

Interplay between Leadership Styles and Effective Communication of Teachers at Higher Level

Quratul Ain Hina*, Zawar Hussain**

Abstract

The major objectives of the study were to assess the effect of leadership styles (Autocratic leadership style, Participative leadership style and Delegate leadership style) on effective communication of the teachers at higher level and to compare leadership styles/effective communication of the teachers at higher level on the basis of experience. The survey based descriptive research style was used for the study. The population of the research was based on 9421 teachers serving in the public sector universities of Islamabad. For the study 66 teachers were taken as sample through convenient sampling. Researcher personally visited to the teachers for data collection through the use of questionnaires. Leadership style questionnaire was developed on the basis of leadership styles presented by Kurt Lewin's (1939) and was found reliable at 0.75. Questionnaire for effective communication was developed by the researcher and was based on 24 items. It was also found reliable at 0.90. Data was statistically analyzed by using Reliability, Correlation, Regression and ANOVA test. The results shows that the leadership styles had 31% (**p <0.01) effect on effective communication (Autocratic leadership style = 22% (**p <0.01), Participative leadership style = 39% (**p <0.01) and Delegate leadership style = 2%). However there was no statistically significant difference between employees on the basis of experience regarding leadership styles and effective communication. As the participative style was found highly effective for communication so it was recommended that the teachers need to be trained to involve the class in peer work and discussion. Further we need to develop an environment of trust between teachers and students for that there is a need of organizing social activities at university level to provide an informal platform to interact with each other and develop trust.

Keywords: Leadership, Autocratic, leadership style, Participative leadership style, Delegate leadership style and Effective Communication.

*Assistant Professor, Department of Education, National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad, Pakistan.

Email: drquratulainhina@gmail.com

**M.Phil Scholar, Department of Education, National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad, Pakistan.

Email: zawarh204@gmail.com

Introduction

Teachers are the leaders of the generations. The strength of the generations depends on the quality of the teachers provided to them. That is the reason that vigilant governments always plan and make serious efforts to ensure quality in teacher training, so that the teachers that any education system is producing need to be competent enough to develop healthy habits and positive attitude in the future generation. Being the leader of the generation the heavy responsibility comes on the shoulders of the teachers. The developed countries invest on the quality of instruction and the facilities for the training of the teachers generously. However the developing and under developing countries have much more issues to face including the financial as well. Due to the financial constrain the developing and under developing countries have to sacrifice on the quality of teacher education some times. However all the countries are agreed upon the fact that the teachers are the leaders of the next generation and being the leaders they need to have leadership abilities to deal with the students in the classrooms. If we want to see our students motivated, enthusiastic, creative, energetic and engaged, we need to train our teachers to develop such learning environment for the students being their leader.

Being effective leader is not only a independent variable. It is affected by many factors and also further effects many factors. It is dependent on once personality traits, brought up, family, environment, ability, experiences etc and further it effects the level of motivation, satisfaction, turnover, communication etc. It is observed that the people with good leadership abilities are generally good speakers as well. The public like to listen the talk of the leader to whom they like. Same is the case with the students. The students also like to listen the teacher to whom they like. Although all the teacher are equally respectable and can be competent in the field, however the communication ability differ in all individuals. Being humans all the teachers have different styles of leadership and depending upon their leadership they would have different level of effective communication.

As in Pakistan the leadership is a burning issue so the researcher planned this study to focus teachers as the leaders of the generation. The research is basically to assess the leadership styles prevailing in teachers and its effect on effective communication in the context of Pakistani culture.

Research Objectives

1. To assess the effect of leadership style on effective communication of the teachers at higher level.
 - a. To assess the effect of Autocratic leadership style on effective communication of the teachers at higher level.

- b. To assess the effect of Participative leadership style on effective communication of the teachers at higher level.
 - c. To assess the effect of Delegate leadership style on effective communication of the teachers at higher level.
2. To compare leadership styles of the teachers at higher level on the basis of teaching experience.
3. To compare effective communication of the teachers at higher level on the basis of teaching experience.

Research Hypotheses

H₀1. There is no significant effect of leadership styles on effective communication of the teachers at higher level.

- a. There is no significant effect of Autocratic leadership style on effective communication of the teachers at higher level.
- b. There is no significant effect of Participative leadership style on effective communication of the teachers at higher level.
- c. There is no significant effect of Delegate leadership style on effective communication of the teachers at higher level.

H₀2. There is no significant difference in leadership styles of the teachers at higher level on the basis of teaching experience.

H₀3. There is no significant difference in effective communication of the teachers at higher level on the basis of teaching experience.

Significance of the Study

The study would be helpful for the teachers in order to understand the prevailing leadership styles. They would be able to assess the pros and cons of different leadership styles and would be able to choose the style for their professional life. The teachers would also be able to understand the importance of effective communication as well in the professional life of the teachers and would learn the ways to improve the communication. The administration would get benefit from the research and they would be able to devise a policy for the teachers to train them related to the leadership abilities and communication skills. The teacher education curriculum/ institutions may also add the content from the findings and recommendations of this research for the improvement of the course.

Literature Review

Leaders are the builders of the nations (Kawar, 2012). Every nation needs an efficient leadership to ensure stability and progress (Brown & Harvey, 2006). Leadership is a quality that can be produced and improved with the help of training and mentoring. To develop this quality in the future generation we need to develop leadership skills among our teachers (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010). Teachers are the most influential factor in the personality development of the children at stages of education (Coatesa et al., 2010). This topic is still in discussion that leaders are born by birth or developed as a product of time and need (Dessler, 2004).

However it is the need of the time to focus on leadership qualities of the teachers being the builders of the nation (Dessler, 2012). The theories of leadership discuss certain traits that are considered to be associated with the leaders such as truthfulness, honesty, hard work, vision and devotion (Bhatti et al., 2012). Researchers who believe in the trait theory of leadership are of the view that there are certain in born qualities that make a man a good leader on the other hand there are experts who have the different opinion. They are of the view that the leadership qualities can be produced, developed and polished as a need of situation (Saadi et al., 2009). They termed it transformational and transactional leaders (Ismail, 2010). Some experts are of the view that leaders have an influential personality that can inspire others in a magical way (Fullan & Scott, 2009). Leadership qualities are affected by the individual differences as well. That is the reason there are different styles of leadership available. In these styles Autocratic, Democratic, Participative and Delegate styles are commonly known (Yukl, 2006). It is still a topic of discussion that which style can be more effective. It all depends on situation to situation and task and task (Tahseen, 2010).

Whatever the style is used, effective leadership has multiple benefits on organizational success. Effective leadership ensures low rate of turnover, job satisfaction, motivation, effective conflict resolution and effective communication process (Landis & Eric, 2011). Communication effectiveness is one of the biggest and most important outcomes of effective leadership. A leader without clarity of communication cannot play his role effectively (Lizzio et al., 2010). Effective communication refers to the transfer of ideas, feelings and emotions in an effective and proper way, without disturbing the spirit of the message (Singh, 2011).

Teachers play the role of a leader for their students (Timothy et al., 2011). Teaching process is mainly dependent on the communication process. Teacher delivers knowledge, attitudes and skills through communication (Valenti, 2010). Thus communication has to be an important element in teachers' training. Clarity of

communication further leads to the effective conflict resolution, decrease of stress, understanding, motivation etc (Bodla & Nawaz, 2010).

Methodology

The research was based on survey type descriptive research. Leadership is one of the burning issues now a day. Teachers being the leaders for coming generation are important for every nation. That is why survey based descriptive research design was selected to address this research area. The population of the research was based on all the 9421 faculty members serving in the public sector universities of Islamabad. So teachers in the role of leader for the students were considered as the population of the research. Convenient sampling technique was employed for the selection of sample. Due to the shortage of time the convenient sampling technique was used. 106 teachers contributed in the data collection process. However 66 teachers returned the questionnaires in complete form. Thus sample was consisted of 66 faculty members. Two questionnaires were used in the research. One questionnaire was termed as leadership style assessment scale and it was based on leadership styles presented by Kurt Lewin (1939). It was based on 3 sub sections related to Authoritative, Participative and Delegate leadership styles. To address the communication skills, a self-developed questionnaire based on 24 items was developed by the researcher. It was termed as Effective Communication Assessment Scale. Data was collected by the researcher personally. For the analysis of the data Cronbach Alpha Reliability, Intersection Correlation, Regression Analysis and ANOVA were used.

Results

Table 1

Reliability of the Scale

Scale	Subscale	Cronbach Alpha Reliability	Items
Leadership Style Assessment Scale		0.75	18
	Autocratic	0.60	05
	Participative	0.68	08
	Delegate	0.65	05
Effective Communication Assessment Scale		0.90	24

Table 1 shows that the Leadership Style Assessment Scale was found reliable at 0.75 while its sub sections Autocratic Leadership, Participative Leadership and Delegate

Leadership were also found reliable 0.60, 0.68 and 0.65 respectively. The effective communication scale was found reliable at 0.90 as well.

Table 2

Intersection Correlation of Leadership Style Assessment Scale

	Autocratic Leadership	Participative Leadership	Delegate Leadership	Leadership Style Assessment Scale
Autocratic Leadership	1	0.510**	0.324**	0.769**
Participative Leadership	0.510**	1	0.396**	0.856**
Delegate Leadership	0.324**	0.396**	1	0.706**
Leadership Style Assessment Scale	0.769**	0.856**	0.706**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2 explains the Intersection Correlation between the sub variables / sections of Leadership Style Assessment Scale. The highest correlation was found (0.856**) between Participative Leadership and Leadership Style Assessment Scale while the lowest correlation was found (0.324**) between the Autocratic and Delegate Leadership styles.

Table 3

Effect of Leadership Style on Effective Communication

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	R ²	β	t	Significant
Leadership Styles	Effective Communication	0.31	0.96	5.40	0.00
Autocratic Leadership	Effective Communication	0.22	2.09	4.25	0.00
Participative Leadership	Effective Communication	0.39	2.13	6.51	0.00
Delegate Leadership	Effective Communication	0.02	0.68	1.21	0.22

*p <0.05, **p <0.01

Table 3 shows the effect of Leadership Styles on Effective Communication. The table explains the follows:

- a. Overall the Leadership styles had 31% ($R^2 = 0.31$) effect on the Effective Communication while β value (0.96) shows that this effect was positive and statistically significant ($p = 0.00$).
- b. Further the Autocratic Leadership style had 22% ($R^2 = 0.22$) effect on the Effective Communication while β value (2.09) shows that this effect was also positive and statistically significant ($p = 0.00$).
- c. The Participative Leadership style had 39% ($R^2 = 0.39$) effect on the Effective Communication and this effect was also ($\beta = 2.13$) statistically significant ($p = 0.00$) and positive.
- a. On the other hand, the Delegate Leadership style had only 02% ($R^2 = 0.02$) effect on the Effective Communication and this effect was not found statistically significant.

Thus the hypothesis No.1 is rejected at 0.01 level of significance. Further hypothesis No. 1a and 1b are also rejected at 0.01 level of significance. However hypothesis No. 1c is accepted.

Table 4

Comparison of Leadership Styles on the basis of Teaching Experience

Variable	Group (Teaching Experience)	N	Mean	df	F	Sig.
Leadership Styles	0-1	4	62.75	61	1.02	0.40
	1-3	14	63.93			
	3-5	27	64.37			
	5-7	03	64.67			
	7-10	18	68.28			

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

Table shows that there was statistically no significant difference ($F = 1.02$) found between the respondents with reference to leadership styles on the basis of teaching experience. Thus Hypothesis No. 2 is accepted.

Table 5

Comparison of Autocratic Leadership Style on the basis of Teaching Experience

Variable	Group (Teaching Experience)	N	Mean	df	F	Significant
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Autocratic Leadership Style	0-1	4	18.00	61	1.42	0.23
	1-3	14	17.21			
	3-5	27	19.00			
	5-7	03	16.33			
	7-10	18	18.94			

*p <0.05, **p <0.01

Table 5 explains that statistically no significant difference found in Autocratic Leadership Style on the basis of Teaching Experience.

Table 6

Comparison of Participative Leadership Style on the basis of Teaching Experience

Variable	Group (Teaching Experience)	N	Mean	df	F	Sig.
Participative Leadership Style	0-1	4	28.75	61	0.40	0.80
	1-3	14	30.43			
	3-5	27	30.59			
	5-7	03	31.00			
	7-10	18	31.39			

*p <0.05, **p <0.01

Table 6 also shows that there was statistically no significant difference found in Participative Leadership Style on the basis of Teaching Experience.

Table 7

Comparison of Delegate Leadership Style on the basis of Teaching Experience

Variable	Group (Teaching Experience)	N	Mean	df	F	Sig.
Delegate Leadership Style	0-1	4	16.00	61	4.04	0.00
	1-3	14	16.29			
	3-5	27	14.78			

5-7	03	17.33
7-10	18	17.94

*p <0.05, **p <0.01

Table 7 shows that there was statistically significant difference found ($F = 4.04$) in Delegate Leadership Style on the basis of Teaching Experience. The teachers having 7 to 10 years of Teaching Experience were found better in Delegate Leadership Style.

Table 8

Comparison of Effective Communication on the basis of Teaching Experience

Variable	Group (Teaching Experience)	N	Mean	df	F	Sig.
Effective Communication	0-1	4	78.25	61	1.05	0.38
	1-3	14	83.14			
	3-5	27	89.48			
	5-7	03	88.33			
	7-10	18	84.83			

*p <0.05, **p <0.01

Table 8 shows that statistically no significant difference was found in Effective Communication on the basis of Teaching Experience, thus Hypothesis No. 3 is accepted.

Discussion

The study in hand was based on the area of leadership and communication. The major objective of the study was to assess the effect of leadership styles on the effective communication of teachers as leaders for the future generation. The study showed that leadership styles had statistically significant effect on effective communication. Further going into the detail the Autocratic and Participative leadership both had statistically significant effect on effective communication. Autocratic leadership had 22% effect while Participative leadership had 39% effect on effective communication. So Participative leadership had more effect on effective communication while delegate leadership had no significant effect. Voegtlin et al. (2012) also supports the idea that

leadership style effect on the functions in any organization and flow of communication is one of such major function. Al-Husseini & Elbeltag (2012) suggest that as the leadership styles have a great influence on development of students' personalities, so there is a need to focus on teachers' training related to leadership skills.

The other major objective of the study was to compare leadership styles and communication on the basis of teaching experience. However there is statistically no significant difference found in leadership styles and communication skills on the basis of teaching experience. Amzat & Ali (2011) also explain that leadership styles are not affected by the teaching experience. The reason may be is the lack of training and mentoring services available for teachers. They suggest that we need to provide trainings to our teachers in this regard.

Recommendations

- As the Participative style was found highly effective for communication so it was recommended that the teachers need to be trained to involve the class in peer work and discussion.
- Further we need to develop an environment of trust between teachers and students for that there is a need of organizing social activities at university level to provide an informal platform to interact with each other and develop trust.
- It has been found that the leadership (Authoritative & Participative) was effective for communication flow. So it is recommended that there is a need of maintaining a culture of sharing the new ideas on continuous basis. For this purpose there is need to arrange informal meeting once a week for employees to develop informal networks.
- As no difference in leadership styles was found on the basis of teacher experiences so it is recommended that special workshops and trainings need to be organized to improve the soft skills of the teachers time by time.
- It was found that the teachers having more than seven years of experiences were found better in delegate leadership. So it is recommended that the senior teachers need to provide guidance & counseling services to the junior teachers.
- Teachers as classroom leaders need to develop that habit of sharing, appreciation, Acknowledgement and teamwork. In this regard the motivational events and speeches may also be organized for the teachers.

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