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## DECISION-MAKING PRACTICES OF SECONDARY SCHOOL HEAD TEACHERS'

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### Abstract

The aim of this study was to learn how secondary school head teachers made decisions. Furthermore, the study was designed to compare the decision-making practices of Public and private school head teachers and also male and female head teachers. The researcher used quantitative design for the study. The population of the study consisted of all head teachers of secondary schools in Lahore. The random sampling technique was used. The researcher developed decision-making practices (DMP) questionnaire to collect the data for the study. The researcher personally visited the schools, and overall 356 of total 384 questionnaires were received back. In this way, the return rate of questionnaire becomes 92.7% of the total sample which was quite encouraging. So, sample size got reduced from 384 to 356. Reseachers computed the mean and standard deviation. The significance of the difference between male, female, and public HTs' perceptions of their decision-making methods was examined using an independent sample t test. Findings of the study illustrate that public and private HTs' mean responses about decision-making practices had found significant difference while male and female HTs' mean responses had found no significant difference.

**Keywords:** Decision-making, decision-making process, decision-making practices, public and private schools HTs'

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## Introduction

Rowe et al (1984) defines decision as “An answer to some question, a choice between two or more alternatives” (p. 3). Process of decision making is based on choice from the different alternatives to achieve desired outcomes (Eisenfuhr, 2011). Lunenburg (2010) explain this definition in three elements. In first element, this process involves making a choice from many alternatives. Second element described as the selection of best alternative. The last element of “desired outcomes”, after final choice from among alternatives, decision maker reach the final decision Decision-making can be defined as a choice made from between alternative courses of action that are obtainable, either towards the solution of a problem or the attainment of an objective (Duze, 2011).

Al-Omari (2013) cited Ravlin and Meglino (1987) according to them decision making is impacted by the singular's close to personal obligations and qualities.

A choice is the decision produced using among accessible choices that is relied upon to result in ideal determination to an issue. On the other hand, administrative choice making does not start or end with the choice, on the grounds that there must be an issue postured before a choice can be made, and after that the choice must be executed. The more extensive term choice making characterizes the procedure of recognizing issues, considering and assessing the choices, touching base at a choice, making a move and evaluating the results. This procedure portrays how supervisors ought to approach the issues they experience (Khan, 2008).

Decision making refer as purposely selecting one decision from two or all the more, proactively to streamline a circumstance or result and not give it a chance to happen as a matter of course (Russel-Jones, 2000).

According to Duze (2005) Principals have a tendency to be legitimate in deciding, along these lines, denying the understudies and instructors the privilege to practice important control over the reasons and last social consequences of their studies. Consistently individuals are confronted with the need to decide. Decision making, in this way, incorporates a variety of procedures some of which have been the subject of broad examinations. One of the key elements of pioneers is to set long haul objectives for their associations (Al-Omari, 2013).

According to Gulcan (2011) three important aspects of decision are:

**It is based on selecting.** It is tenacity, the most accurate one among the alternatives concerning the problem.

**It is rational.** While making decision, be rational. Avoid adopting emotional attitude.

**It is purposeful.** Ways and methods preferred which are helpful to solve the problem.

Gorton (1980) and Drah (2011) stated that making decisions is a complex process that needs time and effort, rational cognitive processes, and the use of pertinent sources of information and support. Therefore, choosing amongst potential solutions is part of decision-making. He noted the following advantages of including relevant third parties in the decision-making process:

1. The number of pertinent decisions that must be taken grows as a result of viewpoints and ideas (input).

2. Make better use of the expertise and problem-solving abilities that are offered by the institutions.

3. When those involved in decision-making see that the administrator values their opinions, it increases their sense of value in the school. The people feel satisfied as a result of this.

4. Encourages the receiving and implementation of decisions since people involved are more likely to comprehend them and express greater confidence in their success.

5. It is consistent with autonomous societal ideas that those who may be impacted by a choice should have some input into how public institutions like schools are run.

It is normally acknowledged that choices must have some conclusion, which needs to be attracted a fitting way, with the goal that one point finished will give a begin to another point (Ahmad, 2013). According to Morphet et al. (1982) school organization at all levels along the chain of command settles on choice. The choice may eventually impact the school's individuals. It can, in this manner be contended that, school principals who settle on choice on essential school issue without satisfactory data do not encourage to achievement of hierarchical objectives and often bring down the assurance of individuals from the association. A decision may be measured by the degree to which its outcomes fulfill the administrator significant destinations. It likewise takes care of the issue that why a choice is taken. It is evident that the leaders wish to accomplish pre decided destinations on the other hand there is some situation, which chiefs need to accomplish inside accessible assets. The head will pick an activity that one accepts help to acquire his goals (Daft, 2003).

Decision making is critical and noteworthy in school and in any association everywhere to direct work, circulate assets, plan fleeting and long-term of realize the future situation as a goal, and exercises of the school. In addition, a school leaders primary occupation is to lead the school through powerful decision making, and all the time they need to choose what could possibly be done, to do it, and when and where is to be finish (Gemaechu, 2014).

A few decisions are of routine nature; choices which influence a few zones, decisions where instability is a component, choices where instability is an overwhelming variable, choices about strategies and procedures. Everything these need to be tended to in the correct point of view and rules of the present and past in such manner (Shami & Waqar, 2007). All the live long day, administrators settle on decision around a wide mixture of issues, be that as it may, not all choices are similar. A few choices yield up over and over thus can be made without much planning. Others come up less oftentimes and are a long way from schedule; such choices may happen just once in a supervisor's whole vocation. In general, decision can be delegated both programmed and non-programmed (Khan, 2008).

**Programmed Decisions** According to Simon (1977) Decisions are programmed to the degree that they are redundant and schedule, to the degree that an encouraging technique has been worked out for holding them with the goal that they don't need to be dealt with without any preparation every time they happen. An administrator makes a programmed decision when a circumstance happens so regularly or is so all around organized that it can be taken care of through the existing decision guidelines. In all around organized circumstances, supervisors need to consider generally few variables, or they face moderately obvious circumstances encompassing the choice (Khan, 2008)

**Non-Programmed Decisions.** Decisions are non-programmed when they are unusual, formless and strangely noteworthy (Simon, 1977). Non-programmed decisions are unique and

unstructured. They are not handled with present rules of decisions because situation occurs uncommonly. Administrator has no planning about these type of problems and situation so, these decisions are not clear-cut (Khan,2008).

Given how crucial decision-making is to the administrative function, numerous studies and analyses have been conducted on it (Khan, 2008). One form of action that has been thoroughly examined through the use of models is decision-making. Models aim to theoretically and practically explain how decision-making by school administrators works. The idea of decision-making as coherent behaviour is a common component of all models. In other words, a decision-maker will follow a logical set of decision-making steps (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 1991).

The reason for the decision making procedure is to locate the best encouraging of every single conceivable option subject to the particular objectives of the leader. An effective choice making procedure ought to utilize and go through some fundamental strides of choice making procedure (Walter, 2010).

Simon (1960) discusses the decision making process in three stages:

1. **Intelligence Activity.** The decision maker explores the situation for conditions calling for decision making.
2. **Design Activity.** The decision maker originates, develops, and analyzes possible courses of action to take.
3. **Choice Activity.** The decision maker selects a scrupulous course of action from among those available.

According to Mintzberg, Raisinghani and Theoret (1976), there are three phases of decision making process:

1. **Identification Phase:** A problem or opportunity is identified by the decision maker, who then makes a decision. It was discovered that while moderate issues did get a thorough, methodical diagnosis, serious, immediate issues did not.
2. **Phase of Development.** The decision-maker looks for established standard practises or solutions or creates a novel, customised answer. It was discovered that the design process was an ill-defined process of trial and error in which decision-makers had only a hazy sense of the perfect answer.
3. **Selection Phase.** The decision-maker selects a course of action. Three methods exist for reaching this decision: bargaining when a group of decision-makers is involved, rational, systematic consideration of the possibilities, and all the political manoeuvring that this entails. Once the decision is formally accepted, an authorization is made.

According to Phillips (1997) the decision making process involves five stages: (a) identification of all the existing alternatives; (b) according to preferences, and their potential outcomes valuing the alternatives ; (c) accumulate the information; (d) transaction between preferences and outcomes; and (e) selecting the most constructive alternative.

At school level there are five effective managerial roles with regards to the decision making process; a) integrative role, b) representative role, c) educative role, d) consulting role and e) administrative role (Hoy & Tarter, 1993).

Decision making process include several components; defining the problem; analyze the problem and creating a plan of action; develop alternatives to solve the problem and select the best solution; starting the actions; and monitoring the outcomes (Druker, 1974; Krumbolts & Hamel, 1977; Rowe et al, 1984). Alker, Rao and Hughes (1972) states that decision making process is based on availability of information.

Process of decision making is based on choice from the different alternatives to achieve desired outcomes (Eisenfuhr, 2011). Decision making is such an essential part of the administrative function; the process has been the subject of much research and analysis (Khan, 2008). Decision making is one type of activity that has been studied comprehensively through the use of models. Models endeavor to describe theoretically and practically how school administrators make decisions. All models characteristically include the concept of decision making as coherent behavior. That is, a decision maker will go through a rational sequence of decision making steps (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 1991).

This study finds out the decision making process of school head teachers and compares the public and private schools head teachers' decision making process. This is helpful for administrator for the betterment of their institute or school.

### **Objectives of the study**

The study would focus to achieve the following research objectives are to:

1. Compare the decision making process of public and private schools head teachers.
2. Compare the decision making process of male and female head teachers of school.

### **3. Sample of the study**

4. For the purpose of the first, quantitative phase of the study, the convenience sampling technique was used. The sample size required for 5% margin of error around the parameter estimation at the .98 confidence was 384. So sample of the study comprised a total of 384 head teachers of public (179) and private (205) secondary schools of Lahore who further bifurcated in to male (214) and female (170) of the accessible population of 1311 head teacher of public (266) and private (1045) secondary schools of Lahore who further bifurcated into male (569) and female (742).

### **Research Instrument**

The researcher was developed decision making process (DMP) questionnaire to collect the data for the study. A brief description of questionnaire is given below:

***Opinion of HTs about decision making process.*** as a result of intensive literature review researcher found some most important steps of decision making process includes; identifying the problem, analyze the problem (gathering information), develop alternative to solve the problem and select the best solution, starting the actions and monitoring the outcomes (Drucker,1974;Krumbotts & Hamel, 1977; Row et al, 1984).

Researcher self-developed questionnaire containing total 35 items, which were divided into as five steps of decision making process. The Researcher recorded responses on five point likert scale ranging from 5= Always, 4= Very Often, 3= Sometimes, 2= Almost never, 1= Never. Finally,

translate the questionnaire from English to Urdu language to make it more understandable to the head teachers.

### **Data Collection**

The questionnaire for head teachers with instructions were provided to respondent to fill out. The researcher personally visited the schools, overall 356 of total 384 questionnaires were received back. In this way, the return rate of questionnaire becomes 92.7% of the total sample which was quite encouraging. So, sample size got reduced from 384 to 356.

**Comparison of Public and Private School HTs' responses about decision making process.** The mean scores difference of HTs' responses on decision making process scale was calculated and following null hypothesis was tested.

Ho There is no significance difference between public and private school HTs' responses mean scores on decision making process scale

The null hypothesis was test using t test on mean scores of public and private school HTs' responses. The summary is presented in the table no. 4.12.

**Table 4.12**

*Comparison of Public and Private School HTs' responses about decision making process*

School Type	N	Mean	SD	t-test for equality of mean ( $\alpha=0.05$ )		
				t	df	Sig.
Public	160	4.483	.30506	2.965	341.06	.003
Private	196	4.363	.45784			

\* $p>0.05$

The above table reflects that t value (2.965) with df (341.06) was significant at  $p>0.05$ . Hence, the null hypothesis stated that there is no significance difference between public and private school HTs' responses mean scores on decision making process scale was rejected. It is clear that there is significant difference in public school HTs' (M=4.48, SD= .305) and private School HTs' (M=4.36, SD=.457) responses about decision making process.

**Comparison of Male and Female School HTs' responses about decision making process.**

The mean scores difference of HTs' responses on decision making process scale was calculated and following null hypothesis was tested.

Ho There is no significance difference between male and female HTs' responses mean scores on decision making process scale.

The null hypothesis was test using t test on mean scores of male and female HTs' responses. The summary is presented in the table no. 4.13.

**Table 4.13***Comparison of Male and Female School HTs' responses about decision making process*

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-test for equality of mean ( $\alpha=0.05$ )		
				t	df	Sig.
Male	188	4.39	.386	-1.11	354	.268
Female	168	4.44	.415			

\* $P>0.05$ 

The above table reflects that t value (-1.11) with df (354) was not significant at  $p>0.05$ . Hence, the null hypothesis stated that there is no significance difference between male and female HTs' responses mean scores on decision making process scale was accepted. It is clear that male HTs' (M=4.39, SD=.386) and female HTs' (M=4.44, SD=.415) did not differ significantly in their responses about decision making process.

### Discussion

The study would focus to achieve the following research objectives ; To discover the decision making process of school head teachers, To compare the decision making process of public and private schools head teachers and to compare the decision making process of male and female head teachers of school.

The process of identifying problems requires observation of the internal and external environment for issues that value attention. Findings of this study reveals that Public and private school HTs' give importance to problem identification. Male and female HTs also consider the identification of problem before coming to any decision. HTs' prefer observation to identify the problem. They always collect relevant and complete information about the problem. The length and meticulousness of the search for alternatives depends on the cost of evaluating additional alternatives (Narayanan, 2005). Ideally, the school administrator should seek to generate as many alternatives as possible and should attempt to ensure that the alternatives are relatively diverse — that is, not highly similar to one another. The extent of the search for alternatives is limited by the importance of the decision, the cost and value of additional information needed to evaluate alternatives, and the number of people affected by the decision (Zopounidis, 2011). In this study, Researcher found that HTs had different opinions about choice of best alternative Some of public school HTs gives scoring to all possible solution than select the top one. Private school HTs developed alternative plans, had always in mind bad and goods of decisions. They had always to very often tend to create various alternatives keeping in view the possible solution of the problem. The alternative that is chosen must be acceptable to those who must live with the consequences of the decision. Failure to meet this condition is the single most likely reason for failure of the decision-making process to solve problems (Hastie, 2010).

The next step in the decision making process involves choosing the alternative that the school administrator consider most effective; that is , the one that allows the administrator to solve the problem and accomplish the school district's objectives. The choice can be difficult even when

outcomes have been evaluated based on some comparable criteria (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 1991). Because most situations do not lend themselves to sophisticated mathematical analysis, the school administrator uses this available information in combination with judgment and intuition to make the decision. Public school HTs' tend to rely on their intuition while coming to any decision any also make haste while taking decision. They also in favor to involve their staff while decision making and appreciate the democratic and eclectic style of decision making. Private school HTs' supported the practices of decision making; take decision which seems correct rather than reasonable, rely upon instinct while taking decision, need teachers help while taking decisions, give importance to the viewpoint of entire staff while making decision and have confidence on their decisions. Findings support the Hicks and De Walt study results, Principals and educators concurred that instructors were some of the time to quite often included in the choice making procedure in molding the educational module, in picking the course readings that were utilized, in picking other instructional materials, in setting formal school principles for understudy conduct, and in deciding a sheltered school environment. As indicated by the Student Development Tasks, educators were not included.

Once a decision is made to choose an alternative solution, it must be implemented. The decision maker will have already considers all conceivable problems that may be associated with the implementation of the solution during the previous step in the decision making process. However, in school organizations, administrators are dependent on other to implement decisions. That is a school administrator must have skills not only for problem solving but also for "selling" the decision to those affected by it (Gupta, 1990). HTs' review the results of decisions and if do not get the expected results go through the decision making process again. HTs had felt enormous responsibility while making decisions. HTs views about reaction on wrong decision and rectification are almost similar. They never showed the hard and strict reaction but if their decision goes wrong they had try to search out where was problem in their decision and then they quickly take new strategy to get better results. HTs' also gives suggestions to made decision making process effective. Some of them suggested for the improvement of decision making process consider the opinion and direction, of elders and experienced people this made decision making process effective and some of them suggested for effective decision making collaboration of all concern people have great importance. Make this process successful through listen the others criticism.

The results of this study revealed that there is a significant difference between public and private school head teachers' responses about decision making process. Another result shows that there is no significance difference between male and female HTs' responses about decision making process.

### **Recommendations**

In the bases of literature review and collected data, following are some recommendations:

1. The findings of the quantitative study reveal that the genuine degree of teachers' involvement in decision making was rarely. So, it is recommended to HTs', they should be involved teachers in decision making process in their school as this will develop sense of responsibility among them. Furthermore, they will feel assertive and experienced.
2. From the findings obtained in this study, it is recommended that Government policies should be established the participative decision making as an integral part of every school.



3. From the findings obtained in this study, it was found that there is significance difference between public and private school HTs' responses about decision making process. Hence, a study to investigate such an effect of decision making process on school performance is thus recommended.
4. This study was delimited to Lahore city, it is suggested that, the study should be replicated in other districts to inaugurate good basis for generalization of study.

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