

## **A Study about the Leadership Styles of Public and Private School Principals**

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### **ABSTRACT**

***Purpose:** This paper aims to investigate the relationship of people oriented and task oriented leadership styles with the public and private school sector principals.*

***Design/methodology/approach:** Data for the research were collected through a survey of public and private sector school principals of Lahore in Pakistan. One hundred forty nine school heads from sixty four private and eighty five public sector school principals in Lahore rated their superiors on 35 items of leadership styles. Factor analysis of the scores on such items yielded two dimensions of leadership styles: (a) task orientation, and (b) people orientation. Items of the scale had high reliability, validity, and discriminative power on two dimensions of leadership styles.*

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**Statistical Analysis:** Factor analysis, Pearson's correlation and ANOVA test was used to estimate the relationship of people oriented and task oriented leadership styles with the public and private job sector school principals.

**Findings:** The results show that the underpinnings of relationship are positively related with each other. Significant relationship exists in the job sector with task orientation and people orientation of public and private school principals. Private sector principals are more task oriented and people oriented than public sector principals. Public sector school principals are less task oriented and less people oriented than private sector school principals, they are running system in ongoing process and following Laissez Fair leadership style.

**Limitations:** The research focuses on resource persons at public and private school education sector of Lahore city; further research in other sectors may be necessary before generalization can be made on the entire examination sector.

**Article:** Research paper

**Keyword(s):** Task Oriented, People Oriented Leadership Style, Public School Sector, and Private School Sector.

Leadership is an advance way of working with people with in an institution to achieve task. Persons in managerial leadership roles must understand the environment of an organization, and interconnect the behaviors of other with that organization's structure. To lead, the supervisor must have a theory of leadership (McCloskey, 1967:270)

Leadership has been defined in many connotations such as ..... is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. (Northouse, 2004); ..... is the influencing process of leaders and followers to achieve organizational objectives through changes. (Lussier & Achua, 2004); ..... is a relationship between those who aspire to lead and those who choose to follow. (Kouzes & Posner, 2002); ..... is the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organization. (House, 1999).

Some of the general ideas in leadership definitions include exerting influence, motivating and stimulating, helping others realize their potential, leading by example, selflessness and making a difference. Our leadership

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definition is defined as "enabling a group and connect together in the process of developing, sharing and moving into vision, and then living it out." We also emphasise the importance of a leader's character and sincerity in building up the trust necessary for the leadership and to achieve goals over a period of time. (Yukl, 2002).

In any organization there must be a power to direct its resources (employees, money and materials) towards organizational goals and standards. In a school, for example, there must be a force to guide the activities of staff and students towards achievement of the schools affirmed objectives. Leadership provides that force and express the leadership style. (Yukl, 2002).

The leadership in education means directing the activities of those engaged in the training of minds towards the achievement of organizational goals set by those persons who have organized themselves for it. In the educational set up this leadership is exercised by the schools head/principal.

A leadership style has been viewed as the charismatic way in which a leader influences over his or her subordinates. The more you are yourself; the more people will like you. That is because they will see in you that they like to see in themselves. The individual's capacity to influence others perhaps begins with the concept, the person has of himself, Kets de Vries (1995) would argue that the power to influence will probably based on the legacy of a stage of development in which the child learns the intricacies of control, dominance and respect. The highest performing leader/principal would be someone who could combine the capacity to visualize the capacity to influence.

Leadership style plays a very crucial role for the uplift of organization. Mehmood (1995) stated that leadership behavior of individuals leading an organization is universally known as an essential determinant of human productivity. To emphasize the importance of leadership style for organizational effectiveness, Mehmood, (1995) has cited that Anderson (1972) and Campbell (1962) assert that the quality of achievement in the organization is related to the nature of its leadership that is considered as the solution of all organizational problems.

Educational research in school organization and administration has recently been dominated by the concept of principal as leaders (Blank, 2001). Blank (2001) has also cited studies like Boyer (1983), Lightfoot (1983), Grant (1982), Coleman, Hoffer & Kilgore (1982) and Sizer (1984) which found that the

role of the principal as a leader is critical in creating school environment that lead to higher student academic performance. Conditions such as setting high standards/goals, planning and coordinating with staff having direction toward the innovation, frequent monitoring of staff and involving parents through and communicating students' performance.

Significance of the study describes the fact that it is one of the pioneer studies of its mature in Pakistan. Research studies are exploring the truth about the various important aspects such as structure. Leadership style and effectiveness of educational organizations are rare in our own context. Nadeed (1983) studied only the organizational structure of the University of the Punjab, Lahore.

Therefore, researcher considered the study of organizational structure, leadership style and its effect of job sector a valuable one with the expectation that findings of this study will help to improve effectiveness of leadership style in school setups.

It is stated that schools in Pakistan can be classified into two main categories i.e. public and private. It has been observed over the years that private schools are increasing in numbers and flourishing rapidly. Government is also encouraging the participation of private sector in educational enterprise.

It is an observed phenomenon that students are shifting form public schools to private schools which resulted in decreasing the numbers of students in public schools. This situation created a competition environment between public and private schools. These changing circumstances inspired the researchers to compare various aspects of competing types of organizations (Mehrotra, 2005). Therefore the researcher conducted a study to compare the organizational leadership style and its effectiveness of public and private schools sector in Lahore city.

The behavior that a leader exhibits during supervision of subordinates is known as leadership style. The term style is roughly equivalent to the manner in which the leader influences subordinates (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 1996).

**Task oriented style:** The extent to which a leader organizes and defines the roles of individuals and members of his or her organization by explaining what activities each is to do as well as when, where and how tasks are to be accomplished. It is further characterized by the level to which a leader defines patterns of communication and specific ways of getting the assign targets of job accomplished (Mehrotra, 2005). Leaders disagree in their concern for groups,

goals and means to achieve the organizational goals. Those with a strong concern are considered to be task oriented (Bass,1996; Fiedler 1967), concerned with production (Mouton, 1964) achievement oriented (Wofford, 1970 & Indivile, 1986) production-oriented goal achieving (Cartwrigh & Zender, 1960) and work facilitative and goal emphasizing (Bowers & Seashore, 1966). The leader's assumptions about their roles purposes and behavior reflect their interest in completing assignments and getting their work done in time. (Iqbal, 2005).

**People/Relation oriented style:** The extent to which a leader engages in personal relationships with individuals or members of his or her organization. The amount of socio-emotional support and psychological strokes provided by the leader as well as the extent to which the leader engages in interpersonal communication and facilitating behavior. (Hersey & Blanchard, 1972). The style of leaders is the behavior patterns they consistently use when working with other people. These patterns are perceived by others and the pattern emerges over a period of time. (Mehrotra, 2005). Leader also disagree in the extent to which they pursue a human relations approach and try to maintain friendly supportive relations with their followers those with a strong concern are identified as people-oriented concerned for maintenance (Misumi, 1985) or organizational maintenance (Cartwright & Zender, 1960, Wofford, 1970). Concerned about/for people, (Blake & Mouton, 1964), interaction, facilitative and supportive (Bowers & Seashore, 1966), interaction oriented (Bass, 1996). Such types of leaders are expressive and tend to establish social and emotional ties. Usually associated with a people-orientation trustworthy and discourage to control the employees. (Iqbal, 2005).

**Classical studies and theories of leadership:** The way in which the leader uses power also establishes a type of style.

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<b>Continuum of Leadership Styles Based on Classic Studies and Theories of Leadership</b>	
Boss centered	Subordinate centered
Leadership style	Leadership style
Theory X	Theory Y
Autocratic leadership	Democratic leadership
Production centered leader	Employee centered leader

Close supervision	General supervision
Initiating structure	Consideration
Task directed leader	Human relations leader
Directive leadership	Supportive leadership
Directive leadership	Participative leadership

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*Source: Adapted from Fred Luthans Organizational Behaviors 7<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: McGraw Hill 1995.*

Each style – Autocratic, Participative and Free Rein – has benefits and limitations. A leader uses all three styles over a period of time but one style lends to be the dominant area.

**Leadership styles evolved by researchers:** In the present study leadership is defined within a superior and subordinates relationship i.e. the principal and the teacher relationship i.e. the ability or skill to direct influence and coordinated group activities. Because the word that ends with the suffix ‘ship’ can be used to denote a skill such as in the word sportsmanship, craftsmanship or can also be used to indicate a relationship as in partnership, apprenticeship, fellowship and in the word relationship itself. (Mehrotra, 2005).

Leadership helps in turning plans and decisions into action. Leaders with certain motives and purposes mobilize resources so as to stimulate, engage and satisfy the motives of followers. In the educational organization, principals create situations in which the ends are desired by both leaders (principals) and followers (teachers). They raise the rights and aspirations of the teachers and the relationship is thus transforming one. Today’s leaders/principals are transformational. They revitalize the entire organization (Mehrotra, 2005).

## **Objectives**

The purpose of this study is to find relationships between leadership styles like people oriented and task oriented with the job sector (public and private schools). It was aimed to be familiar with the intensity of relationship that let down the activeness/seriousness of resource persons to/with their occupation at public and private sector schools.

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## **Null Hypotheses**

The hypothesis of the current research is that the leadership styles have significant relationship with the job sector. Categorically subsequent hypotheses can be described as null hypotheses:

- H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant correlation among task oriented leadership style, people oriented leadership style and job sector.
- H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant difference between task oriented school principals leadership style in Public and Private sector schools.
- H<sub>03</sub>: There is no significant difference between people oriented school principals' in Public and Private sector schools.

To investigate these relationships a survey research design has been adopted.

## **Data Collection Procedures**

The data were collected from one hundred private and one hundred public sector school principals in Lahore City. Two hundred public and private sector schools were selected randomly for the study. They were approached individually. They were given the questionnaires, assured complete anonymity of responses, and requested to return the filled-in questionnaires within a fortnight. A total of 200 questionnaires were distributed and 149 were returned, giving a 75% response rate. All respondents indicated that they had no problems in completing any of the items.

## **Research Instrument**

The questionnaire was divided into three sections: Section 'A' was designed to establish research credibility, discuss the research objectives, benefits for respondents, describe survey mechanics and most importantly assure respondent's confidentiality; Section 'B' contain items related to leadership Style, Section 'C' solicited respondent's demographical data. All items were positively keyed. Response descriptions against items were given on a five point Likert type scale 'never' (1), 'seldom' (2), 'occasionally' (3), 'frequently' (4), 'always' (5) was used for all items.

For the assessment of leadership Style (T-P Leadership Questionnaire adapted by Ritchie & Thompson. In the current research the questionnaire is taken

from Daft (1995). Through this questionnaire one can identify its relative emphasis on two dimensions of leadership; Task orientation (T) and people orientation (P). These are not conflicting approaches, and an individual can rate high or low on either or both. The Cronbach's alpha were calculated for people oriented and task oriented leadership style items used in the questionnaire and found the acceptable values 0.64 and 0.55.

## **Sampling**

The sample used in this study was comprised of 85 public school heads and 64 private school heads (N=149). There were 54.4% male and 45.6% female executives were included to avoid contamination of results by sex differences. The resource person component was chosen so as to make sure the respondents are likely to be professionals and form all category of life. A summary of demographic characteristics of the respondents are shown in Table 1. A total of 200 resource persons were contacted during this study and 75% of them willingly participated in the survey. The sample size, response rate and demographic mix were considered sufficient to perform meaningful statistical analyses and develop appropriate sense.

Table 1:

*Demographic Characteristics of Respondents. (N: 149)*

<b>Demographics</b>	<b>Principals</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	81	54.4
Female	68	45.6
Total	149	100.0
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	51	34.2
Married	86	57.7
Widow/Widower	12	8.1
Total	149	100.0

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<b>Monthly Income</b>		
Rs 10,000 or less	31	20.8
Rs 10,000-15,000	12	8.1
Rs 15,000-20,000	13	8.7
Rs 20,000-25,000	14	9.4
Rs 25,000-30,000	35	23.5
Above Rs 30,000	44	29.5
Total	149	100.0
<b>Age</b>		
Less than 25	27	18.1
25-34	36	24.2
35-44	34	22.8
45-54	32	21.5
Above 54	20	13.4
Total	149	100.0
<b>Job Experience (Years)</b>		
Less than 5	53	35.6
5-10	21	14.1
10-15	19	12.8
15-20	30	20.1
Above 20	26	17.4
Total	149	100.0
<b>Job (Sector)</b>		
Public Sector	85	57.0
Private Sector	64	43.0
Total	149	100.0

## **Data Analyses**

Factor analyses were conducted for the leadership styles using a multi-step process which includes; (a) extracting the factors; (b) labeling the factors; (c)

creating summated scales and examining the descriptive statistics (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson & Tatham, 2006).

The data was analyzed stepwise. Exploratory factor analysis, using the principal component matrix, extraction method and varimax rotation, was used to determine the factor structure of 15 items related to people oriented leadership style. Second an exploratory factor analysis using 20 items related to task oriented leadership style of resource persons using the principal component method of extraction and varimax rotation. Finally, spearman's correlations were used to probe the correlation coefficient of people oriented leadership style, task oriented leadership style and job sector.

### **Exploratory factor analysis for people oriented leadership style**

All the scores of people oriented leadership style items were factor-analyzed using principal component method and rotated through varimax procedure. The variance explained=27.50%, KMO=0.66, Bartlett's Test=146.40, Cronbach's Alpha=0.64, Eigenvalues=2.34, Mean=55.24 and Standard Deviation=5.24 were found. As per a prior knowledge a single-factor solution was expected. As per the obligation, that the factor content must cohere for people oriented leadership characteristics. Individual items seemed to cohere to some degree were included in the factor. Subsequently the single factor was named as per a preceding knowledge and according to the nature of the highest loading items. (Table 2) shows factors, eigenvalues, and percentages of variance and loadings of people oriented factors from a maximum likelihood analysis with varimax rotation.

Table: 2

*Factor Analysis People-Oriented Leadership style (P-Score) Observed among the Principals of public and private schools (N=149)*

Eigenvalues	2.34
Variance Explained	27.50
Mean	45.24
Std. Deviation	5.24
<b>Items</b>	<b>Factors loading</b>
I would refuse to explain my actions.	.72

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I would be reluctant to allow the (staff) members any freedom of action.	.67
I would act without consulting the group/staff members.	.62
I would turn the (staff) members loose on a job and let them go for it.	.57
I would ask that group/staff members follow standard rules and regulations.	-.45
I would permit the group/school to set its own pace.	.41
I would allow the group/staff members a high degree of initiative.	-.37
I would let some (staff) members have authority that I could keep.	.36

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**Method: Principal Component Analysis.**

KMO	.66
Bartlett's test	146.40
Cronbach's Alpha	.64
Guttman Split-Half Coefficient	.56
.63(4) .23(4)	

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**Exploratory factor analysis for task oriented leadership style**

All the scores of task oriented leadership style items were factor-analyzed using principal component method and rotated through varimax procedure. The variance explained=36.82%, KMO=0.66, Bartlett's Test=75.39, Cronbach's Alpha=0.55, Eigenvalues=1.98, Mean=76.59 and Standard Deviation=6.06 were found. As per a prior knowledge a single-factor solution was expected. It was prerequisite, that the factor content must cohere with task oriented leadership characteristics. Individual items seemed to cohere to some degree were included in the factor. Subsequently the single factor was named as per a earlier knowledge and according to the nature of the highest loading items. Table 3 shows factors, eigenvalues, and percentages of variance and loadings of task oriented factors from a maximum likelihood analysis with varimax rotation.

Table: 3

*Factor Analysis Task-Orientation Leadership style (T-Score) Observed among the Principals of public and private schools (N=149)*

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Eigenvalues	1.98
Variance Explained	36.82
Mean	46.59
Std. Deviation	6.06
<b>Items</b>	<b>Factors loading</b>
I would ask the (staff) members to work harder.	.63
I would get swamped by details.	-.59
I would tolerate postponement and uncertainty.	-.59
I would encourage overtime work.	-.49
I would assign group/staff members to particular tasks.	.49
I would encourage the use of uniform procedures.	.40
I would keep the work moving at a rapid pace.	.34
I would push for increased production/output.	.31
<b>Method: Principal Component Analysis.</b>	
KMO	.66
Bartlett's test	75.39
Cronbach's Alpha	.55
Guttman Split-Half Coefficient	.46
.52(4) .27(4)	

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#### **Explanatory Correlations among People Oriented Leadership Style, Task Oriented Leadership Style and Job Sector**

Task orientation and People orientation have positive significant correlation that is 0.43. Task orientation and Job sector have positive significant correlation that is 0.25. Similarly People orientation and Job sector have positive significant correlation that is 0.24. Shown in (Table 4). So the null hypothesis calming there is no significant correlation among task oriented leadership style,

people oriented leadership style and job sector, there for rejected. These correlations are well explained by the model in Figure 1.

**Table: 4**  
*Correlations among Task Orientation, People Orientation and Job Sector (N: 149)*

	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Task Orientation</b>	76.59	6.06	1.00		
<b>People Orientation</b>	55.24	5.24	.43**	1.00	
<b>Job (Sector)</b>	1.43	.49	.25**	.24**	1.00

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

From Table 4 we get that there is a positive significant multiple correlation coefficient between task-orientation leadership style and job sector ( $r= 0.24$ , Sig= 0.01). Also there is a positive significant multiple correlation coefficient between people-orientation leadership style and job sector ( $r= 0.25$ , Sig= 0.01). And Table 4 is also showing that there is a positive significant multiple correlation coefficient between task-orientation leadership style and people-orientation leadership style ( $r= 0.43$ , Sig= 0.01). The null hypothesis postulating that there is no significant relationship among the task-orientation, people-orientation leadership style and job sector of the school principals therefore null hypothesis is rejected.

**Figure: 1**

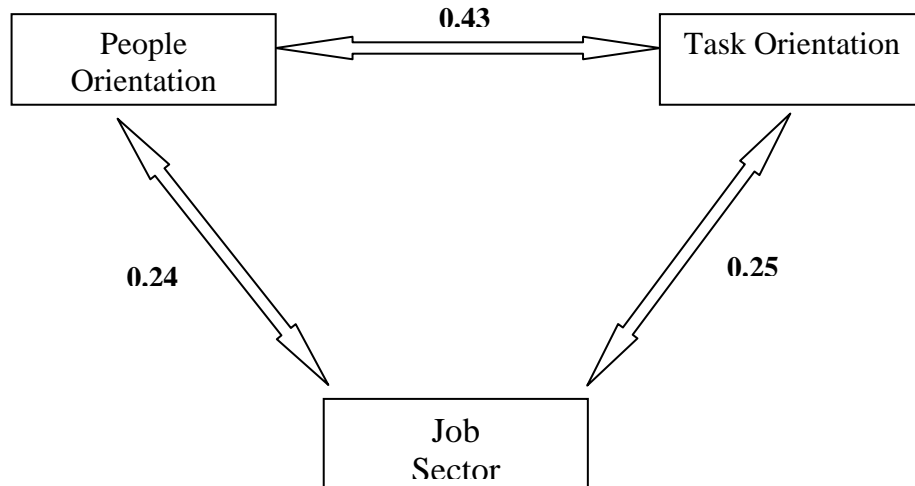


Figure 1 is showing significant correlation among all three factors there is strong correlation between people-orientation and task-orientation and both are correlating with job sector with minor difference.

Table: 5

*Mean, Standard Deviation and ANOVA for People Orientation and Task Orientation in Public Sector and Private Sector (N=149)*

Job (Sector)	Public sector (N=85)		Private sector (N=64)		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	sig.	
	M	SD	M	SD						
	<b>Task Orien- tation</b>	75.27	5.65	78.34						6.19
					<b>With in Groups</b>	5105.21	147	34.72		
<b>People Orien- tation</b>	54.11	3.95	56.73	6.30	<b>Between Groups</b>	249.99	1	249.99	9.61	0.002
					<b>With in Groups</b>	3821.30	147	25.99		

There was a positive significant multiple correlation coefficient ( $F = .9.92$  and  $F = 9.61$ ) at 0.002 level between task-orientation and people-orientation. The F statistics evidenced statistically significant relationship between the attributes. In Table 5 we see that private school sector principals are more task-oriented ( $M = 78.34$ ,  $SD = 6.19$ ) and as well people-oriented ( $M = 56.73$ ,  $SD = 6.30$ ) in their profession, than public school sector principals. The same Table 5 is showing that public school sector principals are less task-oriented ( $M = 75.27$ ,  $SD = 5.62$ ) and less people-oriented ( $M = 54.11$ ,  $SD = 3.90$ ) in their profession, than private school sector principals. So our null hypothesis telling there is no significant difference between task oriented school principals leadership style in Public and Private sector schools. And there is no significant difference between people oriented school principals' in Public and Private sector schools therefore rejected. The result we got that private sector schools principals are more task-oriented and

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people-oriented and running in both leadership styles with little difference. But the public sector schools principals are less task-oriented and people-oriented and they are running free rein leadership style, because of not having so much power in public sector to change the setup or they do not have this much potential and want no change in their school system.

## **Conclusion**

This study involves the leadership style of school principals. The data collect by survey with the help of questionnaire after and coding in SPSS for statistics analysis and than the demographic characteristic summary, factor analysis of t-score and p-score, Cronbach reliability, on the basis of task oriented and people oriented leadership style of school principals was tested. Reliability of Alpha, Cronbach co-efficient indicates that the scale is reliable ( $r=.572$  Items 35). The item analysis indicates that all items functions at the optimal level. There is no need of modification/replacement of the items from the scale. And all the demographics of the respondents are representing that our survey has covered all category of the respondents in public and private school sectors. Correlations test indicates in Table 4 that there is significant strong association among the p-score, t-score and job sector. In case of people-oriented and task-oriented leadership styles of principals, there is no significant difference among public and private sector schools. Leadership styles of both task-oriented and people-oriented indicate that they are strongly correlating with each other. In short we found in Table 5 that private school sector principals are more task-oriented and as well people-oriented in their profession, than public school sector principals. The same Table 5 is showing that public school sector principals are less task-oriented and less people-oriented in their profession, than private school sector principals. So our null hypothesis telling there is no significant difference between task oriented school principals leadership style in Public and Private sector schools. And there is no significant difference between people oriented school principals' in Public and Private sector schools therefore rejected.

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