

## **Opinions and Perceptions of Head Teachers (HTs) towards Devolution in Education in Pakistan**

**Ayaz Muhammad Khan\***  
**Munawar S. Mirza\*\***

---

### **Abstract**

Devolution Plan 2000 was promulgated in all provinces of Pakistan in the year 2001 through Provincial Local Government Ordinance and the purpose was to devolve political, administrative and financial powers from provincial governments to district governments. Education at elementary and secondary level was initially controlled by provincial government and with devolution of powers it filtered down to district governments. Head teachers of the high school are now more accountable to district governments which controlled most of the academic, administrative and financial matters of the school. This study explored two aspects in this regard. On one hand, it explored the current source of powers in public sector schools and on the other hand, it discovered the extent to which they wish academic, administrative and financial powers to be devolved in future. Out of 387 of the total head teachers 341 responded to the questionnaire. The results of the study showed that approximately 80 % of the HTs feel authorized to manage the academic matters. Nearly 60 % of the HTs think that they have powers from some to a large extent in the administrative matters and more than half, 53.70 %, feel to have control over the financial matters to some extent to ever more. Besides, 1/4 of the total HTs stated having no role in financial matters. Similarly, overall opinion of HTs regarding power center of various academic, administrative and financial matters of the schools showed that 62% of the HTs wanted power center regarding academic matters to be within school.

**Keywords:** decentralization, devolution in education, school leadership, academic, administrative and financial matters

---

\* Assistant Professor, Division of Education, University of Education, Lahore. Email: [ayaz@ue.edu.pk](mailto:ayaz@ue.edu.pk)

\*\* Professor Emeritus, IER University of the Punjab, Lahore. Email: [drmsmirza1968@gmail.com](mailto:drmsmirza1968@gmail.com)

## **Introduction**

Educational decentralization divides school system into smaller units, but the focus of power and authority remains in a single central administration and board of education (Lunenberg & Ornstein, 1996). In most of the countries where education was decentralized, curriculum and testing remained centralized practically whereas functions such as the selection of teachers, textbooks, and other instructional materials, and facility construction and maintenance, are being left increasingly to school (Behrman, Deolalikar & Soon, 2002). The success or failure of any form of decentralization in education depends upon its successful implementation (Rondinelli, 1983).

According to USAID (2006) educational decentralization takes three principle forms. The first is deconcentration in which there is reallocation of decision making within education ministry and bureaucracy. The second one is delegation or school autonomy, which is the administrative or legal transfer of responsibilities to elected or appointed school management committees, and school governing boards. The third, devolution, when there is a permanent transfer of decision making responsibilities in education from central government to lower level of government: province municipalities or districts.

Devolution of authority to local government occurs when a government of central authority hands power to local government to make certain kinds of decisions regarding spending, staffing and education content (e.g., curriculum testing) which is being done by the formal agreement in a manner which suggest a measure of irreversibility such as may occur with the change in constitution (Behrman, Deolalikar & Soon, 2002;Caldwell,1993).It is assumed that education controlled by local governments have better knowledge of the idiosyncratic preferences of the area regarding students, teachers and schools and the decision made as close as possible to the site of their implementation as the best and the most relevant information is brought to bear on them. They are in a better position to allocate funds and watch the production of outcomes more closely. Moreover they care for equity (Burki, Perry and Dillinger, 1999; Kemmerer, 1994).

When military took over the reign of the government on October 12, 1999, General Pervez Musharraf gave a seven-point agenda to the nation including that of devolution power to the grass root level. The government intended to decentralize the administrative, financial and political structure of Pakistan. The National Reconstruction Bureau on 18th November 1999 undertook this Herculean task (NRB, 2001). The first major contribution of this Bureau came on the scene when the

Bureau delivered the first comprehensive plan to filter down the essence of democracy to its very grass root level known as the Local Government Plan- 2000 or Devolution Plan announced on August 14, 2000. The objectives of changing the system of governance as mentioned by National Reconstruction Bureau (2001 a) were “to restructure the bureaucratic setup and decentralize the administrative and financial authority to the district level and below and refocus administrative systems to allow public participation in decision-making with improved monitoring system at local councils level.”

### **Devolution Plan 2000**

According to the Devolution Plan 2000, “the local government is based on five fundamental principles; devolution of political power, decentralization of administrative authority, de-concentration of management system, diffusion of power authority nexus, and the distribution of the resources to the district level”

The Devolution Plan (2000) devolved powers and responsibilities, including those related to social services, from the provincial levels to elected district level authorities and local councils. Under devolution, political power, decision-making authority, and administrative responsibilities were moved as close as possible to the village, union council, tehsil and district levels, whereas the major policy-making, coordination, and special service functions left with the provincial governments.

Levels of devolution are:

- Political devolution through the establishment of elected local government.
- Fiscal decentralization through the transfer of funds to local government.
- Administrative decentralization, to correspond with the new devolved political and fiscal arrangements.

Under devolution, there were no shifts of responsibility, power or authority from the federal to the provincial governments rather they were from provincial to districts.

### **Implementation of devolution**

Pakistan is a federation composed of four provinces, Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Federally Administered Northern Areas (FANA). The form of decentralization that has been implemented in Pakistan is devolution as we see that local governments also have autonomous sources of revenue.

The provincial governments promulgated the Local Government Ordinance, 2001 in their respective provinces to install a new integrated Local Government System with effect from 14 August 2001 to function within the provincial framework and adhere to the federal and provincial laws. The new system allowed public participation in decision-making. The essence of this system was that the local governments would be accountable to citizens for all their decisions and actions

Ever since the appearance of Devolution plan in 2000 and till its promulgation in the provinces on 14<sup>th</sup> August 2001, a series of consultation and technical group meetings were held at federal as well as provincial levels to develop a well-designed education structure at provincial as well as at district levels. Many posts were abolished whereas new posts were carved out with clear job descriptions (MSU, 2001 c). The education department of pre-devolution era was devolved through Punjab Local Government Ordinance 2001 in the Schedule I part A of decentralized offices.

At present, the organizational setup of education in Pakistan is at three levels.

- Federal level (Ministry of Education, Govt. of Pakistan)
- Provincial level (Department of Education, Govt. of Punjab)
- District level (District level under Department of Education, Govt. of Punjab)

No federal level power from Ministry of Education was devolved to lower level through Devolution Plan 2000. Devolution of Power Plan (2000) has transferred responsibility for delivering education to local governments. Now, districts are responsible for the planning, monitoring and evaluation of education systems at the district level. Salary and managing teaching and non-teaching staff is in the jurisdiction of the district

The head of the Education Department in a district is Executive District Officer (EDO). Initially, district governments are given the functional responsibility for delivering elementary, secondary and college education but college education was excluded from it and now only elementary and secondary education is in its purview. Under the devolution programme the district management and community has been empowered at the grassroots level in planning, management, resource mobilization, utilization, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the education system (PLGO 2001; Zaidi, 2005).

Head teachers' role in schools is very pivotal in sustaining the change. If a head teacher is a part of the process of change, the chances of the success of any system become great. Similarly the quality and efficiency of school depends to a large extent on the effective school leadership. Plank (1987) pointed out some of the cause of the failure of educational reform initiatives. One of them is the disregard shown to role of school heads in the making and implementation of these reforms. Decentralization in education in Pakistan is a new initiative where educational planners have to seek their role in the new scenario.

Head teachers have three main roles within the school in the Punjab; academic, administrative and financial. According to the Punjab Education Code for the teachers and head teachers, they are expected to help their teachers in improving their pedagogical skills and improving their classrooms environment conducive to teaching learning. This is one of their academic roles as instructional supervisor.

The administrative or management roles of head teachers is considered as their central responsibility and require them to determine staffing needs, preparing time table, maintaining records required by district or provincial governments, school community relationship and creating a conducive environment within the schools.

The financial roles of head teachers are preparing budgets for the school which he/she sends to local or provincial government and to act as drawing and disbursing officer of the salaries of the staff. They have to apply for re-appropriation (transfer of savings in the appropriations of one or more units of appropriations to meet excess expenditure anticipated under another such unit) of the budget to district government which takes a long time for approval (PDFR, 2006)

Head teachers in Punjab operate as linking agent between school and district or provincial government. Little is known about what head teachers of high schools in Punjab want through decentralization in education. What influence do they have on different academic, administrative and financial matters in the school and whether they want the decentralization of the authorities regarding different academic, administrative and financial matters to schools or not.

Two major studies conducted on the attitudes of the head teachers posit that majority of head teachers were in favour of giving more and more autonomy so far as decisions regarding academic, financial and administrative were concerned. In a study conducted by Wright (1993) most of the participants favoured budgeting decentralization to the grass root level. Smith (1993) has pointed out many surveys conducted in USA, Canada New Zealand and England where most of the principals

and teachers have favoured decentralizing most of the administrative, financial and academic functions from local authorities to school though some of them have mentioned an initial burden at the very outset.

The results of the decentralization survey conducted by the Arizona Department of Education in 1994, demonstrate that teachers and principals were of the opinion that “students would be best served if decisions were made at school sites with the exception of determining salaries.” Moreover they also favoured an increased role of parents and community in school.

In a study conducted by Gibton, Sabar and Goldring (2000), the principals felt uncertainty as to whom they should answer. They thought that the authorities were passing down more and more burden of students’ achievement to principals and the staff in the ever changing sociopolitical arena. Decentralization added new pressure to them which was previously unknown to them. Moreover they had less power to initiate change whereas it was actually more accountability on their part.

### **Objective of the study**

The objective of the current study was to find out HTs’ perception regarding their influence on school and classroom matters (academic, administrative and financial matters)) and their opinions regarding power centers of these matters in the future.

### **Research questions of the study**

Following were the research questions of this study

- a. What are HTs’ perceptions regarding their influence on different academic, administrative and financial matters of the school?
- b. What are HTs’ opinions regarding desired power centers of academic, administrative and financial powers in education to be devolved?

### **Population of the Study**

The population for collection of data and generalization of results was composed of Head teachers of 4463 secondary schools of the Punjab

### Sample of districts for head teachers

A two stage sampling technique was used. In the first stage districts were selected randomly out of three categories of districts with respect to literacy rate. Four districts were selected from each category. In this way 12 districts were included in the sample for administering the questionnaires to the head teachers.

Table 1

Selected Districts from each Category for Questionnaires

Sr. No	Category	Total districts	No. of selected districts	Sampled districts
1	A	12	04	Attock, Lahore, Rawalpindi, Chakwal
2	B	12	04	Mianwali, Okara Sargodha, Sheikhpura
3	C	11	04	Bhakkar Bahawalpur, Nankan Sahib, Bahawalnagar
	Total	35	12	

In the second stage schools were selected randomly out of selected districts. Head teachers of those schools constituted the sample. The minimum sample size required for 5% margin of error around the parameter estimation at the .95 confidence level was 387 (Ary, Jacobs&Razavieh 2002). The sample for the study comprised a total of 387 head teachers (223 male, 166 female) of the accessible population of 2070 head teachers (1250 male, 820 female).

### Development of questionnaire

A brief description of the questionnaire is presented below:

### Opinion and perceptions of HTs towards decentralization

As a result of intensive literature review, the researcher found a questionnaire developed by an experienced team of Arizona State Department of Education (USA) to measure the attitude of teachers and head teachers towards decentralization. For adaptation to the Pakistani context the questionnaire was discussed in a focus group of five head teachers having more than 20 years of experience.

The focus group suggested:

- Questions like “content, topic and skills that are taught” were to be asked separately like content that are taught, topics that are taught and skills that are taught and likewise.
- Another 18 variables i.e., academic and professional qualifications, location of the schools, age of the head teachers, headship experience, type of posting, firing of teaching and non-teaching staff, raising new or more funds for the schools, decreasing drop out of students, in service teacher training, re-appropriation of the budget, excess and surrender, administration of special grants, entering into contract with private organizations, and accountability of teachers for inclusion in the questionnaire. They, further, suggested distributing the questionnaire into three main factors. First eleven items represented the academic factor, 13 items from 12 to 16, 19, 21, 22, 23, 27, 28, 29, and 30 represented administrative factors whereas the other 17, 18, 20, 24, 25 and 26 represented financial factors.
- The researcher recorded response on five point rating scale ranging from, 5=to a large extent, 4=to some extent, 3= a little, 2=not at all, and I do not know=1, instead of dichotomous scale in the first part of the questionnaire which aimed at measuring influence of head teachers towards items related to classroom and school. For the second portion which measured the attitude of head teachers towards decentralization, it was suggested to include federal government, provincial government, teacher training institutions and school councils on the choice list.
- Excluded the variables of teachers association, state government and school based management on the choice list in the second portion of the questionnaire.
- Finally to translate the questionnaire into Urdu language to make it more understandable to the head teachers.

Permission was sought from Arizona State Department of Education (USA) to adapt the questionnaire as per Pakistani conditions.

### **Pilot Testing**

Attitude towards decentralization was tested in a pilot study in district Lahore. For piloting questionnaires were delivered to thirty head teachers. The data were coded in SPSS and was analyzed. The Cronbach Alpha for thirty items



measuring head teachers' perception regarding their influence over items related to classroom and school. Reliability was also measured by distributing school and classroom matters into academic, financial and administrative matters of the school are given.

Table 2

The Cronbach Alpha on Head teachers' Influence over Classroom and School matters

Types of items	Items	Cronbach Alpha
Overall items	30	0.90
Items related to classroom	10	0.89
Items related to school	20	0.87
Academic affairs	11	0.80
Administrative affairs	13	0.79
Financial affairs	06	0.77

The Cronbach Alpha for thirty items measuring head teachers opinion regarding desired power centers of various matters related to classroom and school as well as by distributing them into academic, financial and administrative affairs of the school is given below in table 3.

Table 3

The Cronbach Alpha on Head teachers' Attitude over Classroom and School matters

Types of items	Items	Cronbach Alpha
Overall items	30	0.88
Items related to classroom	10	0.88
Items related to school	20	0.85
Academic affairs	11	0.88
Administrative affairs	13	0.82
Financial affairs	06	0.73

### **Opinion and Perception of HTs towards Decentralization in Education**

For data analysis, the statements in each section were classified under three types of matters related to the school.

- Academic
- Administrative
- Financial

Eleven items were related to academic matters of the school, 13 to the administrative matters of school and 6 were related to financial matters.

Data for each of the three types of matters related to the school have been analyzed for the total respondents. First three parts explored the influence, the HTs had on academic, administrative and financial matters of the school whereas the other three parts of each section ascertained the level to which these HTs wish to decentralize the powers regarding academic, administrative and financial matters of the school.

#### **General characteristics of the respondents**

Of the 341 respondents to the survey questionnaire 56.9 % (N= 194) were male HTs and 43.1 % (N= 147) were female HTs.

#### **HTs' perceptions regarding their influence on the academic matters of the school**

HTs perceptions regarding their influence on academic matters in school were elicited on a scale indicating the extent of their influence. Mean response values and standard deviations are also given.

Table 4

HTs' Perceptions regarding their Influence on Academic Matters of the School

N = 341

Academic Matter	<u>Level of influence in percentage</u>					$\bar{X}$ Max. value=5	SD
	I don't know	Not at all	A little	To some extent	To a large extent		
Selection of instructional material	2.3	16.7	7.9	42.2	30.8	3.82	1.11
Content to be taught in a period	2.1	6.2	8.2	42.2	41.3	4.15	.95
Topics to be taught in a period	1.8	6.5	7.6	45.5	38.7	4.13	.93
Skills to be taught in a period	2.6	5.0	15.2	45.2	32.0	3.99	.95
Sequence of contents	2.6	5.9	12.9	41.6	37.0	4.04	.98
Sequence of topics	2.9	6.5	12.3	39.0	39.3	4.05	1.01
Sequence of skills	3.2	8.2	12.6	44.3	31.7	3.93	1.02
Grading system	1.8	12.6	11.7	28.2	45.7	4.04	1.11
Classroom discipline	2.1	2.1	5.6	15.8	74.5	4.59	.85
Use of classroom space	0.9	1.5	2.6	31.7	63.3	4.55	.70
Class assignment	2.6	3.5	4.7	35.2	54.0	4.34	.92
<b>Total</b>	2.26	6.63	9.22	37.35	44.38	4.14	

Mean values of HTs' responses show that they have influence to a large extent on academic matters that can be controlled within the school i.e. content and topics to be taught in one period and the sequence in which they are taught, grading system, classroom discipline, use of classroom space and class assignment. Mean response value indicates that in matters like selection of core instructional material, skills taught and the sequence in which skills are taught, they had lesser influence i.e. to some extent in the prevailing situation. This is because HTs were bound to use the text books as instructional material. Moreover, they have to make it sure that the schedule being provided by the provincial government has to be fully followed. Overall, (44.38%) of the HTs think that they have high influence in all academic matters.

#### **HTs' perceptions regarding their influence on the administrative matters of the school**

HTs' perceptions regarding their influence on administrative matters in school were elicited on a scale indicating the extent to which they had influence. Mean response values and standard deviations are also given.

Table 5

## HTs' Perceptions regarding their Influence on Administrative Matters of School

N=341

Administrative Matter	Level of influence in percentage					$\bar{X}$ Max. value =5	SD
	I don't know	Not at all	A little	To some extent	To a large extent		
Hiring of teachers	8.8	38.1	9.7	23.2	20.2	3.08	1.332
Firing of teachers	9.1	41.6	10.9	21.7	16.7	2.95	1.292
Hiring of administrative personnel	7.0	31.1	13.8	26.4	21.7	3.25	1.292
Firing of administrative personnel	6.5	31.1	14.4	27.0	21.1	3.25	1.275
Promotion of personnel	9.4	31.1	17.9	24.3	17.3	3.09	1.272
Controlling dropout	2.9	10.9	17.0	42.2	27.0	3.79	1.048
Length of class period	2.9	6.5	10.3	39.0	41.3	4.09	1.016
Length of school day	3.2	20.5	9.4	32.0	34.9	3.75	1.223
In-service teacher training	2.1	22.3	18.8	39.6	17.3	3.48	1.081
Contract with NGOs for development of school	10.9	49.0	9.4	20.2	10.6	2.71	1.211
Accountability of teachers	2.9	9.7	14.7	46.0	26.7	3.84	1.021
Community participation	1.8	7.6	11.4	45.2	34.0	4.02	.959
Supervision in the school	1.2	2.9	3.5	25.8	66.6	4.54	.799
<b>Total</b>	5.27	23.2	12.3	31.79	27.34	3.52	

Mean values of HTs' responses in the above table show that they had influence to a large extent over matters like supervision in the schools, length of the class period and allowing the community to participate in school. The HTs report that they had little influence in hiring and firing of teachers and administrative personnel, promotion of the personnel, length of the school day, and accountability of the teachers. The fact of the matter is that these matters were controlled either by provincial or district governments. They also considered a little influence over matters like length of the school day, contract with the private parties for the improvement of the school and decreasing dropout of the students. These three matters are controlled by the district governments. High SD value indicates that HTs have varied opinion on most of the administrative matters except on supervision in the schools and community participation. Overall, 59.13 %, HTs stated that they had influence from some extent to a large extent on administrative matters of the schools.

### HTs' perceptions regarding their influence on the financial matters of the school

HTs perceptions regarding their influence on financial matters in school were elicited on a scale indicating the extent to which they felt they had influence. Mean response values and standard deviation are given.

Table 6

HTs' Perceptions Regarding their Influence on Financial Matters of the School

N=341

Financial Matter	<u>Level of influence in percentage</u>					$\bar{X}$ Max. value=5	SD
	I don't know	Not at all	A little	To some extent	To a large extent		
Allocation of funds	2.6	14.1	11.7	40.2	31.4	3.84	1.09
Raising school funds	5.9	25.8	15.0	35.8	17.6	3.33	1.20
Determining teacher's salary	9.4	48.7	5.0	17.0	19.9	2.89	1.35
Re-appropriation of budget	7.6	21.1	15.5	44.0	11.7	3.31	1.15
Excess and surrender	6.5	21.4	19.9	39.3	12.9	3.31	1.13
Special grants	7.0	24.6	15.8	29.9	22.6	3.36	1.26
<b>Total</b>	6.5	25.95	13.83	34.35	19.35	3.34	

Mean values of HTs' responses in the above table show that HTs had influence, to some extent, in financial matters like allocation of funds, raising school funds, re-appropriation of budget, excess and surrender and special grants. All these matters come under the jurisdiction of the district government except the determination of teachers' salary. They felt that they had no influence at all in the determination of salary of the personnel. This is because salaries are decided by the rules and regulations laid down by the federal government. Overall, (53.73 %) HTs stated that they had influence from some extent to a large extent on financial matters of the schools.

### HTs' opinion regarding desired power center of various academic matters of school

HTs' opinion regarding power center of various academic matters in school were elicited indicating who they consider more relevant to control the academic matters.

Table 7

## HTs' Opinion Regarding Desired Power Center of Various Academic Matters

N=341

Academic matter	Power Center (In percentages)							Power center within schools (In percentages)
	Federal government	Provincial government	District government	Teacher training institute	School council	Head teacher	Teacher	HTs +Teachers =Total
Selection of instructional material	12.0	26.4	4.7	12.0	2.3	13.2	29.3	42.5
Content to be taught in a period	5.0	21.4	1.2	12.6	1.5	22.3	36.1	58.4
Topics to be taught in a period	5.6	20.2	0.9	12.9	1.2	22.9	36.4	59.3
Skills to be taught in a period	3.5	18.8	2.9	14.1	2.6	22.3	35.8	58.1
Sequence of content	4.1	9.7	5.0	13.8	3.8	26.4	37.2	63.6
Sequence of topics	3.8	9.1	4.1	15.2	3.2	26.1	38.4	64.5
Sequence of the skill	3.8	8.8	4.1	15.8	2.9	27.3	37.2	64.5
Grading system	3.5	13.2	3.8	5.6	3.5	42.5	27.9	70.4
Classroom discipline	1.5	2.6	3.2	3.2	4.4	58.7	26.4	85.1
Use of classroom space	0.8	2.1	1.2	2.1	6.7	23.8	63.3	87.1
Class assignment	1.2	3.8	3.2	2.9	3.5	55.1	30.2	85.3
Total	4.07	12.3	3.1	10.0	3.2	31.0	36.2	61.97

In academic matters like selection of core instructional materials, content, topic and skill taught, the sequence in which they are taught and the use of classroom space, the HTs intended to entrust powers regarding those academic matters to teachers. They intended to give authority in academic issues like grading system; discipline and class assignments to HTs. Overall total shows that most of the HTs (36.2%) think that power center of academic matters should be the teacher.

Moreover, a significant majority of HTs 61.97% wanted power center for all academic matters to be within the school, i.e. with the teachers and head teachers.

#### HTs' opinion regarding desired power center of various administrative matters of school

HTs' opinion regarding power center of various administrative matters in school were elicited indicating who they consider more relevant to control the administrative matters. Following table presents the data of HTs response.

Table 8

## HTs' Opinion Regarding Desired Power Center of Various Administrative Matters

Administrative matter	Power Center (In percentages)							Power center within schools (In percentages)
	Federal government	Provincial government	District government	Teacher training institute	School council	Head teacher	Teacher	
Hiring of teachers	2.1	30.2	30.2	6.7	7.9	21.4	1.5	23
Firing of teachers	2.1	30.2	30.2	5.9	7.6	22.6	1.5	24.1
Hiring of administrative personnel	1.2	31.1	17.9	3.2	5.0	39.9	1.8	41.7
Firing of administrative personnel	0.9	30.5	18.5	3.5	5.3	39.6	1.8	41.4
Promotion of personnel	0.9	36.1	30.2	5.6	6.2	18.8	2.3	21.1
Controlling dropout	1.2	6.7	5.0	1.5	12.9	44.6	28	72.8
Length of class period	1.5	9.7	8.2	3.2	4.7	36.6	9.1	45.7
Length of school day	1.8	17.0	16.7	4.1	3.8	51.3	5.3	56.6
In-service teacher training	0.9	17.9	13.8	39.3	4.7	21.1	2.3	23.4
Contract with NGOs for development of school	2.9	19.4	19.4	3.8	13.2	38.7	2.6	41.3
Accountability of teachers	1.8	5.0	10.0	2.1	6.5	71.6	3.2	74.8
Community participation	3.8	4.1	9.1	1.8	31.4	45.7	4.1	49.8
Supervision	1.8	4.1	6.5	2.6	6.5	75.7	2.9	78.6
Total	1.7	18.6	16.6	6.4	8.88	42.6	5.1	47.72

The attitude of HTs on the devolution of most of the administrative matters was more favourable towards decentralization as they intended to give administrative powers to HTs. They wanted administrative powers like hiring and firing of administrative personnel in school, controlling dropout, length of the class period, length of the school day, and contract with the private parties for the development of the schools, accountability of the teachers, community participation and supervision to be devolved to the HTs. They intended to devolve powers regarding administrative matters to the school. HTs recommended centralization of powers regarding

promotion with the provincial or district government. Overall total shows that majority of the HTs 47.72% think that power center of administrative matters should be the head teacher.

**HTs’ opinion regarding desired power center of various financial matters of school**

HTs’ opinion regarding power center of various financial matters in school were elicited indicating who they consider more relevant to manage financial matters.

Table 9

HTs’ Opinion Regarding Desired Power Center of Various Financial Matters

N=341

Financial matter	Power Center (In percentages)							Power center within schools (In percentages)
	Federal government	Provincial government	District government	Teacher training institutes	School council	Head teacher	Teacher	HTs +Teachers =Total
Allocation of funds	2.1	20.8	29.9	4.4	7.0	28.4	7.3	35.7
Raising school funds	3.2	33.4	31.7	1.8	10.6	16.1	3.2	19.3
Determining teacher’s salary	5.0	42.8	18.5	3.5	7.3	17.6	5.3	22.9
Re-appropriation of budget	1.8	26.1	34.9	2.6	7.9	23.8	2.9	26.7
Excess and surrender	1.8	27.6	36.1	2.1	7.6	22.9	2.1	25.0
Special grants	2.6	32.0	30.8	1.2	9.4	22.3	1.8	24.1
Total	2.73	30.4	30.3	2.59	8.3	21.8	3.7	25.5

The opinion of HTs regarding power center of various financial matters was towards outside school either to provincial or to district government. They all claimed to have some influence but when they were asked to which level they intended to give financial powers, they recommended it to be with provincial or district government. The overall total shows that significantly high majority of HTs 60.7% intended to retain financial powers with district or provincial government. This may be due to the procedural difficulties involved in financial matters as well as lack of training in handling financial matters. Moreover, the strict audit done by Accountant General’s Team might be another cause of letting these powers remain with the center.

**Summary**



HTs perceptions regarding their influence on overall academic, administrative and financial matters show that approximately 80 % of the HTs feel authorized to manage the academic matters. Nearly 60 % of the HTs think that they have powers from some to a large extent in the administrative matters and more than half, 53.70 %, feel to have control over the financial matters to some extent to ever more. Besides, 1/4 of the total HTs stated of having no role in financial matters.

Table 10  
HTs’ Perceptions Regarding their Influence on Matters of School

N=341

Matters of the school	Level of influence in percentage					$\bar{X}$ Max. value=5
	I don’t know	Not at all	A little	To some extent	To a large extent	
Academic matters	2.26	6.63	9.22	37.35	44.38	4.14
Administrative matters	5.27	23.2	12.38	31.79	27.34	3.52
Financial matters	6.5	25.95	13.83	34.35	19.35	3.34

Table 10 shows overall opinion of HTs regarding power center of various academic, administrative and financial matters of the schools. It shows that 62% of the HTs want power center regarding academic powers to be within school. If we compare it with the level of influence over academic matters, we conclude that they want to reduce the academic powers of HTs and teachers. They want to diminish the administrative and financial powers within the school.

Table 11  
HTs’ Opinion Regarding Desired Power Center of Various Matters of school

N=341

Power Center (In percentages)								Power center within schools (In percentages)
Federal government	Provincial government	District government	Teacher training institute	School council	Head teacher	Teacher		HTs +Teachers = Total

Academic matters	4.0	12.3	3.1	10.1	3.2	31.0	36.2	67.20
Administrative matter	1.7	18.3	16.4	6.4	8.88	42.6	5.12	47.72
Financial matters	2.73	30.3	30.2	2.59	8.3	21.8	3.7	25.5

## Findings and Discussion

HTs perceived to have influence to a large extent on academic matters that could be controlled within the school i.e. content and topics to be taught and the sequence in which they are taught, grading system, classroom discipline, use of classroom space and class assignment. They wanted powers related to academic matters like selection of core instructional materials, content, topic and skill to be taught, the sequence to be taught and the use of classroom space to be devolved to teachers. Similarly, HTs perceived to have influence to a large extent over matters like supervision of the schools, length of the class period, allowing community to participate in school. They would like administrative powers of hiring and firing of administrative personnel in school, decreasing drop out, length of the class period, length of the school day, contract with the private parties, accountability of the teachers, community participation and supervision to be devolved to the head teachers. In addition to that, HTs had influence to some extent on all financial matters. All these matters come under the jurisdiction of the district governments except for the determination of the teacher's salary. Moreover, they either favoured to give it to provincial or district government. So, more or less, they favoured centralization than decentralization of financial matters of the schools. Furthermore, HTs perceptions regarding their influence on overall academic, administrative and financial matters show that approximately 80 % of the HTs feel authorized to manage the academic matters. Nearly 60 % of the HTs think that they have powers from some to a large extent in the administrative matters and more than half, 53.70 %, feel to have control over the financial matters from some extent to ever more. Besides, 1/4 of the total HTs stated of having no role in financial matters. Comparing it with their overall opinion regarding power center of various academic, administrative and financial matters of the schools, it was witnessed that 62% of the HTs want power center regarding academic powers to be within school.

Though majority of the HTs want power centers regarding academic and administrative matters of the schools to be within the school but comparing their percentage of responses on their opinion regarding power centers with the percentages of responses for their influence towards these matters, we may conclude that they want to diminish their powers regarding academic and administrative

matters within the school. So trend seems more towards centralization than decentralization.

HTs felt that they had high influence on academic and administrative matters but had a low level influence on financial matters. Majority of them wished to decentralize the power center regarding academic and administrative matters to schools but retain financial powers to district or province level. The results of the questionnaire validated the results of the survey conducted by Arizona State Department in 1993 where HTs' attitude towards decentralization was sought on a questionnaire. A significant majority of the HTs of Arizona State favoured to decentralize academic matters to teachers, administrative and financial matters to HTs; thus favouring school based management. HTs in Punjab were not in support of decentralization of financial matters to HTs. The main reason might be the strict monitoring of district audit teams. Moreover due to lack of training on financial matters also restrained them from asking for devolution of financial matters. After the approval of 18<sup>th</sup> amendment in the Constitution of Pakistan in the year 2010, curriculum and syllabus development have been devolved to provincial governments which has added to the responsibilities of provincial government. So devolution of administrative, financial powers to lower level up to district or schools need to be done otherwise centralization of all these matters will prove fatal for Pakistani educational system.

## References

- Arizona State Dept. of Education Poenix. (1994). Report of superintendent's committee on decentralization. ERIC NO 026 659.
- Ary, D., Jacobs, L. C., & Razavieh, A. (2002). *Introduction to research in education*. Wadsworth Thomson Learning. New York.
- Behrman, J. R., Deolalikar, A.B., & Soon, L. Y. (2002). *Conceptual issues in the role of education decentralization in promoting effective schooling in Asian developing countries*. Asian Development Bank (ADB) Economics and Research Department (ERD) Working Paper No.22
- Burki, S. J., Guillermo, E.P., Dillinger, W., & William. R. (1999). *Beyond the center: decentralization of the state*. Washington, D. C., World Bank.
- Caldwell, B. J. (1993). *Decentralizing the management of Australia's schools. A discussion paper*. ERIC NOED 461 143.

- Gibton, D., Sabar ,N., & Goldring, E. B. (2000). How principals of autonomous schools in Israel view implementation of decentralization and restructuring policy: Risks, rights and wrongs. *Educational evaluation and policy analysis*. Volume 22, No 2 pp 193-210.
- GoP . (2000). *Local Government Plan 2000*, Islamabad: Chief Executive Secretariat, National Reconstruction Bureau Islamabad Pakistan.
- GoP. (2007). *Government of the Punjab*. Retrieved March, 13, 2007 from [www.punjab.gov.pk](http://www.punjab.gov.pk).
- GoP. (2001). Guidelines for monitoring committees of local government 2001. Government of the Punjab.
- Government of the Punjab. (2001). *The Punjab Local Government Ordinance 2001*
- Kemmerer, F. (1994). *Utilizing education and human resource analysis*. UNESCO
- Lunenburg, A.C., & Orstein, A. C. (1996). *Educational administration concepts and practices*. Wadsworth Publishing Company. USA.
- MSU. (2002). *Devolution and decentralization: Identifications of Progress in Implementation in Education*. Workshop Report, Islamabad, Pakistan
- MSU. (2001c). Devolution and decentralization: Implication for the education sector Punjab. Provincial (Punjab) Workshop Report, Lahore, Pakistan.
- NRB. (2001). *Local government system 2001. National Reconstruction Bureau Government of Pakistan*. Retrieved from [www.nrb.gov.pk](http://www.nrb.gov.pk)
- PDFPR. (2006). The Punjab Delegation of financial powers, rules 2006. Retrieved on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2009 from [http://www.punjab-prmp.gov.pk/adb\\_docs/OC-7/OC-7\(i\)%20Delegation%20of%20Financial%20Powers%20Rules%202006-FD.pdf](http://www.punjab-prmp.gov.pk/adb_docs/OC-7/OC-7(i)%20Delegation%20of%20Financial%20Powers%20Rules%202006-FD.pdf).
- Plank, D. (1987). School administration and school reform in Botswana. *International journal of educational development*. 7(2), pp 126-199.
- Punjab Local Government Ordinance. (2001). Retrieved on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2009 from [www.punjab.gov.pk](http://www.punjab.gov.pk)
- Rondinelli, D.A. (1983). *Decentralization in developing countries: a review of recent experience*. Washington, D. C; World Bank, Staff Working Paper No 581
- Smith, B. C. (1993). *Choices in the design of decentralization*. London: Common wealth Secretariat.
- Wright, B. (1993). *Leadership faculty and decentralized authority [report]*, ERIC NO

357 715.

Zaidi, S. A. (2005) *Political economy of decentralization in Pakistan*. Transversal theme “decentralization and social movement” working paper 17. development study group Zurich