



RESEARCH PAPER

Prevalence of Distributed Leadership in Secondary Schools of Punjab: Perspectives of Teachers

Aatika Aziz*¹ Dr. Zahida Parveen² Dr. Kiran Shehzadi³

1. Ph.D Scholar, Department of Education, Faculty of Education, University of Education, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan
2. Assistant Professor, Department of Special Education, Faculty of Education, University of Education, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan
3. Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Faculty of Education, University of Education, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

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***Corresponding
Author**

zahida.parveen@ue.edu.pk

The model of distributed leadership corresponds to a system where responsibilities are shared by the people with relevant skills instead of burdening one person on administrative post. Major purpose of this research was to explore the prevalence of distributed Leadership as practiced in the context of secondary schools of Punjab. Four hundred secondary school teachers were randomly selected from secondary schools of Lahore city. A self-developed questionnaire was used to explore perception of the teachers about prevalence of distributed leadership in their schools. The instrument consisted on thirty-five statements and seven factors of distributed leadership. Findings revealed that distributed leadership was more prevalent in terms of responsibility and accountability, initiative, and decision making, while, factors of school culture and structure, collaboration and vision, and values and beliefs were less perceived by the teachers. Further, female secondary school teachers perceive factors of collaboration and cooperation, values and beliefs and initiates as more prevalent in their schools.

Introduction

Distributed leadership is one of the leadership attitudes which are seeking national and global consideration and also enlarged maintenance in modern educational sermon (Spillane, 2006; Gronn, 2000; Harris, 2004). Distributed leadership is a framework which has hypothetical grounds to examine leadership practice in different organizations (Bennett, Harvey, wise & Woods, 2003; Timperley, 2005; Spillane, 2006). The term distributed leadership is mostly used to refer traditional management structures which is reshaped to involve more people from the organization in leadership roles and decision making. It also refers to a formal organizational structure with an inclination to emphasize line management. The senior members in an organization are included in senior management team or a member of a leadership team.

Distributed leadership theory creates an environment where all team members own the decisions of the organization and accountability is also distributed among all employees (Leithwood, Mascall, Strauss, Sacks, Memon, & Yashkina, 2006). According to Spillane, Halverson and Diamond (2001), distributed leadership in educational institutions is of great importance as distributed leadership plays a central role in the process of teaching and learning in school setting. They further agreed that distributed leadership involves all community of schools including teachers, head teachers and deputy principals. The team as a whole is responsible for accountability and decision making. Distributed leadership has a specific characteristic of interaction among group of individuals or network of interacting (Woods et al 2004, p.441).

According to Mayrowetz (2008), distributed leadership has several meanings emerged. It is considered as an emerging theory of leadership that focuses on capabilities of individual employee, their skills and their talents. This leadership theory also focuses on jointly shared responsibilities. MacBeath (2005) states that distributed leadership has the same meaning like dispersed, collaborative and democratic, and shared leadership.

The constant and demanding socio-economic changes have produced the need of restructuring educational process as well the structures of the schools. Challenges have been announced which is aiming not only to expand the educational consequences but also to achieve the adaptation in novel community needs. In educational field teacher plays role of a mediator, the person that articulates evolutions and converts into knowledge. Involvement of the educational leader in process of teacher education is necessary. Even though leadership policy is a decisive for teacher effectiveness. Some rehearses in relationship with leadership plan proved that subsidize to teacher's empowerment.

A number of researches (Dampson, 2015; Oduro, 2007; Lizotte, 2013; Harris, 2013) have verified that achievement of students and school environment much rely on teachers only if they are permitted to make meaningful changes according their perception and need. Though the autonomy should be sustainable. The responsibilities of heads should be elaborated and well defined by practices to improve the whole (OECD, 2001). In Africa and other countries an effective leadership style is focused to be followed in order to address the challenges of global education.

The environment in the typical school system largely depends upon the principles, which may include the objectives to be accomplished, the capabilities of personnel, and the proficiency that exists among different teachers in a school (Bush & Glover, 2012). Despite of the capabilities held by the teachers; they do not view themselves as teacher leaders. They only feel themselves as teacher leaders when they are assigned with the formal roles of administering events. These formal roles may include, specific class teacher, game teacher, convener of any event, etc. Though, the main purpose of Distributed Leadership is to empower a teacher and expected to assume himself as a leader (Spillane & Sherer, 2004). They found that there exist a blurred division between leader-follower distinctions in school context. Whatever the role teachers serve, either in leader role or in a follower role, they contribute significantly in the process of DL as they convey trust and participation while working in the teams (Moller & Eggen, 2005; MacBeath, 2005). Atmosphere of trust

should be developed by the teachers while sharing leadership roles (MacBeath, 2005). But as a follower, teachers should trust the leader's vision and distribution of tasks. To maintain a healthy environment of the school teachers must trust their peers to be team players and their leadership potential must be accepted (MacBeath, 2005).

The school teachers have a desire to grow in the field and they their own areas of interests and expertise where they want to excel. They have the desire to reach their goals and for this, they contribute towards development of the organization and find their fulfillment in work. The process of DL can smoothen and excel the growth and development of teachers in the school. This process improves improved organizational outcomes and produces satisfied employee. Many people in different roles carryout variety of leadership functions in a many ways (Firestone, 1996, p.396), teacher leadership is possible in school as currently structured as it completes leadership from other sources (Heller & Firestone, 1995, p.66). Teacher leaders in formal roles carry out a wide range of other leadership functions. Formal roles embrace not only management responsibilities of subject collaboration or else the responsibilities as a head of department but also relating to teaching practices and responsibilities (Leithwood et al., 1999, p.115). These formal roles take staff away from direct classroom practice (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 1996, p.23).

Roles held for teachers have to purify enough to guide action (Leithwood et al, 1999, p.115) as the lack of role clarification or role confusion is a barrier to teacher leadership. However, scorn role clarification, when middle managers absorb formal roles, their activities remain concentrate upon managing issues rather than leadership matters (Cranston, 2006, p.94).

Principals have always been accepted as a key constituent in school environment and they play a vital role in the improvement of school environment. Those principals are considered as effective leaders who work for the transformation of the school where they work. This transformation has deep roots and a real change for schools. Importance of principals in transformation of the schools are widely accepted by school effectiveness and movements based on research of school community. It is accepted that principals play important role in the development and successful implementation of the policies in schools. Recently, research focuses and confirms that those principals are held to be effective leaders who promote culture of quality teaching and learning process in the classrooms. Another characteristic of effective principals is promoting an environment having motivation for teachers and high expectations (Day & Harris 2002, p.957).

Concept of trust comes from the literature as playing a significant role (Duignan 2006). Teacher's requisite to feel atmosphere of trust and support by their principals and their associates. Harris (2004) describes that operational and cultural obstacles operate within the school and this leads to difficulty in showing qualities of leadership by teachers. Challenging power in a school can create a environment which is not favorable. For instance, young teachers conveying their view, if it differs from the customary or predominant opinion. Such actions could be taken as threat.

Distributed Leadership necessitates an ultimate change of understanding of the leaders and how they interpret the leadership role. Distributed Leadership avoids focusing on the formal system of one man show. It favors the establishment of team

work and healthy relationships among people for the betterment of the students and whole school environment.

Adaptation of Distributed Leadership by a school administration involves a multidirectional flow of influence that interlinks all personnel working in the school system: school principal, counselors, teachers, psychologist, and other organization members. Distributed Leadership is a significant exercise in schools since principals' face have short time and they are over occupied with many administrative tasks and instructional activities. Leading successfully a school has become very challenging for school heads and they need to prepare teacher leaders in order to share their administrative tasks in order to improve school standards. Moreover, school principals also have to meet the challenges posed by policy revisions related with teacher evaluation on daily basis, standards for student achievement and resolving community related issues. Henceforward, (Natsiopoulou & Giouroukakis, 2010) recommended distributed leadership model for schools as it is not possible for a single individual to effectively administer the organization.

Additionally, when teachers are engaged in the process of decision making following distributed leadership, they are assigned with the roles according to their expertise which provides them rich experiences in many important areas including planning curriculum, official communication, and budgeting. This strategic distribution of distributed leadership enhances the capacity of organization to learn new skills, problem solving, and promotes ownership of performance (DeMatthew, 2014). Principally, this process of leadership prepares teachers to become teacher leaders.

A study conducted by Rutledge (2009) with a title of Teacher Leadership and school refinement: A Case Study of Teachers Partake in the Teacher Leadership Network with a Regional Education Service Center. This was a multiple case study and the purpose of this case study was to explore the perceptions of teachers and heads as they both share the leadership roles in schools. Further this case study focused on examining the particular experiences of teachers and head teachers about their shared roles for better functions and supporting initiatives taken for the improvement of school as a whole organization. The study was conducted at a regional education service center. The teachers of the center participated in different activities designed for professional development. For the purpose of validating the findings of the research, different sources of evidences were used. Method of this research included interviews of teacher leaders and head teachers, interviews of colleague teachers, observations of the teacher leaders, a survey of teacher leaders, a rubric for teachers, documents collection related to school initiatives. The data for this research was conducted over the year and individually analyzed and also collectively. The perceptions of teacher leaders and their effect on work of the principal and the improvement initiatives. The findings of the study were found to be consistent with conceptual framework. The leadership work is valued and the teacher leader is always respected by the colleagues of the teacher leader. Teacher leaders feel successful when they are provided with the appropriate support from the campus leadership and leadership responsibilities are shared with the principal. It was also found that both principals and teachers are working together to improve the situation of teaching and learning process in their schools and focusing on student achievement. Further, it was established that establishing a trusting and collaborative

relationship among all faculty members play role in achieving the goals of school improvement.

Jenny (2007) conducted a study to investigate the role of teacher leader contributing towards the organization's capacity to change. The results of the study found that functionalist organizations have discourse of privilege and dominance. The distribution of functions by the principal results in dominance and oppresses the teacher leadership. It was found that teacher leadership is not distributed rather emergent. It was recommended that if leadership is shared then it generates a wide capacity for organizational change. It was also concluded that organization itself has to be reimaged for the purpose of contribution of teacher leadership in the capacity of organization to change.

Extensive literature review was done to find out the factors of DL. Literature revealed that school culture and structure (Elmore, R. F, 2000), strategic vision (Collins and Porras, 1991), values and beliefs (Parker, 1990), collaboration and cooperation (Harris, 2004), decision making (Hargreaves, 2007), responsibility and accountability (Harris, 2008), initiative are major factors of distributed leadership

Material and Methods

For the purpose of research, quantitative approach was employed to survey the secondary school teachers in order to obtain their perspectives about distributed leadership in their schools. Secondary school teachers were approached in order to get the data through a self- developed survey. The target population of the study was teachers (both Male and female) of secondary schools of Lahore. Proportional Stratified sampling technique was used to sample the respondents from the population. All five tehsils named, Lahore Cantt, Lahore city, Model town, Shalimar and Raiwind were part of the research. A list of schools for all these subgroups of population was obtained from website of school education and proportionately schools were selected from each tehsil. In first phase of sampling, 82 schools from 332 were selected and in second phase 400 teachers were selected randomly from these schools.

The instrument used for the research purpose was a self developed questionnaire. Close ended questionnaire was developed by the researchers for the purpose of the study. This questionnaire consisted on three parts: first part was related with demographic information of teachers i.e gender, age, teaching experience etc. The second part consisted on thirty-four statements divided into seven factors of distributed leadership. These factors were named as: strategic vision, school culture and structure, collaboration and cooperation, values and beliefs, decision making, responsibility and accountability, and initiative. These factors were containing thirty four statements in total. The questionnaire was validated from the experts of the field and after incorporating their suggestions, the instrument was pilot tested on forty secondary school teachers. The reliability coefficient for part B of the instrument was found to be 0.79. The final version of the questionnaire was used to collect data from secondary school teachers of Lahore.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 indicates that questionnaire was equally distributed between males (50.2%) and females (49.8%). Most of the respondents were M.A/M.Sc. (70.5%) and relatively a smaller number of respondents were B.A/BSc. (19.8%) and a few of them were MPhil. (9.8%). Probably, higher number of teachers with master degree were revealed in the sample as recruitment criteria for secondary school teacher is Master degree. The respondents having professional degree of B.Ed. (49.5), M.Ed. (46.0%) while a few (4.5%) of them have done other professional degree like C.T, P.T.C, and Diploma in Education. Majority of teachers were with job experience of 1-5 years (28.5%) and 23.2% were with 6-10 years of experience.

Table 1
Frequencies of Demographic Variables of Secondary School Teachers

Sr.No.	Variables	Group	Frequency N=400	Percentage %
1	Gender	Male	201	50.2
		Female	199	49.8
2	Academic Qualification	B.A/B.Sc.	79	19.8
		M.A/M.Sc.	282	70.5
		M.Phil.	39	9.8
3	Professional Qualification	B.Ed.	198	49.5
		M.Ed.	184	46.0
		Other	18	4.5

Second part of the questionnaire was divided into seven factors of distributed leadership in order to explore detailed process in schools. Table 2 presents means and standard deviation of each statement.

Table 2
Description of Mean and S.D of Factors of Distributed Leadership

Sr.No.	Statement	Mean	SD
School culture and structure			
1	Professionals decide the responsibilities	3.64	1.035
2	The leadership roles in teams are formally agreed	3.64	1.050
3	Decisions are made within the predetermined body of responsibilities	3.72	1.013
4	Everyone has the opportunity to participate in the process of decision making	3.79	.957
5	Formal structure facilities informal leaderships at all levels	3.79	.926
6	Regular consultation meetings	3.81	.990
7	Opportunities of professional development for the staff	3.84	.945
Strategic Vision			
8	Opportunity of shared vision	3.71	.945

9	Encouraging of common values	3.73	.904
10	Staff owns their work activities	3.78	.825
11	Students owns their work activities	3.78	.984
12	Development of school as knowledge organization	3.82	.925
Values and beliefs			
13	Team leaders view mistakes as learning opportunity	3.69	.884
14	Teachers have sureness in each other's responsibilities	3.78	.939
15	Professionals practice mutual respect	3.78	.890
16	High standards for professionals	3.72	.982
Collaboration and Cooperation			
17	Teachers work collaboratively to deliver best results	3.77	.963
18	Leadership provides opportunity to express individual opinions on school improvement matters	3.76	1.039
19	Staff members share their knowledge & experience	3.69	1.112
20	Help one another in solving problems	3.72	1.036
21	Sufficient time for collaboration with colleagues	3.78	.987
Decision Making			
22	I am free to decide about content	3.86	.899
23	I am free to decide regarding organizing work	3.79	.957
24	I am free to decide about professional development	3.78	.983
25	All teachers are involved in decision making	3.78	.999
26	Decisions are made from top although professionals got opportunity for decision making	3.84	.906
Responsibility and Accountability			
27	I am kept accountable for completion of my job	3.91	.823
28	I feel responsible for performance of tasks	3.95	.845
29	I can take responsibility without process of accountability	3.80	.922
31	Teachers share together everyday jobs for each other's conduct	3.82	.868
Initiatives			
32	Ideas come from the top	3.83	.846
33	Freedom is provided to pay ideas to improve work in the organization	3.80	.812
34	Teachers are encouraged to take initiatives	3.82	.876
35	The power is distributed among teachers based upon level of expertise	3.93	.667

Table 2 indicates that distributed leadership is prevalent in school structure and culture. Under this factor, majority of teachers (M:3.84) agree that the school leadership supports opportunities of professional development for the staff member while comparatively less agreement was found for formally agreed leadership roles in the school (M:3.64) and teachers are encouraged to take decisions in programmed restrictions of obligation (M:3.64). Further, results revealed that under the factor of strategic vision, majority of teachers (M:3.84) agreed that their leadership has a vision of development of school as a learning organization. The factor of values and beliefs revealed that majority of teachers believe that teachers have sureness in each other's abilities (M:3.78) and teachers show mutual respect towards each other (M: 3.78). A lower number of teachers agreed upon that seniors view mistakes as a learning chance in the organization (M:3.68). While responding to the factor of collaboration and cooperation, teachers agree that their organization provides enough space and time to work together with colleagues on work related issues (M:3.78) and less agreement was found about sharing of knowledge and experiences with each other (M:3.69). Distributed leadership is also prevalent in decision making processes in the schools and majority of teachers (M:3.86) agreed that they are free to make their own decisions for school. Another more prevalent factor of distributed leadership was responsibility and accountability where majority agreed (M:3.91) that they are accountable to the ultimate leader for the completion of tasks assigned. While responding to the prevalence of distributed leadership in taking initiatives majority agreed (M:3.93) that all responsibilities are assigned to the teachers based upon their near proficiency.

Responsibility and Accountability was major factor revealed from the data. It indicated that responsibility & Accountability within distributed leadership was most prevalent factor with 3.87 average mean in secondary schools. Initiatives practiced with 3.84 average mean is second prevalent factor of distributed leadership in secondary schools of Punjab.

Decision making was also prevalent with 3.81 average mean after initiative factor. Data analysis reveals that Strategic vision is also an important factor in distributed leadership with 3.76 average mean in secondary schools of Lahore.

It was observed that school culture & structure, values & beliefs and collaboration & cooperation are relatively less practiced with 3.74 average mean in secondary schools of Lahore.

Independent sample t-test was used to check the perception about DL on the base of gender (males & females). Whether the attitudes of both are different towards distributed leadership.

Table 3
Difference on the basis of Gender

Variable	Gender				T	Df	P
	Male=201		Female=199				
	M	SD	M	SD			
Culture Structure	26.06	4.467	26.38	4.523	.717	-322	.588

Strategic Vision	18.53	3.018	19.13	2.983	1.977	-.593	.333
Values & Beliefs	14.79	2.959	15.16	2.466	1.340	-.365	.022
Collaboration Cooperation	18.37	4.177	19.09	3.267	1.901	-.712	.008
Decision Making	18.77	3.159	19.35	3.142	1.827	-.576	.271
Responsibility Accountability	15.32	2.373	15.62	2.268	.565	-.300	.565
Initiatives	15.08	2.724	15.68	1.887	2.558	-.599	.000

Table 3 shows results of independent sample t test to find out differences in perceptions of secondary school teachers of Lahore about factors of Distributed Leadership. The results revealed no significant difference was found in perceptions of males and females about the prevalence of culture and structure ($t=0.71$, $sig=0.58$), strategic vision ($t=0.593$, $sig=.333$), decision making ($t=1.827$, $sig=0.271$) and responsibility and accountability ($t=0.56$, $sig=0.56$) factors of distributed leadership.

Further, the table shows that there was significance difference among perceptions of males (Mean=14.69, SD=2.959) and of females (Mean=15.16, SD=2.466) about values and beliefs in the process of DL in their schools. Females have more positive perception about existence of values and beliefs. Table reveals that there is a significant difference in collaboration & cooperation of males (Mean=18.37, SD=4.177) and of females (Mean=19.09, SD=3.267) with ($p=.008$). Females are having more positive perception towards prevalence of collaboration and cooperation in their schools. In last factor there was a significance difference in prevalence of factor initiatives of males (Mean=15.08, SD=2.724) and females (Mean=15.68, SD=1.887). Females got slightly more positive attitude than males toward taking initiatives on their own about school related problems.

Findings

Findings disclosed that responsibility and accountability was most prevalent factor in schools. The amount of freedom to contribute their own ideas seems to be the expectations in almost all schools.

Teachers perceived decision making positively. There are opportunities for professionals in the school to make decisions in their work. However it is seen that it is not practiced commonly. Teachers notified that everyone mostly involved in the process of decision making but they also admitted that decisions still come from top.

Distributed Leadership and participation arrangements for imparting serving also giving sentiment so as on accomplish aggregate desire. Class educators recognize distributed collaboration. Instructor's trust that experts in the school worth of effort work together will convey one school comes about they should assist each other.

The same inclination could a chance to be seen on qualities it is more conditioning. It is those incredulous idea about instructors on the acceptance for mistakes. Those clinched alongside written works specified 'can do' culture,

opportunity will analysis which dives as an inseparable unit with settling on mistakes may be not an overwhelming social characteristic as stated by numerous educators.

A standout amongst the every now and again specified vital Components for dispersed heading for written works will be an imparted dream in the class. Teachers' scores are additional unbiased. In spite of the fact that instructors would not negative, it Might be doubted if educators need a greater amount imparting.

There appears should be minimal assertion something like those school structure giving conveyed authority exercises. Educators need aid much All the more negative. This applies especially of the chances on take an interest previously, choice making and the assembly of casual authority at numerous levels in the school. Instructors appear to be on experience the more set option should decide.

Conclusions

According to the survey it is concluded that teachers of secondary schools were well aware of Distributed Leadership style. Factors of DL were prevalent in secondary schools of Lahore.

They gave their views about their organization's atmosphere. They told that they mostly got opportunity to participate in school leadership roles. In schools, teachers got opportunity to share their vision. Teachers got opportunity to learn and freedom to made decision regarding their job-related issues.

Majority of teachers reported that they are held accountable for their job. Although they were in opinion that ideas come from top. But they also got opportunity to involve. Overall, distributed leadership was more prevalent in terms of responsibility and accountability, initiative, and decision making, while, factors of school culture and structure, collaboration and vision, and values and beliefs were less perceived by the teachers. Further, female secondary school teachers perceive factors of collaboration and cooperation, values and beliefs and initiates as more prevalent in their schools.

Recommendations

1. This study was conducted under limited scope, limited time period as restricted sample size. It is recommended to extend this research with broader scope and larger spread of sample.
2. Through this study views of teachers of secondary schools has been collected, located in Lahore Dist. In future other dist. could added as sample or provinces to enhance the generality of the findings.
3. Leadership style of school should be revised according to the needs and abilities of the faculty members.

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