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**COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PRINCIPALS' TIME MANAGEMENT
PRACTICES OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KHYBER
PAKHTUNKHWA**

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Abstract

Time management is equally important to all stakeholders in educational field. The role and responsibilities performed by secondary school principals are multi directional and needs

effective time management skills to fulfill these roles and responsibilities efficiently. The present study focused on comparing the secondary school perceptions about their time management practices (TMP) based on gender and school location. All secondary school principals (908) working in seven divisional head quarter districts comprised the population of the study. Through multi stage cluster sampling method 344 secondary school principals were selected as sample of the study. Data were collected through self constructed questionnaire consisted of 67 rating type items. The Cronbach alpha value .83 of the instrument showed that the instrument is highly reliable. By using mean, standard deviation and independent samples t-test were used to analyze the data. Findings of the study revealed no significant differences in the perceptions of school principals based on their gender and school location. It was recommended that secondary school principals may be provided time management trainings to enhance their time management skills. Reading books and attending seminars by secondary school principals on time management may be proved a worth mentioning strategies to improve school principals time management skills.

Introduction

Provision of quality education to masses is the prime responsibility of the state. Issues related to quality education and instruction is the major focused areas of research throughout the world. One of the major hurdles to achieve this mile stone is lacking of time. The role of school principal in achieving organizational goal cannot be ignored. School principals are responsible for providing conducive environment to ensure the provision of quality education and instruction in the school. For this they will have to allocate their time to instructional activities. For this they will have to manage their time more effectively and efficiently (Claessens, Van Eerde, Rutte, & Roe, 2007).

Most of the works on time management have been done on the philosophical aspects and limited literature is available on how school principals manage their time at their workplace (Claessens et al., 2007; Hellestein, 2012). Literature on identifying the strategies how to manage time at workplace is scarce (Claessens, Van Eerde, Rutte, & Roe, 2004; Kouali & Pashiardis, 2015). Most of the studies related to time management have been carried out on students sample and their outcomes particularly on their academic achievement and academic performance. The real time manager at school to run the school matters effectively are missing in the literature. School principals face problems when dealing with teachers, students and community demands but little attention has been paid by the researchers in both national and international levels (Orlikowsky & Yates, 2002; Liu, Rijmen, MacCann & Roberts, 2009). Internationally the field of time management has been investigated in terms of students' outcomes like academic achievement, job performance, job satisfaction, somatic tension and sales outcomes (Claessens et al., 2007). In the field of educational administration limited research studies have investigated the use of time in school by principals and how school principals manage their time (Grissom et al., 2012; Whitaker, 2003). Today, school principals at international and national level become more responsible and accountable to all the stakeholders than ever before. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate how elementary and secondary school principals use their time at schools and how they should manage their time for various activities carried out at school (Grissom, Loeb, & Master, 2013; Goldring, Huff, May, & Camburn, 2008; Hornget et al., 2010; Khan, 2017; Kouali & Pashiardis, 2015; Spillane, Camburn, & Pareja, 2007; Spillane & Hunt, 2010).

May, Huff and Goldring (2012) stated that principals are equally responsible to improve teaching and learning at school to ensure greater student performance at school. Due to this reason the principal role and duties have been changed (McPeake, 2006). It is a reality that principal' instructional leadership have great impact on student academic achievement,

however, research findings show that increased responsibilities and duties have negative impact on the time principals spent on instructional duties (Grissom, Loeb & Mittani, 2015; Whitaker, 2003). These facts led to focus on provision of quality education and efficient use and manage of time at school (Kouali & Pashiardis, 2015).

Lakein (1973) stated that time management is related to decisions making about needs, setting realistic goals to achieve the needs, prioritizing the needs and planning the required tasks carefully to achieve the stated goals. So, it can be safely said that it is not time that is being controlled or managed but it is actually the individual who controls or manage himself.

There are some time management strategies which are not only beneficial for the school leader but also for the achievement of organizational goals. These includes setting short and long term goals, effective planning and scheduling, establishing priorities, managing meetings, delegating authority and handling interruptions and interferences. By managing the most scare resource time efficiently school heads can achieve organizational goals effectively (Obiekwe & Mbonu, 2018). Due to increasing workload and accountability of the heads, time management becomes a crucial factor of organizational management in order to achieve high productivity. There are many books, online workshops and literature available on time management strategies but for school heads this proves to be challenging. Therefore, the school heads not only manage their personal time but also to manage organizational workload. Thus, school heads need to develop and adopt such effective strategies which proved to be effective to manage oneself and also work for the achievement of organizational goals.

Due to the changing role of principal's responsibilities, introducing of new curricula, new induction policy and the introduction of evaluation and monitoring system in education of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), the effective time management is equally important for principals in KP. The introduction of new system demands for more time and more energy on the part of school principals in KP, as already they feel lack of time in fulfilling their responsibilities (Khan, 2017).

Another possible reason due to which time management must be focused because educational administration in Pakistan generally and in KP particularly is highly centralized and bureaucratic in nature. Principals are selected on seniority basis rather than on competencies basis. Moreover, there is no specific pre-service training programme organized for the newly selected school principals. After the appointment they are sent directly to the schools to perform their responsibilities on trial and error basis. During their first year of principalship they receive one or two weeks training in local teachers training institutions, which is not adequate. Moreover, this type of training is bureaucratic in nature and inadequate to prepare them to fulfill their future responsibilities effectively. Keeping in mind the above facts, it is clear that school principals in KP enter principalship quite unprepared and therefore, time management remains one of the crucial problems for them.

This study sought to seek the answers of the following questions:

1. Do male and female secondary school heads manage the time in the same way?
2. Do urban and rural secondary school principals manage the time in the same way?

To obtain answer of these questions, following research hypotheses were formulated:

1. There is no statistical significant difference between male and female secondary school principals in their TMP.
2. There is no statistical significant difference between urban and rural secondary school principals in their TMP.

Research Methodology

The quantitative approach was used to investigate the differences in the TMP of secondary school principals in KP province. The nature of the study was descriptive and survey method was used to collect and analyze the data. The population of the study consisted of (908) secondary school principals in seven selected divisional headquarters districts of KP. The researchers selected the 344 secondary school principals through multi stage cluster sampling technique from the seven selected divisional head quarter districts. A self developed questionnaire consisted of 67 rating type items were used to collect data from the respondents. The items were grouped in six different dimensions under the headings scheduling and planning; managing meetings; managing paperwork; establishing priorities; delegating authority and responsibilities; and handling interruptions. The respondents were requested to fill the questionnaire based on five-point rating scale ranging from “Almost does so” to “Never do so”

The instrument was first validated through experts in the relevant field to establish its face and content validity. After that it was piloted to 30 school principals in another district which is not included in the sampled districts. The Cronbach’s alpha value for the instrument was found .83, which revealed that the instrument was highly reliable. After establishing the instrument’s validity and reliability, it was administered in the field. The researchers sent the questionnaire to 344 secondary school principals and finally obtained 280 useable questionnaires for data analysis purpose. The response rate was 81.39 percent which is good for survey research.

Data Analysis

This sample represents 66.8% of male principals and 33.2% of female principals; 50% were of Government and 50% were of privately managed school principals; 78.2% were of secondary and 21.8% were of Higher Secondary school principals; 50% were situated in urban area and 50% were in rural area. The average age of principals was 47 years.

Table 01: Comparison between male and female Principals’ time management practices

Practices	Male (n = 187)		Female (n = 93)		t	p
	Mean	S D	Mean	S D		
Scheduling and Planning	3.57	.590	3.50	.529	1.099	.27
Managing Meetings	3.66	.765	3.55	.833	1.897	.27
Delegating Authority and Responsibilities	3.82	.630	3.65	.625	2.136	.03*
Managing Paperwork	3.87	.709	3.68	.773	2.084	.04*
Establishing Priorities	3.75	.754	3.63	.728	1.338	.22
Handling Interruptions	3.76	.453	3.60	.490	2.682	.01*
Total Time Management Practices	3.73	.750	3.60	.490	1.876	.06

Notes: *p ≤ 0.05; df = 278

Table 1 shows the differences between male and female secondary school principals in their perceptions regarding time management practices. For this purpose, independent samples t-test was applied to confirm whether principals’ gender affect their perceptions regarding TMP. The values of t-test were found significant for delegating authority and responsibility, managing paperwork and handling interruptions at .05 level of significance. This proved that there are significant differences in the perceptions of male and female secondary school principals regarding these three practices. On the other hand, the values of

t-test were found insignificant for the scheduling and planning, managing meetings and establishing priorities at .05 level of significance. This proved that there are no significant differences in the perceptions of male and female secondary school principals regarding these three practices. The mean scores revealed that male principals manage their time in a better way than female principals. The t-test was found insignificant for the total TMP scores at .05 level of significance for male and female school principals.

Table 02: Comparison between urban and rural Principals' time management practices

Practices	Urban (n = 140)		Rural (n = 140)		t	p Sig. (2- tailed)
	Mean	S D	Mean	S D		
Scheduling and Planning	3.58	.568	3.52	.575	-0.852	.39
Managing Meetings	3.66	.782	3.58	.797	0.790	.43
Delegating Authority and Responsibilities	3.81	.634	3.73	.630	1.071	.28
Managing Paperwork	3.86	.714	3.76	.757	1.110	.26
Establishing Priorities	3.74	.736	3.67	.756	0.808	.42
Handling Interruptions	3.77	.469	3.63	.464	2.501	.01*
Total Time Management Practices	3.73	.743	3.64	.468	1.833	.07

Notes: * $p \leq 0.05$; $df = 278$

Table 02 shows the differences between urban and rural secondary school principals in their perceptions regarding TMP. For this purpose, independent samples t-test was applied to confirm whether principals' gender affect their perceptions regarding TMP. The values of t-test were found significant for handling interruptions at .05 level of significance. This shows that handling interruptions was differently treated by urban and rural school principals. On the other hand, the values of t-test were found insignificant for the scheduling and planning, managing meetings, delegating authority and responsibility, managing paperwork and establishing priorities at .05 level of significance. This shows that both urban and rural school principals have no significant differences in their perceptions regarding these five practices. The mean scores revealed that urban school principals' TMP were found better than that of rural school principals regarding all TMP dimensions. The t-test was found insignificant for the total TMP scores at .05 level of significance for urban and rural school principals.

Discussion

The study findings revealed no statistical significant difference between male and female and urban and rural secondary school principals regarding their overall time TMP scores. Though, male and female school principals have exhibited significant differences in their perceptions regarding scheduling and planning, managing meetings and establishing priorities practices while insignificant differences were found between male and female principals in their perceptions regarding the scheduling and planning, managing meetings and establishing priorities practices. Similarly, statistical significant differences were found between urban and rural principals in their perceptions regarding handling interruptions while insignificant differences were found between male and female principals in their perceptions regarding scheduling and planning, managing meetings, delegating authority and responsibility, managing paperwork and establishing priorities practices.

The study revealed that both male and female principals have no significant differences in their perceptions of secondary school principals regarding TMP. The mean

scores of the male school principals were found higher than their counterparts' female school principals for all TMP. The mean scores of all six dimensions of TMP were found higher for male principals than their counterparts female principals. The results of the previous studies were found mixed. Researchers like Mansour (2011) found no significant effect of principals' gender on their time management practices. He further added that male principals manage their time in better way than female principals. In the same way, Robertson (1999) found that there is no significant difference between male and female school principals in their perceptions regarding TMP. On the other hand, Grissom et al.,(2013) found that there is significant difference in the time management skills of male and female principals. Female school principals' time management skills were found higher than that of male school principals' time management skills. The mean scores for short range planning of male school principals were found less than female principals while for delegation practices their mean score was found higher than female school principals. Similarly, Hornget al.,(2010) found notable differences between the time management skills of male and female school principals. Male school principals manage their time in better way as compare to female school principals. Taylor (2007) found significant difference between male and female school principals regarding their use of time. Female school principals pay more attention towards time management than male school principals.

The study also revealed no significant differences in the perceptions of urban and rural school principals regarding TMP. The mean scores of the urban school principals were found higher than their rural school principals for all TMP dimensions. Time management skills of urban school principals for all six TMP were found higher than that of rural school principals. Mixed results were found in the literature. Akomolafe and Oluwatimehim,(2013) found no notable difference in the time management skills of urban and rural school principals. Both genders pay equal attention to time management skills as they have to perform the same tasks and responsibilities in the schools. On the other hand, Calabrese (1977) found differently and school's location proved to be significant difference in their time management. Arubayi (1986) found no significant difference between male and female school principals regarding time management techniques in school.

Conclusions

On the basis of findings, following conclusions were drawn.

1. There is no statistical significant difference between male and female secondary school principals in their perceptions regarding TMP. Thus, the null hypothesis H_{01} was accepted.
2. There is no statistical significant difference between urban and rural secondary school principals in their perceptions regarding TMP. Thus, the null hypothesis H_{02} was accepted.

Recommendations

Following recommendations are offered to the government officials, school principals and policy makers in order to enhance the time management skills of school personnel.

1. It is recommended that time management training should be included in the post service training of the school principals, so that they may be able to plan and schedule their events, manage meetings effectively, delegate simple tasks to subordinates, handle interruptions and distractions, manage official paper work and establish priorities for their selves and to their organizations. Such trainings may ensure the involvement of the principals irrespective of their gender and locality of the schools.

2. It is suggested that secondary school principals may read books and attend seminars on time management from time to time to enhance their skills and proved themselves more productive for their organizations.

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