

# A Study of Leadership Behaviour of Secondary School Principals of Bareilly

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## Abstract

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*Human capital management is a challenging task. It requires strategic planning and purposeful practices to secure outstanding talent, and apply it as per the goals in the organisational settings (Burn, 1978; Kumar, 2018). The role of school principal is changing from superheroes towards an orchestra conductor who shares his leadership skills and uses it for school management. Through leadership behaviour, school principals give direction to management system for policy implementation, resource allocation and relationship building. The present study is concerned with leadership behaviour of secondary school principals (N=100) of Bareilly district of Uttar Pradesh, which reveals significant differences in leadership behaviour of school principals with reference to the type of institution, gender and locality. Private school principals revealed higher level of leadership behaviour in comparison to government college principals while with reference to gender, female principals showed higher level of leadership behaviour in comparison to male counterparts. On the other hand, in aspects of locality, very few significant differences were found between urban and rural school principals.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Leadership is a way of management which a person uses to lead other people working in his team. Employees of any organisation play an important role in providing qualitative output

for the organisation. It enables them to have clarity in concepts related to their expectations, requirements and performance. Davis (1975) defined, "Leadership is the ability to persuade others to seek defined objectives

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enthusiastically. It is the human nature which binds any group of people to work together and motivates each other to reach predefined goals.” Robbins (1979) defined Leadership as “the ability to influence a group towards the achievement of goals.” In any other field, Leadership is a driving force behind organisational success but compared to the education field, other industries go to great lengths in prioritising finding, developing, supporting, and retaining their leaders. In the Indian context, it is the principal who occupies the central role in the school leadership and management. A typical day of a school principal involves enlisting and guiding the talents and energies of teachers, students, and parents toward achieving common educational aims.

With reference to organisational management policies, National Policy on Education (NPE, 1986) also suggested to draw long term planning and management by policymakers and school administrators especially in India because it will fulfill manpower needs and contribute in the national development. The policy document also recommended for decentralised and autonomous system of educational organisations for better growth and development. Similar suggestions related to development of autonomous system of curriculum and administrative structure, and more power to school leaders have also supported in the reports of Acharya Ramamurti and

Yashpal Committee (Govinda and Bandopadhyay, 2006).

Leadership behaviour of school Principals give direction to school management system through interpretation of policy, allocation of resources and relationships with community. School principals have to manage various routine activities in the school premises to provide qualitative education to students. Leadership skills of school principals are often the key factor of difference between effective and ineffective schools (Blackburn, 2009; Kearney, 2010; Zhang, 1994). The School Leadership Development Programme (SLDP), initiated by the National Institute of Education Planning and Administration (NIEPA), lists out five key areas where head-teachers could play an important role which are-leading partnerships, developing self, transforming the teaching-learning process, building and leading teams, and leading innovations (SLDP, 2014). Researches reveal that school principals with good leadership skill encourage positive school climates, including high-quality of school culture, teaching, learning, assessment, academic and non-academic performance, communication, accountability and relationship among school, families and community (Chernow, 1985; Hallinger, 2004; Kearney, 2010). Five domains of leadership skill that have been associated with effective school principals are instructional leadership, cultural leadership, strategic

leadership, educational management leadership and organisational management leadership (Allen, 2003; Umme, 1999; Fink and Resnik, 2001). Researchers also revealed that connection between school leadership with various other school factors with reference to environment of school, teaching-learning setups, culture, motivations and behavioural approach of teachers and academic performance of students, including students' performance and achievement.

In contrast to the western experience, school leadership and management have remained an understudied area (Leithwood, 2005). Drucker (1989) mentioned that leadership is not created, taught and learned. Thus, a great amount of attention was dedicated to understand the number of characteristics that are found in leaders. Drive, self-confidence, cognitive ability, honesty, knowledge of context, desire to lead and integrity are considered to be the most commonly observed traits of successful leaders. The tasks performed by school principals are more diverse and demanding than ever before. Analysing daily logs of principals' activities, researchers found that the allocation of principals' attention varies from school to school, even within a single district. Principals in more advantaged schools spend their time in a greater spread of different types of activities than principals in less advantaged school facing more challenging situations (Fink and Resnick, 2001; Lambert et al., 2002).

## **REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES AND LITERATURE**

A specific policy framework is also developed and implemented in United States about the role of school principals in performance management. Similar steps has also been followed by Hong Kong and Singapore to introduce new assessment framework. The head teachers in New Zealand coordinated with the teachers to undermine the standardised curriculum, which had sought to take away the school autonomy on the matters of curricular activities. Similarly, in other countries also, government introduced a new legal framework to regulate and monitor schools, school principals, teachers, and the local communities. In another example from Spain, principals sought to circumvent the compulsory structures or procedures the state had put up for school governance (Òscar Prieto-Flores et al., 2018). In all these case studies, the role of school principals found important and more expectations drawn to face challenging situations.

Principals, with active participation from the local communities, not only resisted the centralisation attempt from educational bureaucracies but also expanded their roles significantly by involving communities. Community related hurdles and boundations also put impact of growth and development of schools. Similarly, the educational decentralisation in India produced different logics, depending

upon the contexts and the limitations set by the system (Chand and Kuril, 2018). Harding (1949) explained types of educational leaders as autocrat, co-operator, elder statesman, muddled, loyal staff man, scientist, open-minded, philosopher, business expert, benevolent, child protector, community-minded, optimist and democratic. Researchers (Blackburn, 2009; Alvy and Robbins, 2005; Portin, 2004; Berlin et al., 1988; Lam, 2003; Chernow, 1985; Clifford et al., 2012) explored about the significant roles of school principals as instructional leader (Blackburn, 2009; Alvy and Robbins, 2005; Portin, 2004; Berlin et al., 1988), and some of them emphasised the importance of cultural leadership for school effectiveness and student achievement (Blackburn, 2009; Lam, 2003) while others focused on the significance of strategic leadership (Chernow, 1985).

Chopra (1982) studied the impact of principals' approach on primary teachers with references to organisational climate and found that the behaviour of the leader or the principal put positive impact on the organisational environment, and it also helps teachers and staff in boosting their communication skills and strengthen interaction process among teachers on gender basis. Shashkin (1988) studied the leadership styles of principals and reported significant differences among male and female, rural and urban and government and private sector principals on different

dimensions. An effective principal with such approach not only sets high expectations and articulates a strong vision but also presents models of good instruction, observes all stakeholders, coaches teachers and provides them with opportunities to reflect on and improve their practices. Such change in principals' roles and approach is reflected in recent standards and performance-based principal evaluation processes that emphasise instructional and collaborative leadership practices. School conditions also include the working conditions of teachers, such as the strength of professional communities, availability of adequate instructional time, and other professional supports.

Dembowski (2008) studied about relationship between working abilities and leadership behaviour among school principals of rural and urban area, and reported that principals with more positive leadership and decision-making skills have higher level of leadership. Urban area counterparts found highly active than their rural counterparts. Roghaiyeh and Pravenna (2013) conducted a study on businesswomen and their leadership skills and reported that female leaders' emphasised on democratic work environment, interactive approach and effective communication system for the betterment and growth of any institution. The more attention on morality and interrelationship with staff helps leaders to work with more

efficiently and comfortably. Karakose (2008) studies about leadership skills of principals with reference to gender, age group and socio-economic status and perception of teachers about it and concluded that male principals preferred occupational leadership more than female counterparts. Principals with low socio-economic status found more prone towards lower level of organisational climate with general system of school management while principals with higher socio-economic status found prone to more constructive change school management approach.

Ryans (2007) examined the relationship between principal leadership behaviours and teachers' sense of self-efficacy and result indicated positive correlation between them. Principals have the power to influence many organisational aspects and factors of school. They have a myriad of roles included in their job. One of the most important and influential is the effect the principal has on the teachers and their working system. Fleishman et al., (1991) explained that there are two common classifications of the team behaviour which includes person focused and task-focused. Task-focused behaviour is mainly concerned with the definition of task requirements, the process of the task completion and complete fulfillment of the given task, while person-focused behaviour emphasised on the development of the cognitive issues in individuals and behavioural patterns in individuals

before they start working as a team. Keegan et al., (2004) identified the main behaviours that are observed in the traits of leaders such as goal clarification, team boundaries setting, the guidance of members, leading followers, engaging members to the team, meeting organisation and information flow control. Leadership dimensions include guidance, involvement, role specifications along with planning and organising, specifying and organising teamwork. Boyett (2006) mentioned that the role of leaders is crucial in gaining the trust of their subordinates and stimulate their commitment towards the successful fulfillment of the undertaken project.

Role conflict is another aspect to create problems among members of team. Role conflict can result in different undesirable outputs such as lower productivity, damaged relationship and even can lead to absenteeism (Zaid and Vali, 2016). The leaders should have idealised influence. They have to be charismatic and influential. Leaders must execute the tasks with confidence and competence. Leaders should play their role as motivator. Leaders must know how to handle and deal with challenges, persons with differential needs and attitude. Along with it, principals in leadership role must have another important traits such as intellectual stimulation, motivator, creative and innovative approach, transformational attitude, goal clarification, team

boundaries setting, the guidance provider, leading followers, skillful in organisation and information flow control, etc. (Yukl, 1994). Viswanathan and Jeevitha (2015) compared the leadership behaviour along with the organisational commitment and its impact on productivity, and explored that organisational commitment and leadership are a must for organisational development and growth.

Joshi and Rani (2017) studied about teacher effectiveness in relation to leadership behaviour of principals of secondary schools and reported that there are no gender differences in relation to leadership behaviour of principals. Both male and female principals are provided equal facilities for better management of schools. The leadership behaviour of school principals positively influences the working effectiveness of teachers. Researches by Goldring et al. (2010), Sancar (2009), Coburn (2005) also suggested that leadership skills of administrators put impact on the working pattern and the behavioural approach of the staff. Positive teacher working conditions include fostering collegial, trusting, team-based, and supportive school culture; promoting ethical behaviour; encouraging peers and creating strong lines of communication. Along with it, research studies (Goldring et al., 2010; Umme, 1999; Harris and Spillane, 2008 and Louis et al., 2010) suggested that principals that value and successfully apply research-based strategies are more likely to receive high ratings on instructional climate by developing

teachers as leaders outside their classroom walls. Effective principals strengthen the professional community, build better working relationships, and keep their staff engaged in continual learning. For better development and growth, new principals needed to accept and follow previous approaches and traditions of organisation to bring meaningful changes as per the present requirements. In such conditions, the role and responsibilities of school leaders needed to change and they also have to opt new leadership styles to bring such long-term changes in their organisation. It has been thus, explored that the connection between educational leadership and student achievement has always been challenging, however, due to the currently available methodologies for measuring leadership behaviour, determining its indirect effects on students achievement has become possible.

### **Statement of the study**

The question of environment or atmosphere or climate is something which cannot be bound within rules and regulations. All these depend on pattern of interaction between the ingredients of the schools' system. School climate, attitude of management and leadership behaviour of administrative officers put impact on the behaviour of the individuals working in the environment, and influences their process or the whole phenomenon. Such environment decides the output or performance of the institutions,

either the teachers' performance or the learning aspects of the students. Today, schools are working under highly competitive scenario and they need to have passionate, qualified and active administrator as well as teachers for the organisational progress. The strength and impact of the organisational climate helps teachers to perform well under the expert guidance and management, hence, the need is felt to conduct survey on leadership behaviour of secondary school principals to understand their leadership skills and abilities. Organisation climate and leadership behaviour of administrators are powerful forces and play pivotal role in the all-round development of any organisation. Hence, the researchers felt the need to study the leadership behaviour of secondary school principals. The statement of the study is as follows—  
A Study of Leadership Behaviour of Secondary School Principals.

### **Objectives of the Study**

- To study the leadership behaviour of secondary school principals.
- To compare the leadership behaviour of secondary school principals on the basis of type of institution, gender and locality.

### **Hypotheses**

For attaining objectives of the present study, following hypotheses have been formulated.

- There is no significant difference in the leadership behaviour of

government and private school principals.

- There is no significant difference in the leadership behaviour of male and female principals of government and private schools.
- There is no significant difference in leadership behaviour of rural and urban, government and private school principals.

### **Design of the Study**

All principals of the secondary schools situated in Bareilly district constituted the population of the study which covers both male and female principals of government and private schools situated in urban and rural areas of Bareilly district. By using random sampling method, the sample of the present study has been chosen which consists of 100 principals (50 male and 50 female) of 100 schools of Bareilly district. To collect data, leadership behaviour Scale developed by Hinger (2005) has been used which contains 30 items to measure six domains of school principal leadership skill: emotional stability, group formation, productive tasks, skill development, and social intelligence and value orientation. The tool is highly reliable and valid. By using split half method, the calculated reliability coefficient is 0.69, and the construct validity of the tool is 0.49.

**ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

**Table 1**  
**Mean Scores of Government and Private School**  
**Principals on Leadership Behaviour Scale**

Groups	N	Mean	S.D.	t value (df=98)
Government School Principals	50	124.87	15.35	5.29**
Private School Principals	50	126.54	13.32	

\*\* .01 level of significance

**Table 2**  
**Mean Scores of Male and Female School Principals on**  
**Leadership Behaviour Scale**

Groups	N	Mean	S.D.	t value (df=98)
Male Principals	50	127.76	12.18	9.12**
Female Principals	50	130.45	10.50	

\*\* .01 level of significance

To test the first hypothesis that there is no significant difference in leadership behaviour of government and private secondary school principals, mean scores, standard deviation and t value have been calculated (Table 1). The mean of the government school principals is 124.87 (15.35) while the mean value for their counterparts is 126.54 (13.32). The calculated t value found 5.29, which is significant at .01 level of significance. Comparison between mean values of group shows that in case of private school principals, mean value is higher than the government school principals which reveal that administrators working in private school shows higher level of leadership behaviour than

government school administrators. Private counterparts were found to be more efficient and capable than government administrators. This may be due to the availability of facilities which help them to work smoothly and efficiently, hence, the first null hypothesis is fully rejected. The result of the present study is found to be similar to Chopra (1982) who also found significant difference in the leadership behaviour of government and private school principals.

To test the second hypothesis that there is no significant difference in leadership behaviour of male and female principals, mean scores, standard deviation and t value has been calculated (Table 2). The mean of male principals is 127.76 (12.18)

while the mean value for female counterparts is 130.45 (10.50). The calculated t value between the groups is found 9.12, which is significant at .01 level of significance. Comparison between mean values of group shows that the mean values in case of female principals is higher than male principals which reveals that female administrators are more capable rather than male counterparts. Female have shown higher level of leadership behaviour rather than male principals. This may be due to natural traits of females which enable them to be more responsible and active in decision making, and sound in leading any organisational role. Hence, the second null hypothesis is also fully rejected as significant differences has been depicted in the leadership behaviour of both male and female principals which is the result of their basic nature. The result of the present study is found in tune with Portin (2004) and Hallinger (2004), and Fullan (2010) who explored significant differences on leadership behaviour of leaders on the basis of gender and locality.

To test the third hypothesis that there is no significant difference in leadership behaviour of urban and rural school principals, mean scores, standard deviation and t value has been calculated (Table 3). The mean of the urban school principals is 127.75 (11.97) while the mean value for their counterparts is 127.60 (11.63). The calculated t value between the groups is 3.01, which is significant at .01 level of significance. Comparison between mean values of the group shows that the mean values in case of urban school principals is little bit higher or almost similar than the rural school principals, which reveals that administrators working in rural or urban locality are similar in their leadership behaviour. Such results reveal that locality doesn't matter in any administrative working system. Smooth administration can be done in any type of surrounding or atmosphere. Hence, the third null hypothesis is also fully rejected as the atmosphere and difference in facilities or conditions of urban and rural areas are completely different, but it does not put impact on the working style and behavioural approach of leaders positively. The result of the

**Table 3**  
**Mean Scores of Urban and Rural School Principals**  
**on Leadership Behaviour Scale**

<b>Groups</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>t value ( df=98)</b>
Urban School Principals	50	127.75	11.97	3.01**
Rural School Principals	50	127.60	11.63	

\*\* .01 level of significance

present study is found in tune with Hallinger and Heck (1998); Portin (2004); Viswanathan and Jeevitha (2015); Harris and Spillane, 2008 and Dembowski (2008), who explored significant differences on leadership behaviour of school principals on the basis of gender and locality.

### **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Another important factor for school administrators is related to creation of cool, easygoing and comfortable working area for which they have to build strong network, wide and useful social circles so that they may be able to balance and manage their responsibilities. They interact with student, parents, and administrative officers. They have to deal with situations with more managerial competencies and expected to push teachers to work, emphasise on output in terms of higher pass-percentage, foster community relationship, prepare appropriate instructional material and aids, help improve instructions by working with teachers, organise pilot studies and action research, help teachers through capacity building, ensure good relationship and staff morale. School leaders have to deal with various problems and resolve problematic issues quickly and in practical manners. Sharma (1982) also reported that the primary function and responsibility of school principals is to manage discipline in academic organisations also. In these formal and informal settings,

administrators have to face variety of problems because of administrative demands and expectations along with conflicting situations and challenges. As a social organisation, schools are responsible not only for employees but for the external environment (nature, environment and society) as well (Chopra, 1982; Hallinger and Heck, 1998; Harris and Spillane, 2008).

The results of the present study are found in tune with research studies by Chernow (1985), Lam (2003) and Hallinger (2004) who explored, that principals of government and private schools are changing their approach. Another aspect is the changing approaches on gender basis as the various groups of principals have shown significant differences on leadership behaviour, which draws differences in management style of male and female counterparts which is the common phenomenon of our society. The pictures are changing as principals associated with rural background or zone, now associating themselves with urban areas trends and adopting the changed environment so that the young generation educators are nurturing themselves as per the urban approach of social development. They are adopting the recent trends and changing their mindset for developing more progressive society, hence the situation is changing. The differences of the data may be due to controlled environment of management of school personnel or the working environment. The result

of the present study supports that the educational structure, system and nurturing style of individuals also put impact on development of leadership skills and behaviour (Umme, 1999).

Young principals or new entrants have potential to bring positive changes with their innovative leadership style. Either there may be difference of opinion among the group of people regarding some issues and challenges, but all of them are associated with a common system of educational management and administration. The working paths of government and private schools, urban and rural school, and male and female school principals can differ but the destination is the same. A positive administrative environment with a lot of bold leaders with social support from parents, teachers, peers and family, and other higher authorities directly or indirectly need to be established for the development of any institution. Both the government and private sector has to take initiative with reference to all stakeholders, to reform the societal approach; organisational structures, curriculums; training patterns, adoption of interdisciplinary curricular and co-curricular activities.

Research priorities in current and future sociological aspects are needed to bring such positive changes in this direction. Educational researches must include leadership skills with reference to practical approach, willingness and societal norms and standard. Such approach would provide a new vision for leadership development and create new bond with the administration and

faculty members also. Interdisciplinary researches may be more helpful, especially in long-term and intensive studies on developing various aspects of behavioural and communication skills. Researches in such priority areas should be encouraged and supported by the government. Formal training (both online and offline) and enhancement in educational qualifications is needed for school principals (Govinda and Bandyopadhyay, 2006). More academic facilities must be provided for the school leaders for their studies in the field of educational leadership, especially at master and doctorate level. Short term courses and distance education courses on organisational management and educational management leadership can be introduced for administrators. Policymakers and practitioners should develop the management systems that develop a holistic approach towards performance that are suitable for implementation in the school education and administration contexts. Research orientation is also important for updation in the administrative field and its linkage with school education. Research studies especially action researches, in the field of defining, modifying school administrator's role and its impact on teaching-learning process and working conditions can be carried out and implemented. Along with it, for better planning and administration, resource, staff, and ample opportunities for school principals should be provided to improve their leadership skills and behaviour (Harris and Spillane, 2008).

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