A Study on the Impact of Principals' Leadership Styles on Teachers' Performance at the College Level in South Kerala

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Abstract

In this paper, we analysed the leadership style of principals on the teacher work at college level in South Kerala. For this purpose, we gather information on 385 college teachers through random sampling method. The data on a five-point Likert Scale self-administered questionnaire were collected. data. To identify an association and differences in the views of the t-test and correlation were employed to study the participants of their study. This study has disclosed that most of the college principals use a democratic form of leadership on a more advanced level, Laissez-faire in the middle level and autocratic. in their colleges at a low level. Furthermore, it has been also disclosed that as principals use more of a democratic leadership style, teacher performance can also be developing. The results showed that the principals had their findings. the style of leadership influenced the performance of teachers positively. The experiment revealed a significant statistically significant association between college. Leadership style of principals and teacher performance. Thus, the results of this paper indicates that the leadership style should be embraced by college principals. depending on the levels of teachers. There should be a change in the leadership style. in the colleges with particular circumstances.
KEYWORDS: principal, leadership styles, teachers' perception.

Introduction

The development of teachers and the society needs a good leadership. In the 21stcentury technological development, there are numerous challenges to fight such as global networks of teachers that require an excellent educational leader in case of the educational institution. The leadership of a principal when it comes to handling educational and cultural changes like enhancing participation, transferring vision, and creating change consists of three broad dimensions. Leader competencies are important in the educational sector to enhance the quality of education in the era of technological progress (Sungtong, 2007; Abbas et al., 2020). A key role of a principal is to help guide, direct and coordinate different activities within the college. The main work of the principal is to establish and maintain a superior teaching-learning environment of the running educational programs in the college. The principal also has a duty of assisting the teachers in their teaching activities. The role of principals is essential to the attainment of the goals and objectives of the institution. These roles include the ability of the principals to provide effective and authentic leadership and the outcome is better presentation of professionals among teachers. The principal has the mandate to provide extremely rated visions, which are centered on their day-to-day practices, and which help to develop a good culture that is conducive to the outstanding teacher performance (Nanson, 2010; Saleemet al., 2020).

Literature Review

Reddy (2023) conducted a study on the successful operation of college principals in B.Ed. in Andhra Pradesh. The researchers discovered that the perceptions of B.Ed. college lecturers on efficient operation of their principals differ significantly with regard to age group and education levels. Principals also do interpersonal jobs such as liaison officer, leader and figurehead that are important to administration. In a study conducted by Quintos (2022) in Faculty Readiness to Teach Mathematics in the Modern World Online, the researcher explored the level of teacher readiness to teach Mathematics online, in the aspects of course design, communication, time management, technical skills and pedagogical skills. Based on 30 faculty members and 172 students, the results indicated that teachers are high in ability to teach online. There was no major difference in the perception of online teaching between teachers and students. The training intervention programme was advocated to enhance instruction development, time management, technological, and teaching strategy competencies.

In their article, Fusion of New Technologies in Initial Education, Bora (2021) revealed that the interaction between computers and youngsters is a fairly recent discussion. The exposition was aimed at making a contribution to the timely research, introducing ideas and theoretical-practical considerations to reach an acceptable assimilation of new developments at the first stage. It has also placed much emphasis on the role of educators to manage major criteria in academic choices when developing the learners who were born following the adoption of electronic technology in the globe.

In the article by Adamu et al. (2020) titled Technical and Vocational Education Teachers Computer Competencies Using Artificial Intelligence, the authors investigated the computer and related technology competencies that were required by TVE teachers. The MLR, AI, and ANFIS models were used to compare the data of 60 questionnaires in six higher technical institutes in north-eastern Nigeria. The findings revealed that teachers were highly skilled in the use of computers and there was association between proficiency and years of teaching with a high association but none with gender.

In the article, Kumara (2020) in E-Learning Problems in the Age of Social Distancing in Higher Education concluded that e-learning platforms are introducing quantifiable changes in the engagement and performance of students. The paper has observed that at such a level, e-learning platforms are the only solution and the professionals have to prepare themselves with the applicable skills before their existing skill sets face the risk of being rendered irrelevant.According to Chin (2015), leadership is defined in the American setting. through scholarly as a process of social influence. of which a person can seek the assistance and help of others. not only the achievement of ordinary but also moral activities. Western (2013) states that leadership is understood as the skills and capabilities of the practical skills. to guide, affect or supply persons, groups or organizations. advice to other individuals, groups or the entire organization. Among others, Goel (2005) and Crum and Sherman (2008) uses another form of leadership depending on the circumstance. An autocratic kind of a leadership style in cases of emergency. Is deemed to be more effective and in a strongly motivated and aligned team democratic or laissez-faire styles have been identified as such. more powerful (Department of the Army, 2006).A great number of researchers in different places and situations. described leadership like the one explained by Okumbe (1998). leadership as a certain attitude of the leader towards. get his or her subordinates motivated to attain the. the objectives and goals of organization.

Problem statement

Principals are expected to behave in a certain way by teachers who work in senior colleges due to their statutory leadership duties. Teachers believe that their principals leadership philosophies differ from their expectations. As a result, if teachers do not receive what they expect from their principals, they may become dissatisfied with their jobs. Given this, one might wonder if there is

a link between the principals perceived and expected leadership behaviours. This was considered when attempting to identify the various leadership philosophies employed by administrators and how the professors at the selected colleges viewed them. The study investigates the relationship between the expected and actual leadership philosophies employed by the principals. The study examines various leadership philosophies used by administrators and how they affect teachers & job satisfaction.

Significance of the Study

Teachers believe that principals should support and encourage their professional growth, engage in openness and transparency regarding job allocation, performance review and others. However, there are situations under which the leadership philosophy of administrators fails to please instructors. Consequently, it is vital to ensure that they have the right perceptions about the leadership philosophies of their principals. Based on the study, we can evaluate the effect of relationship on the institutional climate, the interaction between principals and members of staff and students, and the significant roles played by the principals in college administration. Also, students and teachers often see senior college principals as leaders. Consequently, parents, teachers, and other interested parties often expect the administrators to be responsible in the achievements and failures of college management. It is based on this that the research will aim to determine the degree to which the teacher perceptions towards the principal leadership styles affect the institutional culture and the teacher job satisfaction. The research illustrates its relevance as far as academic and research relevance is concerned. It contributes to the knowledge about the Indian system of higher education overall and the major leadership styles in particular. The results of the study can help the management of colleges become more mindful of their leadership beliefs and build up their personal leadership potential to serve the community of teachers. The results might also assist principals to enhance teacher pay and working situations. The research can help other scholars in the same area determine areas that need further investigation to bridge the knowledge gap and present the latest in the matter of leadership.

Scope of the Study

The present research under investigation looks at the relationship between the behaviour of principals and their attitudes with respect to institutional factors and the perception of principals of the leadership styles by the teachers. Based on the present research, leadership philosophies of principals must be reviewed to enhance their administrative potentials. Teachers with the hope of becoming principals can also use these findings to familiarize themselves with the leadership philosophies of principals that can create positive institutional environment. The results of the paper demonstrate that school administrators can help students to build their leadership styles. Through their actions, personal traits and outlooks, the principals in the college undertake important roles as learners, planners, visionaries, politicians, advocates, organisational developers, managers, leaders and change agents. Besides, the paper examines the relationship between principals and their staff and students and the perceptions of teachers towards the leadership philosophy of their principals. Principal leadership is a necessary condition of developing the instructional climate at the college. The research question is on the perception of teachers to the style of leadership of administrators and the influence of leadership behaviour of principals to the nature of institutions culture. The leadership in a college system plays a key role in the success of a college and administrators can enhance workplace performance and job satisfaction among teachers by using different leadership philosophies to diverse situations. The study was conducted in the state of South Kerala.

Research Questions

The following questions arise from the research gap and problem statement:
1.How do the leadership styles of principals influence the job performance of teachers?
2.To what extent is the principal's strategic ability effective in coordinating the functions of educational institutions?

Objectives of the Study

Based on the research questions, the following objectives were developed:
1.To examine the extent to which the leadership styles of principals influence the job performance of teachers.
2.To assess the effectiveness of principals' strategic ability in coordinating the functions of educational institutions.
3.To evaluate the level of technical competence of principals in managing educational institutions.

Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypotheses have been developed based on the objectives:

H_01: Principals' leadership styles have no significant impact on the job satisfaction of teachers in Kerala. H_02: Goal framing ability (GF) of principals has no significant impact on teachers 'job satisfaction.

H_03: Strategic planning ability (SP) of principals has no significant impact on teachers' job satisfaction. H_04: Organizational excellence of principals (OE) has no significant impact on teachers' job satisfaction. H_05: Communication effectiveness of principals (CE) has no significant impact on teachers' job satisfaction.

Methodology

The procedures used to collect data from senior college teachers for this study are detailed under each heading below.

Research Design

This study is designed to be descriptive and analytical in nature, with concepts related to the study described and primary data collected from the field based on direct observation, then analysed and interpreted.

Sources of Data

For the purpose of the study, two sources of data have been collected:

Primary data: Primary data were gathered from faculty members ateducational institutions in Central Kerala. Secondary data: Secondary data were gathered from all available sources,including reports from the UGC, AICTE, CBSE, NTA, and relevant websites.The higher education landscape comprises a total of 350 colleges, reflecting a diverse range of academic streams. Among these, Arts and Science colleges form the largest segment with 167 institutions, indicating a strong emphasis on general and foundational education. This is followed by Training Colleges, numbering 68, which highlights the importance given to teacher education. Engineering colleges account for 66 institutions, demonstrating significant focus on technical and professional education. In addition, there are 24 colleges offering Management Studies, catering to business and administrative disciplines, and 19 Medical Colleges, supporting healthcare education. Law education is represented by 6 Law Colleges, forming the smallest category among the listed institutions.

Sample Size

The sample size was calculated using Taro Yamane's formula as 385. A multistage stratified simple random sampling method was used to select senior faculty members from the respective colleges. Four districts in South Kerala were considered for the selection of respondents. As a result, the first stage consists of choosing the district, the second of choosing the type of colleges, and the third of choosing the faculties from the various colleges.

Scaling Techniques

Likert's five-point scale was used to quantify the qualitative data collected from respondents.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was carried out with 30 samples from various types of colleges, including government, aided, unaided, and autonomous institutions. Teachers' data were collected to assess the reliability, validity, and efficiency of the research instruments developed. The pilot study was used to improve the research instruments by adding and removing variables, as well as changing the question pattern and testing validity.

Reliability and Validity

Validity is defined as the extent to which a measure evaluates what it is supposed to evaluate. When constructing a data collection instrument, its validity is assessed by refining the content and variables to be measured, as well as the flow of their arrangement. To establish validity, a pilot study with a small sample size is used. Consultation with experts can ensure validity. Following the discussion and subsequent data collection from the pilot study, Cronbach's alpha can be used to test for reliability.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

H□1: Principals' leadership styles have no relation on the job satisfaction of teachers in Kerala.

Table: Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std.Deviation	N
Job Satisfaction of Teachers	4.2114	.42816	385
Autocratic	4.2479	.54011	385
Laissez-faire	4.0000	.61412	385
Participative	4.2507	.54144	385
Democratic	4.2507	.35431	385

The descriptive statistics of the study show that the job satisfaction level of teachers is relatively high with the average of 4.211 and the standard deviation of 0.428 which is moderate variability among the respondents. The leadership styles of the principals that have the highest mean scores of 4.251, than autocratic style which has 4.248, and lastly the laissez-faire style at 4.000. This indicates that principals in the sampled institutions largely use participative and democratic leadership behaviors whereby they focus on involvement, collaboration, and shared decision-making, but the laissez-faire practices, despite being present, were relatively infrequent. Overall, the analysis shows that the styles of participative, democratic and laissez-faire leadership are considerably correlated with the increased job satisfaction of teachers, but not autocratic leadership. The high inter-correlations of the positive leadership styles show that there is an overlapping of collaborative and autonomy-supportive behaviors of the principals. In turn, the null hypothesis that addresses participative, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles is rejected, whereas the null hypothesis, which concerns autocratic leadership, is accepted. The implications of these findings are that inclusive, participative, and supportive leadership practices should be used to magnify job satisfaction among teachers in learning institutions.

Table: **Correlations**

		Job Satisfaction of Teachers	Autocratic	Laissez-faire	Participative	Democratic
Job Satisfaction of Teachers	Pearson Correlation	1	-.019	.435**	.445**	.429**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.724	.000	.000	.000
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	63.979	-1.529	39.938	36.010	22.697
	Covariance	.183	-.004	.114	.103	.065
	N	385	385	385	385	385
Autocratic	Pearson Correlation	-.019	1	.190**	-.141**	-.326**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.724		.000	.008	.000
	Sum of Squares andCross-products	-1.529	101.811	21.938	-14.437	-21.749
	Covariance	-.004	.292	.063	-.041	-.062
	N	385	385	385	385	385
Laissez-faire	Pearson Correlation	.435**	.190**	1	.945**	.867**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	39.938	21.938	131.625	109.688	65.813
	Covariance	.114	.063	.377	.314	.189
	N	385	385	385	385	385
Participative	Pearson Correlation	.445**	-.141**	.945**	1	.982**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.008	.000		.000
	Sum of Squaresand Cross- products	36.010	-14.437	109.688	102.312	65.750
	Covariance	.103	-.041	.314	.293	.188
	N	385	385	385	385	385
Democratic	PearsonCorrelation	.429**	-.326**	.867**	.982**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	22.697	-21.749	65.813	65.750	43.812
	Covariance	.065	-.062	.189	.188	.126
	N	385	385	385	385	385

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

H□2:Goal framing ability (GF) of principals has no significant impact on teachers' job satisfaction.

Table:Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Job Satisfaction of Teachers	4.6786	.37164	385
Goal Framing(GF)	4.5000	.32775	385

Table :Model Summary

Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
.17542	.778	1340.500	1	383	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Goal Framing (GF)

The Pearson correlation analysis shows that there exists a very strong and statistically significant positive correlation between goal framing and job satisfaction of teachers ($r = 0.882$, $p < 0.01$, one-tailed). This shows that the higher the effectiveness of principals in goal framing, the higher their job satisfaction is and the same applies to the teachers. The value of the significance ($p = 0.000$) proves that such a relationship is not coincidental, and goal framing has a fundamental impact on the workplace satisfaction of teachers.To conclude, it is evident in the analysis that goal framing of principals has a significant and positive impact on the job satisfaction of teachers both in terms of correlation and regression. The large effect size, large R2 value, and statistical significance all testify to the significance of an effective goal-setting and communicating the institutional objectives by the principals to increase teacher motivation, engagement, and general satisfaction.

H□3:Strategic planning ability (SP) of principals has no significant impact on teachers' job satisfaction.

Table: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.872[a]	.761	.760	.18190	.761	1219.970	1	383	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Strategic Planning (SP)

This relationship is also supported by regression analysis. It is indicated in the model summary that R2 is 0.761, and R has a value of 0.872 that is, it is revealed that about 76.1 percent of the variation in job satisfaction of teachers is attributed to the strategic planning capability of principals. The adjusted R 2 = 0.760 shows the strength of the model and standard error of estimate = 0.182, the prediction is rather accurate. As indicated by ANOVA table, the regression model is very significant ($F = 1219.970$, $p < 0.001$) and hence, strategic planning is a very strong predictor of job satisfaction.The coefficients show that the B of strategic planning is unstandardized = 0.979, and the standard error = 0.028, the standardized beta = 0.872 ($t = 34.928$, $p < 0.001$). This implies that as perceived strategic planning ability of principals increases by one unit, job satisfaction of teachers also increases by almost one unit, which is significant. Overall, based on the findings, it must be stated that the ability of principals to plan strategically had a significant and positive impact on job satisfaction of teachers. The correlation analysis as well as regression analysis prove that strategic planning is a major leadership role that highly influences the motivation, engagement and satisfaction of teachers in learning institutions. The null hypothesis that strategic planning does not have any significant effect on the job satisfaction of the teachers is, therefore, rejected.

H□4:Organizational excellence of principals (OE) has no significant impact on teachers' job satisfaction.

Table: Model Summary

Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
	RSquare Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
.19784	.717	972.042	1	383	.000

a.   Predictors: (Constant), Organizational Excellence (OE)

Regression analysis further supports this finding. The model summary reveals an R value of 0.847 and an R² of 0.717, meaning that 71.7% of the variance in teachers' job satisfaction can be explained by principals' organizational excellence. The adjusted R² of 0.717 confirms the robustness of the model, and the standard error

of estimate is 0.198, indicating reasonable precision in predicting job satisfaction. The ANOVA table shows that the regression model is highly significant ($F = 972.042$, $p < 0.001$), confirming that organizational excellence is a strong predictor of job satisfaction.The regression coefficients show that organizational excellence has an unstandardized B of 0.944 with a standard error of 0.030 and a standardized beta of 0.847 ($t = 31.178$, $p < 0.001$). This suggests that for every one-unit increase in perceived organizational excellence of principals, teachers' job satisfaction increases by nearly one unit, demonstrating a substantial positive effect. In conclusion, the analysis clearly demonstrates that principals' organizational excellence significantly and positively influences teachers' job satisfaction. Both correlation and regression results confirm the substantial role of effective organizational practices, planning, and quality management in enhancing teachers' motivation, engagement, and overall satisfaction. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that organizational excellence has no significant impact on teachers' job satisfaction is rejected.

H□5: Communication effectiveness of principals (CE) has no significant impact on teachers' job satisfaction.

Table: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig.F Change
1	.835[a]	.698	.697	.20452	.698	884.906	1	383	.000

a.   Predictors: (Constant), Communication Effectiveness (CE)

The regression coefficients show that the unstandardized B of the communication effectiveness is 0.922 with a standard error of 0.031 and standardized beta is 0.835 ($t = 29.747$, $p < 0.001$). This implies that the greater the perceived communication effect, the more the job satisfaction among teachers rises by almost one unit, and this is a significant positive outcome. To sum up, the analysis shows clearly that the effectiveness of the communication of the principals positively and significantly affects the job satisfaction of the teachers. Correlation and regression analyses confirm that an efficient communication is one of the major functions of leadership that stimulates motivation, involvement, and the general satisfaction of teachers. Thus, the null hypothesis according to which communication effectiveness does not significantly affect job satisfaction of teachers is rejected.

Findings

The data analysis clearly reveals that principals' leadership behaviour and managerial competencies have a significant influence on the job satisfaction of teachers in Kerala. The descriptive analysis indicates that teachers exhibit a high level of job satisfaction,

suggesting a generally positive work environment in the sampled institutions. Correlation analysis shows that participative, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles are positively and significantly related to teachers' job satisfaction, whereas autocratic leadership shows no significant relationship. This confirms that inclusive, collaborative, and autonomy-supportive leadership practices enhance teachers' satisfaction levels. Furthermore, very strong and statistically significant relationships were observed between principals' goal framing ability, strategic planning ability, organizational excellence, and communication effectiveness with teachers' job satisfaction. Regression results demonstrate that these leadership dimensions explain a substantial proportion of variance in job satisfaction, with strategic planning, organizational excellence, and goal framing emerging as particularly strong predictors. Overall, the findings conclusively reject null hypotheses H□2, H□3, H□4, and H□5, while partially accepting H□1 only in the case of autocratic leadership, thereby highlighting the critical role of effective and supportive leadership practices in educational institutions.

Suggestions

Based on the findings, it is strongly recommended that principals adopt participative and democratic leadership styles that emphasize collaboration, shared decision-making, and mutual respect. Autocratic practices should be minimized, as they do not contribute positively to teachers' job satisfaction. Training and professional development programs for principals should focus on strengthening goal framing skills, enabling leaders to clearly articulate institutional vision, objectives, and expectations in a motivating manner. Emphasis should also be placed on enhancing strategic planning capabilities so that principals can effectively align institutional goals with teachers' professional growth and organizational priorities. Improving organizational excellence through systematic planning, quality management, and efficient resource utilization is essential for sustaining high levels of teacher satisfaction. Additionally, principals should prioritize transparent, consistent, and empathetic communication, as effective communication has been shown to significantly boost teacher motivation, engagement, and satisfaction. Educational authorities and policymakers may consider incorporating leadership competency development as a core component of principal appraisal and promotion systems.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study establishes that principals' leadership behaviour and managerial effectiveness play a decisive role in shaping teachers' job satisfaction in Kerala. Leadership styles that promote participation, democratic values, and autonomy significantly enhance satisfaction, while autocratic leadership does not yield similar benefits. The strong positive impact of goal framing, strategic planning, organizational excellence, and communication effectiveness underscores the importance of holistic and competency-based leadership in educational institutions. These findings highlight that teachers' job satisfaction is not merely an individual or contextual issue but is deeply influenced by the quality of leadership exercised by school principals. Strengthening leadership competencies among principals can therefore lead to improved teacher morale, enhanced institutional performance, and better educational outcomes. The study contributes valuable empirical evidence to educational leadership research and provides meaningful insights for improving leadership practices in the school education system.

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