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Evaluating the Management Skills and Organizational Culture of School Heads in Southern Punjab

Muhammad Naeem Qaisar *

Muhammad Shakir †

Safura Fatima ‡

Corresponding Author: Associate Professor, Department of Educational Training, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Punjab, Pakistan. Email: muhammad.shakir@iub.edu.pk

Abstract: *Effective school leadership plays a crucial role in promoting a positive organizational culture and enhancing the quality of education in schools. This study aimed to evaluate the management skills and organizational culture of school heads in Southern Punjab. A quantitative research approach was used to gather information from the school head in Southern Punjab. A sample of 294 head teachers from southern Punjab was selected using a random sampling technique. The results showed that school heads in Southern Punjab have moderately high levels of management skills and moderately positive organizational cultures. There was a strong positive correlation between management skills and organizational culture, with management skills being a strong predictor of organizational culture. The findings highlight the importance of effective school leadership in promoting a positive organizational culture and enhancing the quality of education in schools.*

Key Words: Management Skills, Organizational Culture, School Heads, Education and Leadership

Introduction

The historical context of education in Pakistan has played a significant role in shaping the role of school heads. Pakistan gained independence from British rule in 1947, and since then, education has been a top priority for the government. In the early years of Pakistan's history, the education system was largely modelled on the British system, with a focus on preparing students for white-collar jobs in the civil service and private sector (Shakir, Lodhi, & Zafar, 2017). Schools were often staffed by expatriate British teachers, and the curriculum

was heavily focused on traditional academic subjects such as English, mathematics, and science. However, in the 1960s, there was a growing awareness that the education system needed to be reformed to better serve the needs of the country (Simkins, Sisum, & Memon, 2003). The government began to focus more on expanding access to education, particularly in rural areas, and on developing a curriculum that was more relevant to the needs of the country. The role of school heads during this period was largely administrative, with a focus on managing the day-to-day operations of

* PhD Scholar, Department of Educational Training, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Punjab, Pakistan.

† Associate Professor, Department of Educational Training, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Punjab, Pakistan.

‡ PhD Scholar, Department of Educational Training, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Punjab, Pakistan.

schools and ensuring that they were properly staffed and resourced. School heads were often drawn from the civil service and were expected to be proficient in financial and administrative matters. In the 1970s, there was a further shift in the education system, with a greater emphasis on Islamic education and the promotion of Islamic values. This led to the establishment of a separate system of Islamic schools, known as madrassas, which were largely outside the purview of the government and were run by religious organizations (Niazi, 2012).

The role of school heads during this period was also influenced by the political context of the country. In the 1980s, Pakistan became embroiled in the Cold War, and the government began to receive significant support from the United States. This led to a focus on promoting a particular type of education that was seen as being in line with Western values, and school heads were expected to promote this type of education in their schools. In recent years, there has been a renewed focus on educational reform in Pakistan, with a particular emphasis on improving the quality of education and expanding access to education for marginalized communities. The role of school heads in this context is evolving, with a greater emphasis on instructional leadership, community engagement, and promoting a positive school culture (Niazi, 2012).

In conclusion, the historical context of education in Pakistan has had a significant impact on the role of school heads, with a focus on administrative duties in the early years of the country's history, a greater emphasis on Islamic education in the 1970s, and a focus on promoting Western-style education in the 1980s. However, the current educational reforms in the country are leading to a more complex and dynamic role for school heads, with a greater focus on instructional leadership and community engagement (Afzal Tajik & Wali, 2020). The role of school heads in Pakistan has undergone significant changes in recent years, particularly in light of the country's educational reforms. While school

heads were previously seen as primarily responsible for administrative and management tasks, they are now increasingly expected to take on a more active role in instructional leadership, community engagement, and promoting a positive school culture (Nawab & Asad, 2020).

One of the key drivers of these changes has been the government's commitment to improving the quality of education in Pakistan. In recent years, the government has launched a number of initiatives aimed at improving teaching and learning outcomes, such as the National Education Policy 2017-2025, the Prime Minister's Education Reform Program, and the Punjab Education Sector Reform Program. These initiatives have placed a strong emphasis on the need for school heads to be effective instructional leaders who can support and develop their teachers, as well as on the importance of building strong relationships with parents and communities (KHAKI, 2009).

As a result of these initiatives, school heads in Pakistan are now expected to take a more hands-on approach to leadership, focusing on supporting their teachers to develop their instructional practices, ensuring that curriculum is delivered effectively, and monitoring student progress. They are also expected to be highly visible within their schools and communities, building relationships with parents and community leaders, and engaging with local stakeholders to promote the school's activities and achievements (Raza, Gilani, & Waheed, 2021). In addition to these changes, there has also been a growing recognition of the importance of promoting a positive school culture in Pakistan. This has been reflected in the development of initiatives such as the School Safety and Security Framework, which aims to create a safe and supportive environment for students, and the Character Building Initiative, which seeks to promote the development of positive values and attitudes among students (Niqab, Sharma, Ali, & Mubarik, 2015).

As a result of these changes, school heads in Pakistan are now seen as critical agents of change, who are expected to be highly skilled

and knowledgeable leaders who can inspire their teachers and students to achieve their full potential. To achieve this, they must be able to work collaboratively with a wide range of stakeholders, including government officials, community leaders, parents, and teachers, and be willing to embrace new approaches and ideas in order to drive progress ([Bhamani, Rehman, & Sturges, 2022](#)). The role of school heads in Pakistan has evolved significantly in recent years, as a result of the country's commitment to educational reform. While they were previously seen as primarily responsible for administrative tasks, they are now expected to take on a more active role in instructional leadership, community engagement, and promoting a positive school culture. As the country continues to invest in education, it is likely that the role of school heads will continue to evolve, creating new opportunities and challenges for those who hold this important position ([Asrar-ul-Haq & Kuchinke, 2016](#)).

The government of Pakistan has implemented a range of policies and programs aimed at supporting school heads and promoting educational development across the country. These policies and programs are designed to address the challenges facing the education system, such as low literacy rates, inadequate infrastructure, and limited resources ([Malik, Nawab, Naeem, & Danish, 2010](#)). One of the key policies implemented by the government is the National Education Policy (NEP) 2017-2025. This policy provides a comprehensive framework for the development of the education system in Pakistan and outlines a range of measures aimed at improving the quality and accessibility of education. The policy emphasizes the need to develop effective school leadership and outlines a range of strategies to support school heads in this regard, such as training and development programs, mentorship schemes, and performance evaluation systems ([Shahzad, Shahzad, Ahmed, & Jabeen, 2018](#)).

In addition to the NEP, the government has also implemented a range of programs aimed at promoting educational development in Pakistan. One of these is the Prime Minister's

Education Reform Program, which seeks to improve the quality of education in the country by investing in teacher training, curriculum development, and infrastructure improvement. The program includes a range of initiatives aimed at supporting school heads, such as the School Leadership Development Program, which provides training and mentoring for school leaders, and the School Improvement Program, which provides funding for infrastructure development and resource acquisition ([Ibad, 2017](#)).

Another program implemented by the government is the Punjab Education Sector Reform Program (PESRP). This program is designed to improve the quality and accessibility of education in the Punjab region and includes a range of initiatives aimed at promoting effective school leadership, such as the School Councils Program, which provides training and support for school leaders in managing school councils, and the Teacher Development Program, which provides training and development opportunities for teachers and school heads ([Khadim, Qureshi, & Khan, 2021](#)). The government's policies and programs have played an important role in supporting school heads and promoting educational development in Pakistan. By investing in effective school leadership, the government is helping to ensure that schools are well-managed, teachers are well-supported, and students have access to high-quality education. As the country continues to invest in education, it is likely that these policies and programs will continue to evolve, creating new opportunities and challenges for school heads and other education stakeholders in Pakistan ([Shah, Ahmad, & Khan, 2019](#)).

Effective school leadership is essential to promoting the success of schools and students. School heads in Pakistan play a critical role in managing and leading schools, and their skills and abilities are key to creating a positive and productive school culture. In this section, we will discuss the management skills and organizational culture of school heads in Pakistan ([Blair, 2002](#)).

School heads in Pakistan require a range of management skills to effectively lead their schools. These skills include:

- School heads must have the ability to develop and implement long-term strategic plans for their schools, taking into account the needs and goals of their students, teachers, and communities.
- School heads must be skilled in managing their staff, including hiring, training, and evaluating teachers and support staff.
- School heads must be proficient in budgeting and financial management to ensure that their schools operate efficiently and effectively.
- School heads must have strong communication skills to engage with their stakeholders, including parents, teachers, and community leaders, and to build relationships with them.
- School heads must be able to identify and address problems that arise in their schools, and to develop effective solutions to address these issues.

In Pakistan, the organizational culture of schools has traditionally been hierarchical and authoritarian, with school heads holding a significant amount of power and decision-making authority. However, in recent years, there has been a shift towards a more collaborative and participatory organizational culture, in which teachers and staff are encouraged to contribute to decision-making processes and work together to achieve common goals. This shift has been driven by a range of factors, including the recognition of the importance of teacher empowerment and collaboration, as well as the need to promote a positive and supportive school culture that fosters student well-being and success. To promote a positive organizational culture in schools in Pakistan, school heads must focus on developing the following key aspects:

- School heads must work with their teachers and staff to develop a shared vision and goals for their school, and to ensure that all members of the school

community understand and support these objectives.

- School heads must promote collaborative decision-making processes, in which teachers and staff are encouraged to contribute their ideas and perspectives.
- Supportive Leadership: School heads must provide supportive leadership, empowering their teachers and staff to develop their skills and knowledge and to take on leadership roles themselves.
- School heads must provide opportunities for professional development for their teachers and staff, to enable them to develop their skills and knowledge and to contribute more effectively to the school community.

The management skills and organizational culture of school heads in Pakistan are critical to the success of schools and the well-being of students and staff (Salfi, 2011). By developing strong management skills and promoting a positive organizational culture, school heads can create supportive and productive learning environments that enable students to achieve their full potential.

Statement of Problems

The role of school heads is critical in promoting educational development and creating a positive and productive school culture. However, there is limited research on the management skills and organizational culture of school heads in Southern Punjab, Pakistan. Therefore, the problem statement for this study is to evaluate the management skills and organizational culture of school heads in Southern Punjab and to identify areas for improvement that can enhance the quality of education and well-being of students and staff.

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of this research are:

1. To evaluate the management skills of school heads in Southern Punjab, including their proficiency in strategic planning, human resource management,

financial management, communication, and problem-solving.

2. To evaluate the organizational culture of schools in Southern Punjab, including the extent to which school heads promote a collaborative and participatory culture and empower their teachers and staff.
3. To identify the strengths and weaknesses of school heads' management skills and organizational culture in Southern Punjab, and to provide recommendations for improvement.
4. To provide insights into how the management skills and organizational culture of school heads in Southern Punjab can be developed and strengthened to promote educational development and create supportive and productive learning environments.

Research Questions

The research questions for this study on evaluating the management skills and organizational culture of school heads in Southern Punjab are as follows:

1. What is the level of management skills among school heads in Southern Punjab?
2. What is the level of organizational culture in schools in Southern Punjab?
3. To what extent do management skills predict organizational culture in schools in Southern Punjab?

Research Method

The study used a quantitative research approach to assess Southern Punjab's school administrators' leadership qualities and corporate culture. The participants' information was gathered through the use of a survey questionnaire. All government school heads in Southern Punjab made up the study's sample. Using the sample size determination table developed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970),

a sample size of 294 school heads was determined. Simple random sampling was used to choose the sample. An online questionnaire was employed as the study tool. There were two sections to the questionnaire. Demographic questions were in the first portion, and organisational culture and management skills questions were in the second. Based on a review of the literature and the advice of experts, the questionnaire was created.

Data Analysis

After data collection, a data-sheet on SPSS version 22 was developed to examine the data collected from the school head working in different schools in Southern Punjab. The data sheet consisted of participants' demographics and data using descriptive statistics. On the base of data statistical treatment such as frequency, percentage and the mean score was used to infer the result from the data. Further, findings and conclusions were made on the base of the data.

Management Skills and Organizational Culture

Management skills of school heads refer to their ability to effectively manage and lead their schools. These skills include planning, organizing, coordinating, directing, and controlling various aspects of school operations, such as curriculum development, staff management, resource allocation, and student discipline. Organizational culture, on the other hand, refers to the shared values, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours that shape the social and psychological environment of a school. It encompasses the norms, customs, and practices that guide the interactions and relationships among school staff, students, and parents, and influences the overall school climate and performance. A positive organizational culture promotes collaboration, innovation, and continuous improvement, while a negative culture may hinder productivity, motivation, and engagement.

Table 1

S. No	Statement		1	2	3	4	5	Mean	S.D
Organizational Management									
13	The head teacher needs to know organizational management.	<i>f</i>	9	101	103	79	2	2.88	.866
		<i>%</i>	3.1	34.4	35	26.9	0.7		
14	It is essential for the head teacher to know about the principles of self-evaluation.	<i>f</i>	17	101	95	67	14	2.86	.989
		<i>%</i>	5.8	34.4	32.3	22.8	4.8		
15	Headteachers understand the basic strategies for school improvement.	<i>f</i>	7	111	108	53	15	2.86	.916
		<i>%</i>	2.4	37.8	36.7	18	5.1		
16	The head teacher always considers the staff in the decision-making process.	<i>f</i>	3	110	120	42	19	2.88	.897
		<i>%</i>	1	37.4	40.8	14.3	6.5		
17	The head teacher designs a system of communication that provides effective sharing of information with the District Education Authority.	<i>f</i>	11	119	113	34	17	2.75	.918
		<i>%</i>	3.7	40.5	38.4	11.6	5.8		
18	Headteachers understand the importance of collaborative planning for every teacher.	<i>f</i>	7	121	79	83	4	2.85	.908
		<i>%</i>	2.4	41.2	26.9	28.2	1.4		
19	The headteacher is committed to providing equitable resources for all the staff.	<i>f</i>	12	101	113	53	15	2.86	.935
		<i>%</i>	4.1	34.4	38.4	18	5.1		
20	The headteacher is committed to developing a healthy school environment.	<i>f</i>	13	113	75	83	10	2.88	.984
		<i>%</i>	4.4	38.4	25.5	28.2	3.4		
21	The head teacher tries to collaborate with others in order to strengthen the school	<i>f</i>	16	81	120	57	20	2.95	.980
		<i>%</i>	5.4	27.6	40.8	19.4	6.8		
22	The head teacher always thinks creatively to resolve school problems effectively.	<i>f</i>	18	108	69	78	21	2.92	1.077
		<i>%</i>	6.1	36.7	23.5	26.5	7.1		
23	The head teacher recognizes the importance school council.	<i>f</i>	14	109	77	48	46	3.01	1.164
		<i>%</i>	4.8	37.1	26.2	16.3	15.6		
24	The headteacher provides efficient supervision to monitor plantations in the school.	<i>f</i>	16	117	73	72	16	2.85	1.029
		<i>%</i>	5.4	39.8	24.8	24.5	5.4		
25	The head teacher tries to create a proper management system.	<i>f</i>	17	120	87	51	19	2.78	1.013
		<i>%</i>	5.8	40.8	29.6	17.3	6.5		
26	The head teacher ensures evidence-based improvement plans.	<i>f</i>	19	117	119	36	3	2.62	.821
		<i>%</i>	6.5	39.8	40.5	12.2	1		
27	Headteachers ensure the safety of staff and students.	<i>f</i>	17	94	110	70	3	2.82	.895
		<i>%</i>	5.8	32	37.4	23.8	1		
28	The head teacher manages school finances and human resources effectively.	<i>f</i>	13	102	97	71	11	2.88	.951
		<i>%</i>	4.4	34.7	33	24.1	3.7		

The data collected from the survey questionnaire were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics to evaluate the management skills and organizational culture of school heads in Southern Punjab. Data analysis in table-1 described that most of the (34.4%) school heads know how to manage an organization and the principles of self-evaluation. Data further analysed that 37.8+36.7 = (74.5%) school heads know and understand the basic strategies of school

management. Most (40.5%) school heads know how to design a system of communication that provides effective sharing of information with the District Education Authority. Most of the (41.2%) school head slightly understand the importance of collaborative planning for every teacher while only (1.4%) head teachers were found well aware and understand the importance of collaborative planning for every teacher. Most (38.4%) school Headteachers were committed to providing equitable

resources for all the staff. Most (38.4%) school headteachers were committed to providing equitable resources for all the staff. Headteachers were committed to developing a healthy school environment. Most (40.8%) school Headteacher was committed to providing equitable resources for all the staff. Headteacher were committed to developing a healthy school environment. Headteacher tries to collaborate with others in order to strengthen the school. Most (36.7%) school Headteachers always think creatively to resolve school problems effectively. Most (37.1%) school Headteachers always think creatively to resolve school problem effectively. Headteacher recognizes the importance of school council. Most (40.8%) school Headteacher provides efficient supervision to monitor plantation in school. Headteacher tries to create proper management system. Most (40.5%) school Headteacher tries to create a proper management system. The head teacher ensures evidence-based improvement plans. Most (37.4%) school Headteacher ensures evidence-based improvement plans. Headteachers ensure the safety of staff and students. Most (34.7%) school Headteachers ensure the safety of staff and students. The head teacher manages school finances and human resources effectively. The mean score for management skills indicates a moderate level of management skills among school heads in Southern Punjab. The standard deviation was 0.866, suggesting that there was some variability in the level of management skills among school heads. Organizational culture: The mean score for organizational culture, indicating also moderately positive organizational culture among schools in Southern Punjab. The standard deviation was 0.895, indicating that there was some variability in the organizational culture of schools. Overall the results suggest that school heads in Southern Punjab have a moderate level of management skills and moderately positive organizational cultures. There is a strong positive correlation between management skills and organizational culture, with management skills being a strong predictor of organizational culture. These

findings highlight the importance of effective school leadership in promoting a positive organizational culture and enhancing the quality of education in schools.

Discussion

The study aimed to evaluate the management skills and organizational culture of school heads in Southern Punjab, Pakistan, and to identify areas for improvement that can enhance the quality of education and well-being of students and staff. The findings suggest that school heads in Southern Punjab need to improve their management skills in strategic planning, human resource management, and communication, and promote a more participatory and empowering organizational culture. In terms of management skills, the study found that school heads in Southern Punjab demonstrate proficiency in financial management and problem-solving, but they need to improve their skills in strategic planning and human resource management. The literature suggests that effective strategic planning is critical for ensuring that schools are aligned with the broader goals of educational development (Harper & Rickard, 2014). School heads need to have a clear understanding of their school's strengths and weaknesses and develop a shared vision and goals that are aligned with the needs and expectations of their students and communities (Naidu & Adendorff, 2018). Human resource management is also a critical management skill for school heads, as it impacts the quality of teaching and learning in schools. The study found that school heads in Southern Punjab need to improve their skills in recruiting, retaining, and developing teachers, providing them with appropriate support and guidance, and creating a positive and supportive working environment (Iqbal & Akram, 2018). Effective communication is another critical management skill that enables school heads to build strong relationships with their staff, parents, and students, and promote a positive and productive school culture (Gökçe, 2017). In terms of organizational culture, the study found that schools in

Southern Punjab have a hierarchical and authoritarian culture, with limited opportunities for teacher empowerment and collaboration. This finding is consistent with previous research that suggests that schools in Pakistan tend to have a centralized and bureaucratic culture, with limited opportunities for teacher voice and participation (Rauf, 2018). However, research suggests that a participatory and empowering organizational culture can promote teacher motivation and job satisfaction, leading to improved student outcomes (Hofman & Jones, 2005). To promote a more participatory and empowering organizational culture, school heads need to focus on providing supportive leadership, creating opportunities for teacher empowerment and collaboration, and offering professional development for teachers and staff. Research suggests that effective school leadership is critical for promoting a positive and productive school culture and improving student outcomes (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003). Overall, the study highlights the importance of effective school leadership in promoting educational development and creating supportive and productive learning environments. By strengthening the management skills and organizational culture of school heads in Southern Punjab, schools can enhance the quality of education and well-being of students and staff, and contribute to the broader goals of educational development in Pakistan.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study aimed to evaluate the management skills and organizational culture of school heads in Southern Punjab, Pakistan, and to identify areas for improvement that can enhance the quality of education and well-being of students and staff. The findings indicate that while school heads in Southern Punjab demonstrate proficiency in some management skills, such as financial management and problem-solving, they need to improve their skills in strategic planning and human resource management. The study also found that the organizational culture of schools

in Southern Punjab is hierarchical and authoritarian, with limited opportunities for teacher empowerment and collaboration. To promote a positive and productive school culture in Southern Punjab, school heads need to focus on developing a shared vision and goals for their school, promoting collaborative decision-making processes, providing supportive leadership, and offering opportunities for professional development for teachers and staff. The study recommends that school heads in Southern Punjab receive training and support to develop their management skills and promote a more participatory and empowering organizational culture. The study highlights the importance of effective school leadership in promoting educational development and creating supportive and productive learning environments. By strengthening the management skills and organizational culture of school heads in Southern Punjab, schools can enhance the quality of education and well-being of students and staff, and contribute to the broader goals of educational development in Pakistan.

Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proposed to improve the management skills and organizational culture of school heads in Southern Punjab.

- The government and educational institutions should provide leadership training programs for school heads to enhance their management skills, particularly in strategic planning, human resource management, and communication. Such training programs can equip school heads with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively manage their schools and promote a positive and productive organizational culture.
- School heads should promote a more participatory and empowering organizational culture by involving teachers in decision-making processes,

- encouraging collaboration, and providing opportunities for professional development. Such practices can enhance teacher motivation and job satisfaction, leading to improved student outcomes.
- School heads should create a supportive and positive working environment for teachers and staff by providing appropriate support and guidance, recognizing and rewarding their efforts, and promoting a culture of mutual respect and trust. This can enhance teacher well-being and retention rates, and create a conducive learning environment for students.
 - School heads should emphasize the importance of effective communication and promote a culture of open communication among staff, students, and parents. This can enhance relationships, promote understanding, and contribute to the development of a positive and productive school culture.
 - The government and educational institutions should develop a monitoring and evaluation system to assess the management skills and organizational culture of school heads and provide feedback for improvement. Such a system can help identify areas for improvement and promote accountability.

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