

**An Investigation into the Administrative Role of Principals in Secondary Schools of
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Pakistan**

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Abstract

Most graduates from secondary and upper secondary schools go on to higher education institutions. In a similar vein, secondary schools supply skilled labour for the workforce. Principals are the primary stakeholders allocated administrative tasks in secondary schools that are essential to the provision of worthwhile education and that produce workforce with high demand in the market. The study aims to analyse the administrative role of principals in secondary schools in Swat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, taking into consideration their administrative role at the secondary level. The study's objectives extended beyond analysing the managerial responsibilities of secondary school principals and offering suggestions for effective secondary school management so that quality education and quality workforce could be ensured. There were 117 male secondary school principals in the population, and 100 were selected at random using simple random selection. Pilot testing confirmed that the questionnaire was valid and reliable. Personal instrument administration was used to collect data, and the chi-square test, mean scores, and standard deviation were used to analyze the results. The findings of the study demonstrated that principals create the school's vision and mission, provide facilities for learning, plan and coordinate extracurricular activities, supervise the school environment, monitor student requirements, keep track of school records, ensure sound financial management, work with parents, guardians, and the community, and communicate with upper management. The study suggested that training be given to new hires at the time of entrance, that on-the-job principals acquire technical skills in fiscal management, record-keeping behavioural management, human resource management, service regulations, and information and communication skills not only within the schools with colleagues, employees and students but also with parents and community for brighter future of the students.

Keywords: Pakistani Secondary Schools, Administrators, Roles, and Principals.

Introduction

By assisting students in developing life skills and getting them ready for a successful postsecondary education by providing students good skills in line with the market demand, by making them good citizens and by inculcating in them democratic values and spirit of Islamic and national identity and by making them multicultural literate, secondary schools help students become more employable (National Education Policy, 2009). Secondary school pupils need proper supervision in order to successfully enter the workforce and be able to seek higher education in the reputed organizations so that high paying jobs could be made easy (Watson, McMahon, Foxcroft & Els, 2010). Secondary education is an important area of education since principals there are responsible for the administrative operations of their schools, they are responsible not only for effective implementation of managerial decisions but also for ensuring quality supervision and high quality learning for the students. They oversee and carry out instructional learning processes, set the long-term goals of their schools, and maintain general order (Sawchuck, 2008). According to Fullen (1998), the administrative role of a principal is considerably more demanding and requires efficiency in order to fulfil administrative obligations. The need for competent secondary school principals has grown as a result of principals' expanding duties and demanding administrative functions. Principals who are more devoted, compassionate, and empathetic in their performance of their administrative duties tend to be

more effective (Day, 2004). To properly carry out their administrative duties, principals must possess a strong sense of passion, ownership and national duty (Harvey & Donaldson, 2003). Principals also need to own their organization and the students as that will not only enhance the reputation of their organization but also help them in performing their duties effectively in nation building process and producing good citizens. Generally people from different walk of life complaint about the falling standards of education and about the schools' environment therefore, the Principals' responsibilities are twofold. They need to build parents and community's confidence and implement the educational goals and targets devised in the national and provincial educational policies and guidelines. Making good educational policy and effective educational goals and targets are the responsibilities of the national level educational experts but its effective implementation depends on Principals' and teachers efforts. The success of such policy depends and is measured from its on the field effectiveness. That is also one of the reasons that teaching community and schools administrative heads are made part of the policy making process through different survey, seminars and workshop. The goal is to take them on board so as to ensure smooth implantation phase of such policies.

Principals' primary responsibility in the administrative sphere is to supervise the learning environment, but in the modern educational setting, they also have to plan, manage, and build relationships with students. In addition to instructional leadership, they are assigned administrative responsibilities (Ginsberg & Thompson, 1993).

In addition to their administrative responsibilities for policy creation, record keeping, and building relationships with staff members, principals in schools are also in charge of instructional leadership (Cooley & Shen, 2000). Because of the growing demands from governments and state organizations as well as from society at large, the position of principals in schools has grown considerably more dynamic and complex (Winter, Rinehart & Munoz, 2004). As per Peterson and Deal's (2009) findings, principals are tasked with comprehending the school's vision and mission and subsequently implementing these plans into real-world teaching and learning activities as well as extracurricular pursuits to help schools realize their goals.

The principals have to deal effectively with students, with human resource within school and parentage and have to fulfil their expectations. They also have to make decisions in times of emergency. Trail (2000) studied about the administrative role of principals and came up with the conclusion that principals are responsible for the administration of instructional leadership, financing and budgeting, supervision and assessment of the overall school activities. He further demonstrates that principals are also responsible for the management of infrastructure, human relationship and teachers' accountability.

Alberta Education (2009) reported that the functions of schools as organizations have become multifaceted and the role of principals have become dynamic in terms of managerial and administrative responsibilities. New technology, competition among private educators and access to information have raised the standards of the parents expectation of the schools' management i.e. Principals' and from the education system generally. Principals are responsible for creating the school's mission, setting priorities within the meagre resources, overseeing finances ensuring smooth audit and budgeting, using human resources effectively, defining strategies for school improvement in terms of facilities, environment and learning, building cordial relationships with the community generally and with parents specifically, creating systems for accountability and supervision, gathering data, and building rapport with education department representatives. Principals' administrative responsibilities were emphasized by Lunenburg (2010), who categorized them as conceptual, technical, and human. He also discovered that social relationships, time management, interpersonal relationship development, academic activity coordination, budgeting, and financial development were all responsibilities of successful principals.

Allen and Gawlik (2009) identified that principals in schools were responsible for administrative responsibilities like provision of school physical and learning facilities, maintaining finances, selection and recruitment of staff, controlling finances, coordinating with school authorities and admission of students in schools and ensuring good learning environment. Germeten (2011) investigated the administrative role of principals and found that principals are faced with the issues of low finances, lack of staff and heavy load of work. The principal were also faced with the issue of low level of cooperation from the authorities in implementation of newly introduced curricula.

It is evident from the review of the research studies that principals are the administrators and key figures in secondary schools. They are responsible for preparing the vision and mission of the schools, record keeping, management of staff and finances, relationship with society and school authorities and monitoring and evaluation of the school activities. Therefore, the researchers investigated the administrative role of principals in secondary schools of district Swat Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Methods and procedures Population and Sample selection Population of this research study encompassed of 117 heads of male public secondary level schools of Swat area of KP, Province of Pakistan. A sample of 100 school heads with simple random sampling was selected due to homogeneous nature of the population in order to study to the target population.

Tools

The investigators created a questionnaire as a means of gathering information about the managerial responsibilities of secondary school principals. Through piloting, the dependability of the questionnaire was established and validated. The questionnaire's reliability was determined to be 0.823. The dependable instrument was used to gather information from secondary school principals after its dependability was confirmed. The information gathering process was personally administered so as to ensure authenticity of the process and of the resultant data.

Examination of the gathered information

The research participants, or secondary school administrators, completed the questionnaires in person, which allowed for the personal administration of data collection which also indicate the seriousness of the participants and researcher. Tables containing the gathered data were then analysed using both inferential and descriptive statistics. The data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences and the mean scores, standard deviation, and chi-square test of significance were employed.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 The Principal’s administrative responsibilities in Secondary Schools

Statements	N	Mean	S. D	χ^2	P
Preparing vision and mission of the school	100	2.57	.858	69.26	.000
Provision of school plant	100	2.56	.869	70.46	.000
Organizing teaching learning process	100	2.64	.761	100.94	.000
Arranging co-curricular activities	100	2.55	.809	81.50	.000
Supervision of school activities	100	2.73	.870	70.46	.000
Identifying needs and demands of students	100	2.54	.859	69.26	.000
Maintaining school record	100	2.76	.622	125.36	.000
Financial management of the school	100	2.72	.649	116.06	.000
Collaboration with parents and society	100	2.70	.689	112.22	.000
Coordination with educational authorities	100	2.58	.796	76.58	.000
Monitoring and evaluation of the staff	100	2.77	.648	116.09	.000
Reward and Punishment	100	2.66	.713	98.96	.000
Cumulative	100	31.17	2.944	38.320	.000

The table highlights the administrative role of principals in secondary schools. The mean scores of 2.57, 2.56, 2.64 and 2.55 with standard deviations of .858, .869, .761 and .809 demonstrate that participants are agree that principals prepare the vision and mission of the schools, provide school plan for short term and long term activities’, organized the teaching learning process and arrange co-curricular events. Participants responses are not divers and not off the mean scores.

The mean scores of 2.73, 2.54, 2.76 and 2.72 with standard deviations of .870, .859, .622 and .649 demonstrate that participants are agree that principals supervise the events of their organization, trace and track the requirements of the students, maintain the record of the school and ensure the fiscal management of the school. The responses are not scattered from mean scores suggesting significance of the results.

The participants' agreement is indicated by the mean scores of 2.70, 2.58, 2.77, and 2.66 with standard deviations of .689, .796, .648, and .713, which show that principals interact with parents and higher management, keep an eye on and evaluate institutional workers, and administer rewards and punishments. The participants' responses do not deviate from the average scores. The standard deviation of 2.944 and the cumulative mean score of 31.17 indicate that participants generally agree with the administrative role that principals play in secondary schools. The chi-square test yielded significant results in terms of the statistical data yield.

Discussion

The study looked into the administrative duties of secondary school principals and discovered that

they play a big part in running secondary schools. Principals design the school's strategic objectives, maintain the infrastructure, coordinate the curriculum, and plan extracurricular activities. They keep an eye on school operations, assess student needs and requests, keep track of school records, and oversee the school's financial management. They also work together with the community and parents, plan with the high level administration in charge of education related matters, keep an eye on collective and individual performance and assess the school personnel duty and behaviour, and administer rewards and penalties. In line with the research findings of Sawchuck (2008), secondary school principals oversee school management.

They formulate the vision and mission of their schools, organize teaching learning process and keep the overall discipline. The same findings are also reported by Day (2004) principals are responsible for the administration of the school and they show empathy and commitment for doing their administrative role. Similarly, Ginsberg and Thompson (1993) found that principals supervise the teaching learning process, plan school activities, manage schools and establish human relationship. Similar findings are also reported by the study of Cooley and Shen (2000) who found that principals were responsible for instructional leadership, policy making, and record keeping and establishing human relationship. Consistent with the study's findings, Peterson and Deal (2009) have determined that principals have the responsibility to comprehend the school's vision and mission and then translate that plan into practical teaching and learning activities as well as co-curricular activities for the realization of the school's visions and missions; they also have to deal with students and students related problems including both behavioural and academic problems , teachers and relevant issues of the teachers, and parents effectively and meet their expectations for their children better future; additionally, they must make decisions during emergencies; and finally, Trail (2000) conducted a study regarding the administrative role of principals and concluded that principals are accountable for the administration of instructional leadership, financing and budgeting

Similar findings were also reported by Allen and Gawlik (2009), who identified that principals in schools were responsible for administrative responsibilities like provision of school physical and learning facilities, maintenance of interpersonal relationships, supervision and assessment of the overall activities of the school, and teachers' accountability. Lunenburg (2010) also highlighted the administrative roles of the principals and classified them as conceptual, technical, and human. He further found that effective principals were involved in establishing social relationships, managing time, developing interpersonal relationships, managing human resource, coordinating academic activities, and developing budget and finances.

In summary Examining the administrative function of principals in secondary schools was the study's first goal. The study discovered that principals have a crucial administrative role in secondary school administration. Principals create the school's vision and mission, manage the facilities, oversee curricular and extracurricular activities, and organize instruction oversee instructors instructions and provide feedback. They keep an eye on school operations, assess student needs and requests, keep track of school records, and oversee the school's financial management. They also work together with society and parents, plan with authorities in the field of education, keep an eye on and assess school personnel, and administer rewards and sanctions.

Making recommendations for effective secondary school administration was the study's second goal. The study suggested that training be given to prospective secondary school principals as well as enhancing the skills of seasoned principals in areas such as personnel management, record keeping, financial management, and service regulations. To accomplish efficient school administration, principals must also receive computer skills training.

Recommendation

Considering the goals of the investigation, the researchers suggested the following:

1. When new principals start at a school, there might be capacity-building trainings for school administrators to help them become efficient leaders and ensure smooth operations and day to day affairs.
2. Refresher courses in financial management, record keeping, personnel management, service rules and efficiency, and disciplinary rules may be offered to current principals.
3. To aid in the efficient management of their schools, principals may receive training in the use of information and communication technology.

4. Research on the administrative responsibilities of elementary school principals may be carried out on a larger scale involving larger population and data field.
5. Research on the administrative responsibilities of female principals of secondary schools may also be done in a similar manner.
6. Female principals' may be provided training in the culturally appropriate setting segregated from male participants so that can openly discuss their problems and apprehensions about different schools related management issue.
7. Mechanism may be devised through the government agencies to ensure school audits in terms of students learning and understanding.
8. As schools provide raw material for colleges and universities, therefore a mechanism under the government supervision may devised where for the joint colloquial where both the organizations could convey each other different working recommendation for betterment of school and learning quality.

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