rarely involve the staff, nearby school heads and community in the affairs of the school.

Directing

Directing is a process in which work environment is created where people can do their best in achieving the desired goals.²⁶ Secondary school heads direct teachers, staff, coordinate with parents and community to communicate, discuss, motivate for support in active participation in the teaching and learning activities organized by the school. It is a management and administrative function of the school heads who direct their staff in all those activities of the school, which lead to students' achievement. They need to direct the staff to implement the plan and to provide leadership by delegating powers and responsibilities to staff by motivating them. The directing process also involves coordinating and controlling, the supply and use of resources to achieve the pre-determined goals of the institution.

Efficiency

Efficiency is obtaining maximum possible output for any given expenditure of the resources.²⁷ It is the utilization of minimum resources for achievement of the desired objectives and comparison of the input with the output. In secondary schools, usually funds are limited and the heads have to achieve the desired results within the available financial, human and material resources. The schools heads who successfully achieve the desired results within the limited available resources are considered as efficient and those who fail to achieve are inefficient. Efficiency is the ratio between the output of an organization and the inputs used in producing the outputs.²⁸ It is the comparison of what is actually performed with what can be achieved with the same utilization of resources (money, time, labor etc.). It is necessary to improve

school efficiency and it is the responsibility of the Heads as well as the staff to ensure utilization of all the resources in the best possible manner, to achieve the desired objectives. Efficiency of school heads revolve around the achievement of their students in the school.

Factors Affecting Efficiency

In general, there are many factors responsible for affecting the efficiency of female school Heads. Three factors are responsible for improving efficiency i.e. availability of instructional material, human and financial resources.²⁹ Increasing the level of efficiency of secondary school, there is a need to equip the school with necessary instructional material, adequate mechanism and procedures. Proper recruitment procedures are to be adopted while recruiting teachers and staff. The available resources are to be properly utilized and new resources for income of the school are to be generated by the Head with the help of the community. Peng has also presented three factors, which are directly involved in improving efficiency.³⁰ These factors are; sensitizing the community on importance of education, reinforcement of guidance and counseling in public secondary schools, and equity and access to the education is to be realized. Efficiency of the school as well as of school head can be improved if the community is sensitized regarding education, establishment of guidance and counseling in the schools and financial equity is ensured among the financial institutions.

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, secondary schools are not adequately equipped and the community is not fully sensitized about the importance of education. The human and financial resources are not up to the required level and there is lack of proper system of guidance & counseling.³¹

Improving Efficiency

Efficiency and performance of the school head depends upon the attitude and behavior of the head with the teachers and the staff. School heads today face a huge challenge in knowing and applying different skills of secondary school management but in maintaining the required professionalism for efficiently handling the available resources and practices.³² Therefore, heads of school is responsible to manage the overall academic activities according to the available resources i.e. the teachers, classrooms, material and the school budget. He/She can efficiently achieve the desired objectives if the minimum available resources are properly

utilized. Improving efficiency of the school heads has become a great concern for educationists. Bringing improvement in internal efficiency has been inspired by several considerations i.e. in the past, attention was given to the inputs provided rather than the standard of teaching and decision making process at the schools. Secondly, attention was given to the textbooks; teachers and students' attendance, rest of the relevant factors were ignored. Improving internal efficiency of the individual components does not automatically lead to improving an organization.³³ The process is contextual and improvement depends upon the capacity of each school to become an effective organization. In this regard, policies and strategies are to be devised to strengthen the supervision, evaluation, assessment and teacher management. School heads efficiency can therefore be seen as a specific instance of the general phenomenon of the selection of system.

Methodology

The study employed a quantitative research design and as a descriptive study used a questionnaire for gathering data from the given sample of female school heads.

Population

Of the 26 districts of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, as indicated above, eight districts were selected for the study; four of these eight districts were having highest literacy rates and the rest of the four districts were having lowest literacy rates. Highest literacy rate Districts consisted of Abbottabad (56.6%), Haripur (53.7%), Kohat (44%), Nowshera (42.5%) and the lowest literacy rate Districts included Upper Dir (21.2%), Battagram (18.3%), Shangla (14.7%) and Kohistan (11.8%).

Table 1: District wise literacy rates

S No.		District	Literacy Rate
1	Highest	Abbottabad	56.6%
2		Haripur	53.7%
3		Kohat	44%
4		Nowshera	42.5%
5	Lowest	Upper Dir	21.2%
6		Battagram	18.3%
7		Shangla	14.7%
8		Kohistan	11.8%

Source: Education Management Information System, EMIS, 2014 -2015 KP

Sample of the Study

230 school heads were taken as sample of the study from the Districts of Abbottabad, Haripur, Kohat, Nowshera, Upper Dir, Battagram, Shangla and Kohistan. The sample was taken on the basis of highest and lowest literacy rates and the schools for data collection were selected on the basis of high and low enrollment ratio.

Instrumentation

A questionnaire having 30 items was developed in light of the objectives of the study and administered according to the sample of the study.

Data Collection

The questionnaires were administered to respondents through post along with self-addressed envelopes and also personally administered to the respondents.

Results and Discussion

The collected data were analyzed tabulated and interpreted, Mean score and Standard Deviation of each statement of the questionnaire were calculated. Standard Deviation indicates the measure of the spread of data values. A large value of Standard Deviation indicates that points are far from Mean and small value indicates that the results are clustered closely around Mean.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

S No	Statement	<i>f</i>	Values	
			Mean	Standard Deviation
1.	School heads plan & organize the activities	230	4.06	1.06
2.	School heads coordinate with colleagues in activities of the school.	230	4.08	0.98
3.	School heads assign tasks to the teachers according to their potential.	230	3.37	1.2
4.	School heads consult teachers regarding improvement of the teaching/learning process	230	3.7	1.3
5.	School heads help teachers in the	230	4.1	0.9

instructional process.				
6.	School heads manage school finances appropriately.	230	2.60	1.1
7.	Schools heads utilize the funds properly	230	2.8	1.04
8.	School heads maintain regular contact with community	230	2.12	1.14
9.	School head needs administrative and managerial training.	230	4.3	1.01
10.	Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa may establish educational Planning & Management Academies.	230	4.60	0.60

As the results show, female school heads provided guidance to the teachers in instructional activities, delegated powers to the teachers and motivated them for better performance. However, they did not have the skills to maintain school budget and finances properly and to maintain liaison with the community. The findings show that although the schools lacked a number of resources, the available resources were not properly utilized. In this regard, three factors have been considered important for improving school efficiency i.e. availability of instructional material, human and financial resources. Efficiency of heads improves if the available resources are properly utilized with respect to time and money. The findings show that female heads needed administrative and managerial training and there is a dire need of an academy of educational administration and management in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This corroborates with the research study of Hussain, who found that professional development through pre-service and in-service training had a positive impact on the performance of the principals of secondary schools regarding planning, organizing, leading the school staff and controlling institutional activities as well as resources. The findings also show that the female school heads needed management skills in finances, and in maintaining relations with community and parents. This means that professional training facilities were needed for enhancing financial and management skills of the female heads and in developing effective relations with parents and the community.

Conclusion

As has been shown in the results and discussion above, female heads planned and organised activities of the school and helped the teachers in improving their teaching skills. The female heads delegated power to the teachers and involved teachers in decision making. However, the female heads did not maintain liaison with their colleagues as well as the community. There is scarcity of resources and the female heads did not have the skills to maintain the school budget properly and to assign tasks to the teachers according to their capabilities. The female heads motivated teachers for better performance but could not achieve the desired objectives by utilizing minimum resources. The female heads did not maintain liaison with the parents and the community and with the neighboring school heads. They are untrained and needed administrative and managerial training and in this regard, the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa may establish management training academy for improving the managerial skills of female secondary school heads. This confirms Isaiah and Isaiah's findings that: school heads are not performing their instructional functions and they are failing in their duties to monitor the teaching and learning process.³⁴ They do not communicate with their teachers.

Recommendations

From the results, discussion and conclusion, some recommendations are offered for improving policy and practice provision. Female school heads may be given administrative and managerial training at the time of their promotion and appointment as school heads. It will improve their professional skills and efficiency like proper utilization of human, material and financial resources. The Government of KP may establish new academies of administration or improve the existing Regional Institutes of Teacher Education. In these training Institutes, the school heads may be given administrative and managerial training.

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