

Leader Effectiveness of the Secondary Schools Heads: A Study with Special Reference to Kerala

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Abstract— This study was to find out the leader effectiveness among the Heads of Secondary schools in Kerala in terms of their gender, age, experience and type of management of their school. The investigator approached 260 heads of the secondary schools throughout the Kerala to collect information regarding their leader behaviour. The study found that 39 percentages of the total sample exhibit Effective Leader behaviour. 19 percentage of heads shows Problem Leader behavior while 42 percentage reveals Inefficient Leader behavior. It also found that among the Effective Leaders, the percentages of females, age group two and experience group two are significantly higher than their males, age group one and experience group one counterpart. But the percentages of Effective Leaders among aided school heads and government school heads do not differ significantly. The study suggests the need for effective leadership training programme for heads of secondary school in Kerala.

Key words: Leader Effectiveness, Education

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is an imperative device for social change, social mobility and human resource development. It is necessary for cultivation of knowledge, which is the main avenue for self development and development of the community or nation. No nation can progress, no human group can advance and no individual can prosper without proper education. Education is the backbone of the nation and society. It is regarded as one of the most important and influential social energy, which ultimately brings radical changes in the outlook and approach among the members of the society. Education is essential for the development of any community. It raises the status of the human beings and the community as a whole. It is one of the powerful instruments of modernization and rational thinking and it broadens the mental horizon of the human being. It also bridges the gap between the rich and poor, the rural and urban and of one's pursuing white collared jobs and those doomed to manual labour. Above all it to a great extent makes the system free of exploitation.

Leadership is a boosting attribute that accelerates the performance of a group. A great leader can inspire the entire community by his thoughts and deeds. The effectiveness and efficiency of the leader influences and energize the performance of the institution, which will result optimum output in the field of education. Successful implementation of the educational programmes of every institution relies upon the leadership effectiveness of the classroom teachers, headmasters, supervisors, and administrators of concerned institutions. In a period of crisis and transition the position of the educational leader is more significant than at any other time. According to Bennis and Nanus (1985) "Leadership seems to be the marshaling of

skills processed by a majority but used by a minority. But it is something that can be learned by any one, taught to everyone, denied to no one".

Leadership is a process by which a person influences others to accomplish an objective and directs the organization in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent. The leader is a person who influences others to attain goals. The greater the number of followers shows the intensity of influencing power of the leader, and the more successful the attainment of worthy goals, the more evident the leadership. Efficient leaders may combine good strategic substances and effective interpersonal process to formulate and implement strategies that produce results and sustainable competitive advantage.

Good leaders are made not born. If one has the desire and willpower, he can become an effective leader. Good leaders develop through a never ending process of self-study, education, training, and experience (Jago, 1982). Developing team spirit among subordinates and inspiring them to achieve targeted goals are the warranted qualities of an effective leader. Good leader can build these professional competencies through continuous works and effective training programmes. Stogdill (1950) "Considers leadership is the process of influencing the activities of an organised group in its efforts towards goal setting and goal attainment".

II. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Leadership is a social phenomenon in the sense that it emerges as a result of social interaction which itself is a process affecting the behaviour of the individuals coming into contact with each other in social situations. It is a critical factor in organizing successful institutions. In a group, the members who like to dominate often take advantage of all group situations and organize, channelize and direct the total energy of the group towards the achievement of group goals. Consequently they become leaders in the group. Thus a leader is one who is capable of exerting his influence on others to a much greater extent than others influence him.

Even a small group may gain wonders with effective and motivated leadership. But a large group without an effective leader may achieve nothing. Like that, leadership of headmaster is a determining factor in the success of any programme in schools. A leader who is attempting to build a shared vision in an institution must possess certain qualities. Firstly the followers must have confidence in the leader's knowledge and wisdom. Secondly the believable character of the leader. Character is important because followers must believe the leader will "stay the course". Charisma is the third essential. It is the ability to make an idea attractive and appealing to others. A good leader must possess these things. Heads of secondary

schools in Kerala may lead scores of teaching and non teaching staff in a school and the smooth functioning of the school depends on their efficiency in leader behaviour. Therefore the leadership effectiveness is a vital question of the time. Hence the Study

A. Objectives of the Study

- 1) To identify the different types of Leadership Behaviour among the heads of secondary schools in Kerala in terms of their Leader Effectiveness for the total sample and the relevant subsamples based on gender, age, experience and type of management.
- 2) To compare the percentages of different types of Leadership Behaviour of heads of secondary schools in Kerala in terms of their Leader Effectiveness among the relevant subsamples.

B. Hypotheses of the Study

- 1) There exist different types of Leadership Behaviour among the heads of secondary schools in Kerala based on their Leader Effectiveness for the total sample and relevant subsamples based on gender, age, experience and type of management.
- 2) There exist no significant differences in the percentages of different types of Leadership Behaviour among the relevant subsamples based on their Leader Effectiveness.

C. Methodology of the Study

In the present descriptive study the investigator collected data from 130 heads of secondary schools in Kerala. Stratified random sampling technique was used for collection of data. The self version of Andrew and Halpin's Leadership Behaviour description questionnaire (LBDQ) was used for data collection purpose. In order to find out different types of leadership behavior the investigator analysed the data based on dimensions of LBDQ, such as Consideration Leadership Behaviour and Initiation Leadership Behaviour apart from total Leadership Behaviour. Subsamples selected for the study were gender, age, experience as head and the type of management of their school. Hence the heads were classified in to two, which are males and females on the basis of gender. They were also classified in to age group one (below 50 years) and age group two (50 years and above). Experience was another classificatory variable. Heads were classified accordingly to experience group one (below 5 years of experience as head) and experience group two (experience of five years and above as head). In the type of management two categories (government schools and aided schools) were identified.

Percentage analysis as well as Critical Ratio (\bar{Z}) test of percentage were used to analyse and interpret the data.

III. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The investigator carried out the percentage analysis to identify the different types of Leadership Behaviour among the heads of secondary schools in Kerala in terms of their leader effectiveness. Three types of Leadership Behaviour were identified from the selected sample, Effective Leaders, Problem Leaders and Inefficient Leaders. The subjects who scored high on both dimensions of Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire that is Consideration and

Initiation structure were treated as Effective Leaders. This type of leaders produces high output and best performance with job satisfaction. They keep congenial educational environment in the school setting. The subjects who scored low on Consideration but high on Initiation Structure were considered as Problem Leaders. These leaders yield high output but with employee grievances and less job satisfaction. Under this type of leaders, educational environment will be like a broken family. Mental health of leaders as well as subordinates may be affected. Inefficient Leaders are those who score low on both dimensions of the LBDQ or who score high on Consideration dimension but low on Initiation Structure dimension. This type of leaders exhibits poor performance.

For identifying the different types of leaders, the investigator scored the response sheets of Leader Behaviour Description Questionnaire dimension wise and classified the heads in to high score and low score groups. Subjects who obtained the mean score and above in a dimension were considered as high score groups of that dimension. Similarly subjects who scored less than the mean score in a dimension were considered as low score group of that dimension. Thus three types of leaders were identified from the total sample and subsamples and percentages were estimated accordingly. The details are given in Table No.1.

Sample	N	Effective Leaders	Problem Leaders	Inefficient Leaders
Total	130	39	19	42
Male	78	32	27	41
Female	52	50	08	42
Age Group 1	36	37	21	42
Age Group 2	94	46	15	39
Experience Group 1	97	31	19	50
Experience Group 2	33	43	19	38
Government	73	36	22	42
Aided	57	44	16	40

Table 1: Percentages of different Types of Leadership Behaviour based on their Leader Effectiveness for Total Sample and Subsamples

Table 1 shows that out of the total sample, 39 percent of heads of secondary schools are Effective Leaders, 19 percent are Problem Leaders and 42 percent are Inefficient Leaders. It also reveals that 32 percent of male heads are Effective Leaders, 27 percent are problem Leaders and 41 percent are Inefficient Leaders. Among the female heads 50 percent are Effective Leaders whereas Problem Leaders and Inefficient Leaders constitute 8 percent and 42 percent respectively. From the Table it can also be observed that among the heads of secondary schools 37 percent of Age group one shows effectiveness in their Leadership Behaviour while 21 percent are Problem Leaders and 42 percent are Inefficient Leaders. Among the age group two 46 percent are Effective Leaders, 15 percent are Problem Leaders and 39 percent are Inefficient Leaders.

The Table further reveals that 31 percent of experience group one shows effective nature in their Leadership Behavior while 19 percent exhibits the problematic nature of Leadership Behaviour and 50 percent

shows the inefficient nature of their Leadership Behavior. Among the experience group two 43 percent are Effective Leaders and 19 percent are Problem Leaders and 38 percent are Inefficient Leaders. From the table it is also evident that only 36 percent of government secondary school heads are Effective Leaders. 22 percent of heads are Problem Leaders whereas 42 percent are inefficient Leaders. Among heads of aided secondary schools 44 percent are Effective Leaders, 16 percent are Problem Leaders and 40 percent are Inefficient Leaders.

The percentages of different types of Leadership Behaviour of the total sample is represented by figure 1.



Fig. 1: Percentages of different Types of Leadership Behaviour for Total Sample

A. Comparison of Percentages

The comparison of percentages of heads of secondary schools based on their leader effectiveness among the subsamples was conducted using Critical Ratio (\bar{Z}) test and the details are described below.

B. Effective Leadership Behaviour

Details of test of significance for difference in percentages of Effective Leaders among the subsamples of the study are presented in Table 2.

Subsamples	N	Observed Percentage	Standard Error	C. R	Level of Significance
Male	78	32	4.28	4.20	0.01
Female	52	50			
Age Group 1	36	37	4.34	2.07	0.05
Age Group 2	94	46			
Experience Group 1	97	31	4.15	2.89	0.01
Experience Group 2	33	43			
Government	73	36	4.28	1.86	NS
Aided	57	44			

Table 2: Data and Results of the Test of Significance for Difference between Percentages of Effective Leadership

Behaviour among Subsamples of Heads of Secondary Schools

Table 2 shows that there exist significant differences in the percentages of effective leaders among the subsample of heads of secondary school drawn on the basis of gender, age and experience since the obtained critical ratios are higher than the value required for 0.05 level of significance. It is interpreted that more Effective Leaders are there among female heads than their male counterparts. Similarly significantly higher number of Effective Leaders are available among age group two heads and experience group two heads than age group one and experience group one heads respectively.

The critical ratio obtained for government and aided school heads is 1.869 which is not significant. Hence it is interpreted that there is no significant difference in the percentages of effective leadership behavior among the subsamples of heads of secondary schools based on type of management.

The difference in the percentages of Effective Leadership Behaviour of heads of schools among subsamples is represented by Figure 2.

C. Problem Leadership Behaviour

The details of test of significance for percentages of problem Leadership Behaviour among subsamples are furnished in Table 3

Subsamples	N	Observed Percentage	Standard Error	C. R	Level of Significance
Male	78	27	3.46	5.49	0.01
Female	52	08			
Age Group 1	36	21	3.27	1.83	NS
Age Group 2	94	15			
Experience Group 1	97	19	3.44	0.00	NS
Experience Group 2	33	19			
Government	73	22	3.46	1.73	NS
Aided	57	16			

Table 3: Data and Results of the Test of Significance for Difference between Percentages of Problem Leadership Behaviour among Subsamples of Heads of Secondary Schools

Table 3 reveals that the obtained critical ratio for male and female heads is 5.49 which is significant at 0.01 level. It shows that there exists significant difference in the percentages of Problem Leaders among the subsamples. Hence it is interpreted that male heads with Problem Leadership Behaviour is significantly higher than their female counterparts. The Table also shows that there exist no significant differences in the percentages of Problem Leaders among the subsample pairs of heads of secondary school based on age, experience and type of management since the obtained critical ratios are below 1.96 which is

required to be significant at 0.05 level. The percentages of Problem Leaders are almost equal among the subsamples pairs.

D. Inefficient Leadership Behaviour

The details of test of significance for difference in percentages of heads with Inefficient Leadership Behaviour among subsamples pairs are given in Table 4.

Subsamples	N	Observed Percentage	Standard Error	C. R	Level of Significance
Male	78	41	4.35	0.22	NS
Female	52	42			
Age Group 1	36	42	4.29	0.69	NS
Age Group 2	94	39			
Experience Group 1	97	50	4.37	2.74	0.01
Experience Group 2	33	38			
Government	73	42	4.35	0.45	NS
Aided	57	40			

Table 4: Data and Results of the Test of Significance for Difference between Percentages of Inefficient Leadership Behaviour among Subsamples of Heads of Secondary Schools

Table 4 exhibits that the critical ratios obtained for percentage of Inefficient Leadership Behaviour of heads of secondary schools among subsamples based on gender, age and type of management are 0.229, 0.699 and 0.459 respectively. These are lower than the value required for 0.05 level of significance. Hence it is interpreted that heads of schools with Inefficient Leadership Behaviour is almost equal among subsample pairs drawn on the basis of gender, age and type of management. But the critical ratio obtained for experience group one and experience group two heads is 2.74 which is significant at 0.01 level. Therefore it is evident that experience has a significant impact on effectiveness of Leadership Behaviour. Experience group two shows less percentage of Inefficient Leaders than experience group one among the heads of secondary schools.

IV. MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The major findings of the study is summarized below

- 1) It is found that among the total sample of heads of secondary schools 39 percent are Effective Leaders, 19 percent are Problem Leaders and 42 percent are Inefficient Leaders.
- 2) Among male heads 32 per cent are Effective Leaders, 27 percent are Problem Leaders and 41 percent are Inefficient Leaders. Among female heads 50 percent are Effective Leaders, 8 percent are Problem Leaders and 42 percent are Inefficient Leaders.
- 3) It is found that among heads of schools belonging to age group one (below 50 years) 37 percent are Effective Leaders, 21 percent are Problem Leaders and 42 percent

are Inefficient Leaders. The percentage of Effective Leaders, Problem Leaders and Inefficient Leaders from age group two (50 or more years of age) are 46, 15 and 39 respectively.

- 4) Among experience groups one heads, 31 percent are Effective Leaders, 19 percent are Problem Leaders and 50 percent are Inefficient Leaders. Among the experience group two heads the percentages of Effective Leaders, Problem Leaders and Inefficient Leaders are 43, 19 and 38 respectively.
- 5) Among heads of government schools 36 percent are effective Leaders 22 percent are Problem Leaders and 42 percent are Inefficient Leaders. But among heads of aided secondary schools the percentage of Effective Leaders, Problem Leaders and Inefficient Leaders are 44, 16 and 40 respectively.
- 6) It also found that among the Effective Leaders, the percentages of females, age group two and experience group two are significantly higher than males, age group one and experience group one respectively. But the percentages of Effective Leaders among aided school heads and government school heads do not differ significantly
- 7) The percentage of male heads having Problem Leadership Behaviour is greater than that of female heads. But the percentage of the Problem type Leadership Behaviour do not differ significantly among subsamples based on age, experience and type of management.
- 8) The percentages of Inefficient Leaders do not differ significantly among subsamples drawn on the basis of gender, age and type of management. But the percentages of heads with Inefficient Leadership Behaviour differ significantly among subsamples based on experience of the heads. The number of Inefficient Leaders is significantly higher among less experienced group of heads than more experience group of heads.

V. CONCLUSION

Leader effectiveness is a vital factor which will result favourable output in educational sector. A good leader can influence his subordinates as well as energize them to accomplish a targeted goal. Leadership is the real symbol of one's personality. It determines his or her decision making power, loyalty, courage, confidence and so forth. The successful functioning of every institution is largely depending upon the behavior of the leader. He has to deal and lead hundreds of human being with different temperaments. Hence the heads of the schools must possess attractive and efficient leader behaviour to lead the subordinates and students to accomplish the targeted task. Otherwise it will inversely affect the effective functioning of school. The study was to identify the different type of leader behavior of heads of secondary schools in Kerala based on their leader effectiveness. The result shows that among the total sample of heads of secondary schools 39 percent are Effective Leaders, 19 percent are Problem Leaders and 42 percent are Inefficient Leaders. This is the common feature seen in almost all subsamples cases. This is not a healthy sign for our educational sector as well as nation. Hence the study implies that the department of education of the state and other agencies should organize various programmes in

order to boost the efficiency of leader behaviour of heads of secondary schools in Kerala.

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