

# Decision-Making Style of Educational Administrators with reference to their Experience

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## ABSTRACT

*The present study was carried out to find and compare the Decision-Making Style of Public and Private Secondary School Administrators with reference to their Experience. A sample of 200 administrators was drawn randomly from the Public and Private Secondary Schools of Kashmir. Decision-Making Scale by N. Ganihar was administered for data collection. Mean, S.D and Test of Significance were used to analyse the data. The results revealed that Public administrators prefer Heuristic Decision-Making Style and Private administrators follow Routine and Compromise Decision-Making Styles in dealing with the academic, administrative, entrepreneurial and personal problems. Furthermore, results showed that senior administrators were found to espouse the Heuristic Decision-Making Style than the junior administrators who take on Routine and Compromise Decision-Making Styles.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Decision-Making, Public Administrators, Private Administrators, Experience.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Decision-making is a way of life for school administrators. It is a process of generating and assessing the alternatives and chooses among them [1] (Mondy, 1993). Decision-making is a cognitive process of choosing a course of action from numerous alternatives. It can be an action or an opinion. It arises when we need to do something, but we do not know what? Hence decision making is a reasoning process which can be coherent or illogical and can be based on overt or tacit assumptions. It is a crucial skill in the workplace, and it is mainly imperative to make an effective leader [2] (Muthulakshmi, 2015). It represents a harmonious judgment and a commitment to action. Decision- making pervades all administrative actions and is an indispensable component of the administrative process itself. The success of the school is critically allied to effective decisions by the administrators. Their primary responsibility lies in making decisions rather than performing routine operations. The quality of the decisions made is a predominant factor in how the superintendent, for example; views a principal's performance, or how a principal views a department head or team leader's performance. Decision making affects the performance of a school by looking at the interests of its students, teachers, parents, as well

as the community. Every decision-making process produces a final choice that may or may not prompt action. It is the process of thought and deliberation that leads to a decision [3] (Glueck, 2006). Decision making is a conscious process, involving both individual and social phenomena. Literature viewed decision making as the process of choosing among alternative courses of action to solve a problem or attaining better situation regarding the opportunities that exist [4] [5] [6](Carlisle, 1979; Harrison, 1999; Harris, 1980). According to [7] (Baker et al., 2001) decision-making should start with the identification of the decision makers and stakeholders in the decision, reducing the possible disagreement about problem definition, requirements, goals, and criteria. Their primary responsibility lies in making decisions rather than performing routine operations. Decision making is one of the most critical activities in which school administrators are engaged daily. The success of a school is critically linked to effective decisions [8] (Lunenburg, 2010).

## **2. OBJECTIVES**

1. To find and compare the decision-making style of Public and Private administrators of the secondary schools.
2. To find and compare the decision-making style of Senior and Junior administrators of secondary schools with respect to their experience.

## **3. HYPOTHESIS**

1. There is a significant difference between the Public and Private administrators of the secondary schools.
2. There is a significant difference between the Senior and Junior administrators of secondary schools with respect to their experience.

## **4. SAMPLE**

The sample of 200 administrators was drawn randomly from the following two types of institutions of the Kashmir, J&K, India:

- a) Secondary Schools run by the Government and b) Secondary schools maintained by the Private management.

## **5. TOOL**

The following standardized tool was administered by the investigator for data collection:

**Decision-Making Style Scale (2005):**The scale was developed by Prof. Noorjehan N. Ganihar which covers four problem areas of decision-making:

- i) Entrepreneurial Problems, ii) Administrative Problems, iii) Academic Problems and iv) Personnel Problems

## **6. STATISTICAL TREATMENT OF DATA**

The data collected was subjected to the statistical treatment by calculating Mean, S.D. and Test of Significance.

**Table No. 1** Showing the Significance of Difference Between the Mean Scores of Public and Private Secondary School Administrators on Decision-Making Style (N=100 each).

Dimensions		Public		Private		't' value	Level of Significance
		Mean	S. D	Mean	S. D		
I	Routine	5.60	3.94	10.05	7.23	5.40	**
II	Compromise	16.25	5.01	19.54	7.27	3.72	**
III	Heuristic	26.15	5.97	18.50	8.90	7.13	**

Note: \*\* p<0.01;

**Table No. 2** Showing the Significance of Difference between the Mean Scores of Senior and Junior Secondary School Administrators on Decision-Making Style.

Dimensions		Senior (N=102)		Junior (N=98)		't' value	Level of Significance
		Mean	S. D	Mean	S. D		
I	Routine	6.34	4.279	9.37	7.463	3.53	**
II	Compromise	16.31	5.82	19.54	6.675	3.64	**
III	Heuristic	25.43	6.758	19.09	8.90	5.68	**

Note: \*\* p<0.01

Senior: >6 years of experience as an administrator

Junior: <6 years of experience as an administrator

## 7. INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

The comparative analysis of Public and Private Secondary School Administrators on different levels of decision-making style is reflected in **Table 1**. A quick look at this table shows a significant mean difference between the Public and the Private secondary school administrators on different dimensions of decision-making style. The results revealed that both the groups (public and private administrators) differ significantly on Routine Decision-Making Style. The mean score in case of Private Administrators is reported to be higher (M=10.05) as compared to the public administrators (M=5.60). The obtained 't' value came out to be significant

at 0.01 level of confidence ( $t=5.40$ ). The results further revealed that both the groups (public and private administrators) differ significantly on Compromise Decision-Making Style. The mean score in case of Private Administrators is reported to be higher ( $M=19.54$ ) as compared to the Public Administrators ( $M=16.25$ ), and the obtained 't' value came out to be significant at 0.01 level of confidence ( $t=3.72$ ). From the results, it is clear that on Routine Decision-Making Style and Compromise Decision-Making Style, the mean score favours the private administrators which means private administrators follow the Routine and Compromise type of decisions. The two groups were further compared on Heuristic Decision-Making Style, and here the mean score in case of the Public Administrators is observed to be higher ( $M=26.15$ ) as compared to the private administrators ( $M=18.50$ ). The obtained 't' value came out to be significant at 0.01 level of confidence ( $t=7.13$ ). The mean difference favours Public administrators, which indicates that public administrators follow a heuristic type of decisions while solving the Entrepreneurial, Administrative, Academic and Personal problems. From the results, it is inferred that private administrators adopt the traditional methods like observation, supervision or circulars in solving the entrepreneurial problems, and sometimes they seem to conduct seminars and symposia to evaluate the outcomes. Public administrators, on the other hand, try to identify the problems that thwart the goal achievement and undertake task group techniques for solving the problems. In serving the community, private administrators traditionally organise the school programmes according to the rigid syllabus and do not risk making any changes in it. Whereas, the public administrators consider the needs and demands of the society first, and then include such aspects in the curriculum so that the teaching would be of practical use. From the results, Public administrators seem to be committed; they organise the programmes and activities of the organisation to achieve the objectives within the specified time. They never mix their problems with that of the administration or academic while as the Private Administrators are observed to mix their problems with that of the administration and hence fail to improve the quality of work. Therefore, it can be inferred that the private secondary school administrators give more preference to Routine and Compromise Decision-Making Styles which do not require much evaluation and analysis. On the other hand, public administrators give more preference to Heuristic Decision-Making Style to solve a problem or to make a decision. In the light of these results reported above, the Hypothesis No. 1 which reads as, "There is a significant difference in mean scores of Decision-making styles of public and private secondary school administrators" is not rejected.

It has been found that both the groups are different with regard to different dimensions of decision-making style. A host of researchers support the results in the field;

[9] Kundan & Sandeep (2016) found a positive and significant relationship of problem-solving ability and self-esteem with decision-making styles of secondary school administrators. The researcher claimed that the infrastructure facilities of private schools are better than that of the public schools which in turn gives freedom to private administrators in their decision making and hence they adopt the routine type of decision-making style. [10] Syarif (2014) found that the variation in the principal's decision making is affected directly by the emotional intelligence, leadership style, and interpersonal communication. In contradictory to the above results, the administrators with the transformational leadership skills employ a restrictive measure that hinders the teachers from instigating strategies that would foster academic achievement [11] (George & Jones, 2000).

A close look at **Table 2** shows a significant mean difference between the senior and junior secondary school administrators on various dimensions of decision-making style. Both the groups (senior & junior heads) have been found significantly different on all the dimensions of decision-making style. Analysis of the data reveals that both the groups differ significantly on Routine Decision-Making Style. The mean score in case of junior administrators is reported to be higher ( $M=6.34$ ) as compared to the senior administrators ( $M=9.37$ ). The obtained 't' value came out to be significant at 0.01 level of confidence ( $t=3.53$ ). The results also reveal that both the groups differ significantly on Compromise Decision Making Style and, the mean score in case of Junior Administrators is reported to be higher ( $M=19.54$ ) as compared to the Senior Administrators ( $M=16.31$ ). The obtained 't' value came out to be significant at 0.01 level of confidence ( $t=3.64$ ). The groups were further compared on Heuristic Decision-Making Style, and here the mean score in case of the Senior Administrators is reported to be higher ( $M=25.43$ ) as compared to the junior administrators ( $M=19.09$ ). The obtained 't' value came out to be significant at 0.01 level of confidence ( $t=5.68$ ). From the results, it can be inferred that junior administrators prefer Routine and Compromise type of decisions and senior administrators prefer a Heuristic type of decisions while solving administrative, entrepreneurial, academic and personal problems. Senior administrators are seen to identify the problems that hinder them to the achieve goals and undertake risky works. They encourage teachers as well as students to take part in seminars, workshops, and conferences, whereas the junior administrators supervise the records, circulars, at times arrange meetings with staff to see whether the set goals or primary objectives are achieved or not. Senior administrators indulge teachers to solve the problems faced by the students and the school by frequently arranging meetings. In anticipating a change in the organisation to adopt the needs, aspirations, and motivation of the individuals, junior administrators conduct a meeting to make the teachers understand the importance of the change undertaken and assign them activities accordingly. On the other hand, the senior administrators implement the change with the help of experts and willing teachers and then compare the achievements to the already present type of administration. To improve the overall quality of work, senior administrators arrange discussions, guidance and counselling sessions occasionally with the help of experts, while the junior administrators direct the teachers to go for the in-service training programme for up gradation of their knowledge. Hence, it may be analysed that the senior administrators adopt Heuristic decision-making style and the junior administrators prefer Routine and Compromise decision-making styles. In the light of above results the Hypothesis No. 2, which reads, "There is a significant difference between the Senior and Junior administrators of secondary schools with respect to their experience" is not rejected.

The findings are in conformity with the findings of some researchers in the field: [12] Oluwadare et al. (2011) suggested that the principals need the leadership qualities like co-operation and supervision for effective administration. [13] Crum (2009) found that successful leaders provide the capacity for building a shared vision and help promote the acceptance of group goals within the organization. However, in contrary to the results, [14] Antoinette & Love (2007) found that teachers' length of service did not have any significant effect on the principal's perceived leadership effectiveness and decision-making behaviour.



## 8. CONCLUSION

1. Private Secondary School Administrators were observed to follow the Routine and Compromise Decision-Making Style in comparison to the Public Secondary School Administrators who prefer Heuristic Decision-Making Styles in dealing with the academic, administrative, entrepreneurial and personal problems.
2. Public Secondary School Administrators were observed to be committed to achieving the objectives and never mix their problems with that of the administrative or academic in comparison to the Private Secondary School Administrators.
3. On the other hand, Senior Secondary School Administrators were reported to be Heuristic Decision Makers which led them to be inspiring and encouraging. They are observed to be motivating, and they always forestall a change to meet the needs of individuals.

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