

EFFECTIVENESS OF LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM OF PROVINCIAL INSTITUTE OF TEACHER EDUCATION FOR THE HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL HEADS IN KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA

Ihtiram Khan*

PhD Scholar Education, Qurtuba University of Science and Information Technology, Peshawar.
ihtiram73@gmail.com

Asif

Professor, Qurtuba University of Science and Information Technology, Peshawar.
asifkhan6719@yahoo.com

Iffat Ara Hussain

Professor, Qurtuba University of Science and Information Technology, Peshawar.
Iffathussain92@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to find out the effectiveness of the “Leadership Training program of PITE (recently renamed as DPD Directorate of Professional Development) for the higher secondary school heads of Khyber Pukhtunkhwa”. The program trained the higher secondary school heads in the art of leadership. The objective of the study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the program by investigating the trained school heads in leadership and to find out the relationship between the leadership training of PITE and the school heads’ understanding and skill in the art of leadership. Initially about 250 school heads were trained in this program. These 250 schools heads is the population of the study. Random sampling technique was utilized to select 148 school heads as sample of the study. A quantitative research design was utilized. The data was collected through a questionnaire, designed on Likert scale, based on the contents of the training document. The data was analyzed through SPSS using Chi- square. The analysis of data reveals the school heads’ feedback of the program. The implications of the findings of the study proclaim the effectiveness of the training and recommend it for the development and improvement of school leadership.

Keywords: Leadership, school heads, and development of school leadership.

INTRODUCTION

Education is a broader term which serves to transfer knowledge and information using training and skills of practical utility as pointed out by Cowie (1989). Education seeks to develop the overall personality. It polishes the philosophical, intellectual, physical, spiritual, ethical and aesthetic capabilities (El-Moslimany, 2018). Education helps us to comprehend our society, culture and traditions (Hollins, 2015). Pritchett (2013) says, ‘Education prepares the children to take on their grown up roles as parents and citizens and to contribute productively to the society and to the community.’ Education as a human right has always been there in the literature of the world delineating the goals and qualities as Acedo et al. (2012) put it but it actually depends on a number of things as how to deliver it. The institutions should be led and managed by such professionals who comprehend the value and importance of education for the betterment of the institution itself and the students. The school heads must have the ability to understand the psychology of the students which enables them to find out the inner capabilities of the learners and to streamline it for full realization. The schools are responsible to ensure a conducive and favorable environment that enables the students to explore and exploit their talents to the full. This is the responsibility of the school leader to play his role in such a way to turn the school into a center of overall development. This proves him to be a sound professional and best fit for the profession. They are well aware of their authority, limitations, influence and adjust their environment accordingly. They form school improvement teams

* Corresponding Author

and assign them responsibilities in accordance with their capabilities. They reshape their mental caliber according to the worth of the work and create a sense of wholeheartedness in their staff, (Peña-López, 2009).

Leading the school is a full time responsibility. The school principals have to keep themselves aware of all the activities of the school. According to Nkwah (2001) the school head must be competent enough to lead the school effectively to achieve the set objectives; the school leaders must be alert enough to find out and to understand the ever changing requirement of the society and to address it in a befitting manner. The school heads are the custodians of their schools. They are responsible for the curricular and co-curricular outcomes of the schools that include but are not limited to leading the schools and managing all its resources, (Khan & Iqbal, 2013). The school head is responsible to foresee and address the challenges faced by the school and to devise solutions to these problems. The analysis of the research shows that lack of leadership capabilities has always affected the efficiency of the schools in facing the problems of change and development, (Govt of Pakistan, MOE 1997).

The school heads must be thoroughly trained professionally before they are placed at such a responsible position. These training programs must be of practical utility and it must address such problems which are associated with the school life and which create hardships for the school heads in the delivery of their services at the schools. According to (Adams et al, 2019) there is a general problem with the leadership in educational institutions. The school heads' hands are fastened with limited or no authority. This situation is further aggravated by the lack of professional trainings and a great amount of dependency on autocratic style of leadership. The subject teachers get promoted without being inspected for having leadership competencies and are placed at the post of school heads without any pre-service or in-service leadership training.”

Educational leaders in our school system do not follow a straight path in their leadership journey but become leaders by chance. Research findings show that personnel working at such positions do not consider themselves as leaders and never aspired for a leadership role. Luck is found to be one of the factors that enable people to advance to leadership positions in Pakistani educational context. It was evident from research participants' narratives that none of them grew up dreaming of an academic leadership career but ended up in leadership roles accidentally (Khwaja, 2022).

Research suggests that the role of the principal as a leader is critical in creating school environment that lead to better student academic performance (Harris, 2004; Levine, 2005). Principals as leaders are in the best position to provide teachers with the professional development strategies needed to improve skills and influence student outcomes raise student achievement (Lindstrom & Speck, 2004).

The school heads should be alert to keep all the matters of the school under observation. The principals are accountable for observing the teachers during teaching learning process and to provide his learned input where necessary. They are supposed to view and review the objectives of the instructions and to align them with larger aims of educations. They are responsible for public dealings with parents, public figures, officials and officers from the department and people with issues from different walk of life from the society. A man of high caliber trained in the art of leadership can handle these types of situation. Fullan cited in Suzette (2003) describes that the school heads should be professionally so trained to enable them to be focused, to put things in order of priority. They should be able to keep maximum time spare to deal with unforeseen.

Keeping in view the importance of professional competence of school heads in leadership the government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa planned to build up the capacities of the school heads. For this purpose the responsibility was assigned to PITE (recently renamed as Directorate of Professional Development DPD) to train the school heads in the art of leadership to develop and polish their skills. The training was delivered in 2013-14 and continued onward. Up till 2014 250 school heads received the training. The researcher felt the need of conducting a study to find out the effectiveness of the training.

Objectives of the study

To evaluate and to find out the effectiveness of Leadership training program of PITE (DPD) for the higher secondary school heads in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The nature of the study is descriptive and quantitative; therefore, survey design was utilized to get responses of the participants. 148 out of 250 higher secondary school heads who received the training were surveyed. The survey focused on the feedback from the participants in leadership, teaching learning process, school improvement planning and monitoring school performance.

Data Analysis

Table Leadership Principles

S.No	Statement	SD	D	U	A	SA	Chi-square P-value
1	The training has benefited me in terms of my understanding of the educational leadership.	1 (.7)	0 (0)	0 (0)	94 (63.5)	53 (35.8)	88.0 (.000)
2	Enabled me to review and modify my role as an effective school leader.	0 (0)	1 (.7)	0 (0)	98 (66.2)	49 (33.1)	95.3 (.000)
3	Equipped me with the ability to understand and develop the school vision and mission.	0 (0)	1 (.7)	0 (0)	93 (62.8)	53 (35.8)	161.7 (.000)
4	Enhanced my understanding of the change management.	0 (0)	1 (.7)	1 (.7)	87 (58.8)	59 (39.9)	150.7 (.000)
5	Equipped me with the skill to identify the signs of resistance to change.	2 (1.4)	1 (.7)	3 (2.0)	86 (58.1)	56 (37.8)	208.2 (.000)
6	Enhanced my capability to develop strategies to manage change.	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (.7)	81 (54.7)	66 (44.6)	73.3 (.000)

63.5 percent of the respondent school heads agree whereas 35.8 percent strongly agree that the training has benefited them in terms of their understanding of educational leadership. Chi-square model value is 88.0 with significant value 0.000 which shows that the data is significant at level 0.05.

As regards the role of an effective school leader, 66.2 percent of the school heads, who were trained in this training, agree whereas 33.1 percent of the participants strongly agree that the training has enabled them to review and revisit their role and to modify it as an effective school leader. Chi-square model value is 95.3 with significant value 0.000 which shows that the data is significant at level 0.05.

In connection with the ability to understand and develop school vision and mission 62.8 percent of the trained school heads agree and 35.8 percent strongly agree that the training has equipped them with the ability to understand and develop school vision and mission. Chi-square model value is 161.7 with significant value 0.000 which shows that the data is significant at level 0.05.

As far as the understanding of the change management is concerned 58.8 percent of the respondents agree and 39.9 percent strongly agree that the training has enhanced their understanding of the change management. Chi-square model value is 150.7 with significant value 0.000 which shows that the data is significant at level 0.05.

With relationship to the skills of the school heads to identify the signs of resistance to change 58.1 percent of the respondent school heads agree and 37.8 percent strongly agree that the training has equipped them with the skills to identify the signs of resistance to change. Chi-square model value is 208.2 with significant value 0.000 which shows that the data is significant at level 0.05.

As regards the capabilities of the school heads to develop strategies to manage change 54.7 percent of the respondent school heads agree and 44.6 percent strongly agree that the training has enhanced their capabilities to develop strategies to manage change. Chi-square model value is 73.3 with significant value 0.000 which shows that the data is significant at level 0.05.

Key Findings

The findings, of the items developed on Leadership Principles of leadership training, clearly reject the null hypothesis H₀ that there is no relationship between the Leadership training program of PITE and the school heads' understanding and skills in leadership principles. It established the fact that the school heads who were trained in this program improved their capabilities in the art of leadership and management which paved the way for a positive change in the environment of their schools.

DISCUSSIONS

The purpose of the study was to find out the effectiveness of Leadership training program of PITE for the school heads. Over the years generally teachers were allowed to ascend to school headship positions with very little preparation or opportunities for professional development. Usually a teacher having experience in classroom teaching is promoted to the position of the head of the school like headmaster and eventually to the post of the principal. Thus, the school leaders were (and often still are) appointed on the basis of teaching record and experience rather than leadership potential (Bush & Oduro 2006). Unfortunately, the literature illustrates that excellent teaching ability does not necessarily indicate that the person appointed will be an effective principal. In contrast, contemporary notions of leadership prefer that prospective candidates be required to complete leadership training courses. Bearing this in mind, the initiative to engage and improve leadership skills for school leaders by the principal stakeholder, the Ministry of Education, is a welcome move, especially at a time when a myriad of educational reforms have been introduced (Walker & Dimmock 2006).

The study in hand is a pioneering work undertaken to find out the effectiveness of the Leadership training program of PITE. It discovered interesting facts regarding the program which are based on the opinions of the training participants. The findings of the study show that the training participants found the training extremely useful. For them it was the first of its kind in the history of PITE. The training polished their skills and improved their understanding in leadership. Borko (2004) observed that trainings during service offered by department are good for the professional development of employees. They were able to revisit and reconceptualise their role as effective leaders. Leadership is the most important area of function for a school head. School leadership is widely recognized as a critical factor in the process of achieving school effectiveness and improvement (Bush & Oduro 2006; Robinson, Hohepa & Lloyd 2009). Leadership create followership in the followers. It sets direction for the followers and motivates them towards that direction. The real leaders set vision and chalk out the mission for getting to the vision. The vision is a golden future which is envisaged by leaders and objectives and goals are set by the leaders to reach that golden future. In the absence of the competent leaders these important leadership areas get ignored and the institutions remain without clear future map. It was this leadership training program that addressed this important area of developing the leadership qualities in the school heads. The program developed their understanding of leadership. It made them practice developing school vision and mission. It opened ways for them to develop strategies in the form of objectives and benchmarks and to combine them all in the form of mission for reaching at the vision. This training made them understand change and resistance to change. They developed their understanding to identify signs of resistance to change.

CONCLUSIONS

The basic purpose of conducting the study was to find out the effectiveness of Leadership and Management Training program of PITE Khyber Pukhtunkhwa. Key areas were selected from the contents of the training to be investigated and items were developed on these areas. Data of the participants' responses to these items was analyzed and the findings helped the researcher to reach at the following conclusions. The findings of the study led the researcher to reject the null hypothesis as it established the fact that there is a significant relationship between the leadership training program of PITE and the capacity development of the school heads, who were able to polish their capabilities as a result of this training, are now better placed to lead their schools effectively.

After studying the findings, it is concluded that Leadership training program of PITE successfully achieved its objectives.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This is a useful training and may be delivered to all the school heads. The training may be made mandatory for the prospective school heads. Promotion to the office of headship may be linked with getting the Leadership Training. The training may be conducted preferably in summer vacations to avoid wasting the time of school heads.

REFERENCES

- Acedo, C., Adams, D., & Popa, S. (Eds.). (2012). *Quality and qualities: Tensions in education reforms* (Vol. 16). Springer Science & Business Media.
- Adams, D., Piaw, C. Y., Lee, K. C. S., & Sumintono, B. (Eds.). (2019). *Instructional Leadership to the Fore: Research and Evidence*. University of Malaya Press
- Borko, H. (2004). *Professional Development and teacher learning: Mapping the terrain*. *Educational Researcher*, 33(8), <http://dx.doi.org/10.3102/0013189X033008003>
- Bush, T. & Oduro, G.K.T. (2006), New Principals in Africa: Preparation, Induction and Practice, *Journal of Educational Administration* 44(4): 359-375.
- Cowie A.P. (1989). Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary 4th. Oxford University Press. England p.385
- Davis, S., Darling-Hammond, L., LaPointe, M., & Meyerson, D. (2005). *School leadership study: Developing successful principals*. Stanford Educational Leadership Institute Retrieved from: seli.stanford.edu/research/documents/SELI_sls_research_review.pdf
- El-Moslimany, A. P. (2018) *Teaching children: a moral, spiritual, and holistic approach to educational development*. Richmond, Surrey, UK: IIIT.
- Fullan, M. (2002) The change *Educational leadership*, 59(8), 16-20
- Government of Pakistan (1997), Experience with Education, Ministry of Education. (P.7)
- Harris, A. (2004a). Distributed leadership and school improvement: Leading or misleading? *Educational Management and Administration*, 32(1), 11-24.
- Hollins, E. R. (2015). *Culture in school learning: revealing the deep meaning*.
- Khan, P., & Iqbal, M. (2013) An Analysis of Principals' Interventions for School Effectiveness: Principals' Perspectives. *Dialogue (Pakistan)*, 8(4).
- Khwaja, S. H. (2011). Need Assessment and designing a model for heads of secondary schools. Islamabad: Allama Iqbal Open University.
- Levine, A. (2005), *Educating School Leaders* (Washington, DC: The Education Schools Project), retrieved from http://www.edschools.org/reports_leaders.htm.
- Lindstrom, P., & Speck, M. (2004), *The Principal as Professional Development Leader* (1st ed.). Corwin.
- Nkwoh, B. (2011). Analysis of administrative roles of principals in private secondary schools in Abia education zone of Abia state. *Journal of Educational Administration* 2 (1), 33-41
- Peña-López, I. (2009). Creating effective teaching and learning environments: First results from TALIS.
- Pritchett, L. (2013). *The rebirth of education: Schooling ain't learning*. CGD Books
- Robinson, V., Hohepa, M. & Lloyd, C. (2009), *School Leadership and Student Outcomes: Identifying What Works and Why*, Best Evidence Synthesis Iteration [BES] (Wellington: Ministry of Education).
- Walker, A. & Dimmock, C. (2006), *Preparing Leaders, Preparing Learners: The Hong Kong Experience*, *School Leadership and Management* 26(2): 125-147.