

Decision Making Style of Secondary School Head Masters with Reference to their Length of Service

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the study was to investigate the decision making style of secondary school headmasters with reference to their length of service. The sample of two hundred (200) headmasters was drawn through systematic random sampling technique from different government secondary schools of the Kashmir Valley. Decision making style scale developed by Ganihar (2005) was administrated to collect data from sample subjects. Collected data were analyzed with the help of Percentage Statistics Mean, S.D, & Test of significance. The results of the study revealed that senior headmasters are applying a heuristic type of decision as compared to junior headmasters who were observed in routine decision making styles. The study further revealed that length of service has no impact on making the compromise style of decisions as both the groups of headmasters are applying a compromise type of decisions as far as it benefits the school.

Keywords: *Decision Making Style, Secondary Schools, Headmasters, Length of Service*

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Introduction

The headmaster is the major component of any educational enterprise. Everything in the school plant-the staff, the curriculum, methods and techniques of teaching, co-curricular activities, human relationships bear the impression of the personality of the headmaster. The headmaster is believed to be the keystone in the arch of school administration. He is the hub round whom the educational efforts revolve. He is a group leader who knows how to involve people, how to arrange conditions and initiate operations that will bring out the best in each participant. The headmaster is the group leader to lead and stimulate group effort. In the school management, the headmaster occupies a singular place. Decision-making is the selection of an alternative, from two or more alternatives to determine and opinion or a course of action. A decision is the selection of a course of action from two or more alternatives; the decision making process is a sequence of steps leading to that selection (Williams, 2007). Educational institutions are complex organizations in the sense that they deal with human beings at every level. The input (students), the process (rules and regulations), as well as the output (learning outcomes), all are human beings. Therefore, the headmaster who manages the educational organization should have a deep and expert knowledge of decision-making.

Decision-making is the most crucial aspect of educational management. Research suggests that decision-making is one of the salient factors upon which the survival of any organization is based. In this respect, Dunham (1995) asserts that the wellbeing of all the school community members and the survival of the school heavily depended upon the decision-making skills of managers. For this reason, the most critical task in an organization is the process of deciding a desirable course of action. Therefore, headmasters in educational organizations should have a profound knowledge of decision-making, and be able to make effective decisions. According to George and Jones (2000) "the success of any organization depends on managers' abilities to make effective decisions". The concept of decision-making consists of decision taking and decision-making process. A decision is a judgment. It is a choice between two or more alternatives. This definition implies three things: 1) when managers make decisions they are choosing, 2) managers have alternatives available when they are making a decision and 3) managers have a purpose in mind when they make a decision. Decisions are not made in a vacuum. There is an orderly process underlying decision-making. According to (Glueck 2006), decision making is the process of thought and deliberation that leads to a decision. Kumar (2010) found that aided schools head

leadership behavior was better than the Government schools head leadership behavior & unaided schools head leadership behavior was better than the Government schools heads leadership behavior. Roelle (2010) confirmed that principals who rated their own job satisfaction and efficacy as high gave their superintendent a high rating on their decision making potential. Decision- making is considered as an indispensable component of the management process and headmasters’ life is filled with making decisions after decisions. They see decision making as their central job. Since decisions making involves one’s competence, his personality makes up, besides administrative orientation. For that the head of the institution should possess a balanced type of personality which helps him to accommodate all quires as an when a particular situation allows them to rise.

Objectives

1. To study the decision making style of senior and junior secondary school headmasters.
2. To compare senior and junior secondary school headmasters on various dimensions of decision making style.

Hypothesis

1. Senior school headmasters differ significantly from junior school headmasters on various dimensions of decision making style.

Operational definitions of terms and Variables

Decision Making Style

Decision-making style in the present study refers to the dominant set of scores as measured by the Decision Making Scale designed by Noorjehan N. Ganihar.

Length of Service

Length of Service in the present investigation means the number of years put in the service career by the sample subjects. Subjects with more than eight years and less than five years of field experience have been considered as senior and junior headmasters respectively.

Sample

The sample for the present investigation consisted of (200) headmasters drawn from various high schools of Kashmir Valley by adopting a systematic random sampling technique.

Tool Used

Decision Making Style Scale developed by Noorjehan. N. Ganihar (2005).

Statistical Treatment

The collected information was subjected to statistical treatment by calculating mean, SD, and test of significance.

Statistical analysis

Table 1: Showing the Significance of difference between the Mean scores of Senior and Junior High School Headmasters on various dimensions of Decision Making Style (N=100 each).

1. Dimension	2. Group*	3. N	4. Mean	5. S. D	6. 't'-Value	7. Result
8. Routine	9. SH	10.	14. 05.	15. 5	16. 2.86	17. 0.01 levels
	18. JH	11.	830	.500		
21. Compromise	22. SH	12. 100	19. 08.	20. 6	25. 0.55	26. Not Significant
	27. JH	13. Each	300	.615		
30. Heuristic	31. SH	13. Each	23. 16.	24. 4	34. 3.21	35. 0.01 level
	36. JH		770	.978		
			28. 17.	29. 4		
			140	.401		
			32. 25.	33. 6		
			400	.334		
			37. 22.	38. 6		
			560	.174		

SH-Senior Headmasters

JH-Junior Headmasters

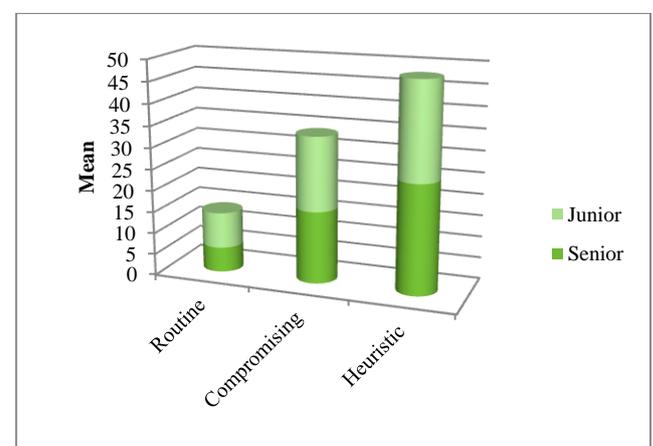


Fig. I: Showing the Mean Comparison of Senior and Junior High School Headmasters on Decision Making Style (N=100 each).

The results presented in the table 1 shows the significance of difference between the mean scores of senior and junior headmasters on the routine dimension of decision making style. The mean score in case of senior headmasters is reported to be lower ($M=5.830$) than junior ones ($M=8.300$). The obtained 't' value was found to be 2.860 which is significant at 0.01. From these results it can be inferred that junior headmasters are taking a routine type of decisions while solving Entrepreneurial, Administrative, Academic and Personnel problems as compared to senior headmasters. They take Routine decisions to keep the institution going. This type of decision is programmed. They are in favor of traditional methods and are not taking the step of making any change.

In the compromise dimension of decision making scale the mean scores in case of senior headmasters were found to be ($M=16.770$) than junior headmasters ($M=17.140$). The obtained' value came out to be 0.557 which failed to arrive at any level of significance. The results reveal that junior and senior headmasters equally apply compromise decisions while solving entrepreneurial, administrative, and academic and personnel problems. It can be concluded that length of service does not matter in taking the decisions about compromising nature. Both the groups of headmasters are taking the compromising decisions as far as they benefit the institution.

On the heuristic dimension of decision making style the results show the significance of difference between the mean scores of senior and junior headmasters on Heuristic component of decision making. The mean score of senior headmasters is higher ($M=25.00$) than the mean score of junior ones ($M=22.00$). The obtained' value is reported to be 3.211 which is significant at 0.01 level of significance. The results further reveal that senior headmasters are in favor of the Heuristic type of decisions as compared to their counterparts. This type of decision the emotional and social tone is relatively relaxed; openness, originality and seeking of consensus are the essentials of Heuristic decision-making. In a nutshell, this type of decision is creative. In heuristic decisions, there is a lack of emphasis on hierarchical structure, role behavior is characterized by freedom for each individual to explore all ideas. The emotional and social tone is relatively relaxed; openness, originality and seeking of consensus are the essentials of heuristic decision making. In a nutshell, it is a creative type of decision.

In view of the above mentioned results the hypothesis which reads as:

"Senior school headmasters differ significantly from junior school headmasters on various dimensions of decision making styles" stands partially retained.

The findings are in conformity with the findings of some earlier researchers in the field (Syarif, 2014; Oluwadare, *et al.* 2011; Kumar, 2010; Roelle, 2010; Ejimofor 2007; Antoinette & Love (2000). The findings are in conformity with the findings of some earlier researchers in the field (Syarif, 2014; Oluwadare, *et al.* 2011; Kumar, 2010; Roelle, 2010; Ejimofor 2007; Antoinette & Love (2000)Syarif (2014) found that the principals' decision making is affected directly by leadership style and interpersonal communication. Oluwadare, *et al.* (2011) concluded that the instructional leadership skills needed by principals for effective administration include, among others: principal co-operation with teachers to define objectives, principal providing facilities, supervising lesson plans, teaching and learning activities, evaluating curriculum plans and implementation. Kumar (2010) found that aided schools head leadership behavior was better than the Government schools head leadership behavior & unaided schools head leadership behavior was better than the Government schools heads leadership behavior. Roelle (2010) confirmed that principals who rated their own job satisfaction and efficacy as high gave their superintendent a high rating on their decision making potential. Ejimofor (2007) found principals' that decision making styles significantly effects teachers' job satisfaction. Antoinette and Love (2007) found that teachers' length of service did not have any significant effect on the principal's perceived leadership effectiveness and decision making behavior.

Conclusions

On the basis of interpretation and discussion of the results, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. It has been observed that junior headmasters apply Routine type of decisions while solving Entrepreneurial, Administrative, Academic and Personnel problems as compared to senior headmasters.
2. Both the groups (senior and junior headmasters) apply Compromise decisions while solving Entrepreneurial, Administrative, Academic and Personnel problems to an equal extent. On this basis, it is concluded that Length of Service does have nothing to do with taking compromise nature of decisions.
3. It has been found that senior headmasters favor Heuristic decisions to solve Entrepreneurial, Administrative, Academic and Personnel problems as compared to junior headmasters. Senior headmasters are reported to be inclined to good and cordial relations with students. Their decisions are based on fact finding lines. Senior headmasters are seen to be in favor of engaging the students in seminars, library work

and self-study along with organizing group discussions for teachers.

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