

## **Perception of Teachers towards School Principal as Instructional Leader**

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### **Abstract**

The title of the article is 'Perception of Teachers towards School Principal as Instructional Leader'. Instructional leadership has become one of the most widely researched topics. This type of leadership has been connected to teacher growth and development, teacher job satisfaction, student achievement, and improving school climate in general. The objective of the study included to determine the role played by principals as instructional leaders in schools through the perceptions of teachers. To achieve this purpose quantitative research methodology was used and the study was survey type in nature. The sample consisted of 436 school teachers of Kathmandu district. A self developed questionnaire was developed using Google Forms and sent to the respondents via email and social networking sites. The data were collected from teachers in emails and social media. The data were analyzed by using different descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings of the study indicated that school principals support creativity, innovation and practice of new skills in the classroom. They also praised to those teachers who use creativity in classrooms to enhance the learning of students. They held meetings with teachers to discuss the students' performance and solve the problems of teachers as an instructional leaders. The findings suggested that there is no significant difference on perception of instructional leadership of principals on the basis of gender of teachers and subjects they teach but have a significant difference on perception on the basis of their academic qualification. It is recommended that principals may be trained that they can use new innovative methods and ideas to discuss with teachers and they help out the teachers to make

the dull topics interesting. Principals may motivate teachers by giving different incentives in the shape of awards for bringing innovation in school.

**Keywords:** Instructional leaders, Principals, Significance, Teachers performance

### **Introduction**

Leadership and administration both are the procedures identified as a value-based and shared occasion that perform between the leader and the followers. Leader calls the meetings which is accessible for everybody. Leadership identifies with impact on how the heads influence the other employees essentially, subsequently, there is a shared collaboration between the leader and followers. In addition, leadership incorporates the gathering's objective accomplishment where the leaders direct their followers to accomplish their shared objectives together (Northouse, 2004). Similarly, educational institutions also run by leadership. The leadership theories apply in educational context. School is an educational institution where the principal of the school performs as a leader and teacher are the followers and stakeholders in the institution.

The principal instructor has a vital role in an educational institution. He/she is responsible to coordinate the instructors and partners keeping in mind the final goal to achieve their shared objectives together. The principal can be an image of the shared participation among the teachers, shareholders, and society; the head of the institution needs to develop the good relations with them and he can do a better job in a school with their positive attitude. He needs to act boldly with a specific end goal to solve the problems of institutions (Purinton, 2013). Leadership has critical effects on educational institution and on the performance of students. Leadership is relevant with the initiation of initiative since administration is about institutional progression. Especially, it is connected with sorting out the institution (school) to accomplish common and shared objectives. The objective of school authority is to change the dimension of school towards its improvement. In fact, administration is a fundamental part for school which deals with viability in order to train the learners to achieve their future achievement (Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, & Hopkins, 2006).

School administration has been a critical basis for school betterment and learners accomplishment (Hariri, Moneypenny, & Pridaux, 2012). Teachers are facilitated in their designated practices and solve their academic or teaching problems in instructional leadership. School principal encourages the teachers, supporting educators and allowing them to learn new knowledge to meet the academic and social needs of the students. There is fundamental duty of principal as an instructional director is to takes an interest in the instructing and learning procedure of the school; inspect the teachers in classrooms and working them to upgrade teaching and learning, setting the school's objectives, conveying the objectives, directing and assessing instructions, organizing the educational programs, monitor the educational improvement and progress of the students, ensuring time, keeping up high standard, giving

insight to instructors or teachers, advancing proficient improvement, creating and implementing scholarly standards, and providing motivating forces to learning. The instructional administration considered the principal as a leader of the leader (Hallinger, 2008; Hallinger & Murphy, 1987).

Instructional leadership is also understood as “distributed,” and “shared” leadership and this perspective impels that administration of the school is a considerably more grounded indicator of school improvement and academic change and learners’ completion when authority is circulated extensively over various parts including school heads (Leithwood, 1994). These days with the advancement of knowledge and learning and the emerging innovation, we require varied leadership in educational institutions.

The present instruction frameworks in schools have a tendency to set their attention on managing school-smooth transport tasks, substitute situation, learners and staff training. The principal is answerable of administrative functions and as well as the academic development of the students, and gives proficient help to less experienced staff in issues including lesson improvement and classroom administration (Dowling, 2007). Many principals were playing the traditional roles in the institutions. They do not pay attention to teaching learning activities in schools. The traditional image of the principals is not compatible with current needs. Now, it is an ideal opportunity to move and find a way to change this scenario. The instructional administration in broader view adds to “leadership for instructions” in educational sectors. It focuses to look at the effect of leadership on the performance of teachers and students achievement. Moreover, this enlightens how the school principal runs the instructive framework and dedicates to their activities and their allotment of time to educational modules and academic improvement, and administration of institutions with guardians and society (Leonard, 2010).

### **Research Objectives**

The study was conducted for achieving following objectives:

1. To identify the roles of school principals as instructional leaders in schools.
2. To find out the difference in the teachers’ views about the roles of school principals with respect to the demographic variables (gender, teaching subjects, qualification of teachers).

### **Research Questions**

The study was conducted to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the roles of school principal as an instructional leaders in schools?
2. Is there any difference between male and female teachers’ perceptions about the roles of the principal as an instructional leader?
3. Is there any difference between technical and language subject teachers’ perceptions about the roles of the principal as an instructional leader?

4. Is there any difference in the teachers' perceptions about the roles of the principal as an instructional leader due to qualification?

### **Significance of the Study**

This research may be helpful to the individuals who are keen on instructive leadership. It may provide the guidelines to principals of the schools that how they train themselves in different fields and enhance the skills which are compulsory to run an institution. Furthermore, this research may help out the principals to recognize the best instructional leadership practices that could help the teaching staff practically in classes and in the meantime to realize which instructional leadership practice requires the improvement in schools. The findings of the study may also be helpful for the teachers to understand the roles of their principals and how to improve their teaching practices.

### **Methods**

#### **Research Design**

This study is quantitative in nature and survey method was used to collect the perceptions of teachers regarding school principal as an instructional leader in schools.

#### **Population and Sample**

The population of the study was male and female teachers of different schools of Kathmandu district. A sample of 436 teachers from different schools were selected randomly as they responded the questionnaire sent by the researcher.

#### **Instrumentation**

A self-developed questionnaire on five point Likert type (strongly agree to strongly disagree) was used to collect data from the respondents. There were altogether 25 questions on Likert type divided into five different groups and each group contained five questions each. The groups were 'Roles about supervising and evaluating instruction', 'Roles about monitoring students' progress', 'Roles about providing motivation for teachers', 'Roles about professional development' and 'Roles about infrastructure and resources'.

#### **Data Collection**

The survey form was developed in Google Forms and the link was shared among the teachers via email, messenger, viber and different social media. The link was sent to 300 teachers via email but 280 of them replied with filled forms. Other forms were received via social media. Altogether of 436 school teachers filled up the forms and submitted. All the forms were filled properly and clearly while 24 respondents did not want to showcase their names.

#### **Methods of Analysis**

Initially, univariate or descriptive analysis was performed to describe the percentage and number of sampled respondents according to gender, academic qualification, teaching subject

and teaching experience. Bivariate analysis was performed to examine the association between the teachers' perception and principal's instructional leadership. For the bivariate analysis, all the statements of the Likert scale were summed together and treated as dependent variable. Independent sample t-test was used to check the difference between perception of teachers on instructional leadership on the basis of gender and teaching subject. To know about the strength of difference between the two groups, we used an effect size, Cohen's d to accompany reporting of t-test. In addition, one way ANOVA was explored for the difference among teachers regarding instructional leadership practices on the basis of their qualification.

## **Results**

### **Demographic Analysis of Respondents**

*Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the respondents*

<b>Characteristics</b>		<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Sex</b>	Male	33.0	144
	Female	67.0	292
<b>Teaching Subject</b>	Technical	24.8	108
	Language	75.2	328
<b>Academic Qualification</b>	Intermediate	22.0	96
	Bachelors	45.9	200
	Masters	28.4	124
	MPhil/PhD	3.7	16
<b>Teaching Experience</b>	1-5 years	46.8	204
	6-10 years	17.4	76
	11-15 years	20.2	88
	16 years and above	15.6	68
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>436</b>

The total number of teachers surveyed for the study was 436. All the respondent teachers provided the data in all questionnaire. Among the total surveyed teachers, 33% were male and 67% were female teachers. Regarding teaching subject of the respondent teachers. 24.8% teachers said that they taught technical subjects like mathematics and science whereas larger percentage 75.2% of teachers said that they taught language subjects like English, Nepali, Social Studies, Moral Education etc. The academic qualification of the teachers was found as 22% were intermediate, 45.9% bachelors, 28.4% masters and 3.7% MPhil/PhD. The query regarding teaching experience of respondent teachers revealed that 46.8% teachers had experience of teaching for 1-5 years, 17.4% had experience of 6-10 years, 20.2% had experience of 11-15 years and 15.6% teachers had experience of teaching for 16 years or more.

### **School Principal as Instructional Leader**

The role of school principal as instructional leader is examined with the help of various statements as perceived by the respondents. Altogether 25 statements were asked to them dividing them into 5 different roles. Since the statements were in ordinal scale, median was calculated to measure the central tendency and range was calculated to measure the dispersion. A detail analysis of the study is as under.

*Table 2: School Principal's Roles are Instructional Leader*

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Range</b>
<b><i>Roles About Supervising and Evaluating Instruction</i></b>		
Principal ensures the classroom objectives	4	4
Principal helps to ensure the working towards the same objectives	4	3
Principal makes effort with the goals of school	5	3
Principal provides guidance and counseling sessions to foresee problems of teachers	4	2
Principal gives the feedback to teacher after observation	5	4
<b><i>Roles About Monitoring Students' Progress</i></b>		
Principal arranges meetings with teachers to discuss student school performance	5	3
Principal visits classrooms to discuss school issues with teachers and students	4	3
Principal visits classrooms to discuss school issues with teachers and students	4	2
Principal provides direct instruction to students	4	3
Principal evaluates the academic performance of the students	4	3
<b><i>Roles About Providing Motivation to Teachers</i></b>		
Principal praises and support teacher's performance	4	3
Principal facilitates teachers work	4	2
Principal compliments teachers openly for their efforts and performance	4	3
Principal gives special opportunities to the teachers for professional development	4	3
Principal provides time with teachers to discuss instructional issues	4	4
<b><i>Roles About Professional Development</i></b>		
Principal do efforts on aid teacher's professional development	4	3
Principal encourages new ideas of the teachers	5	2
Principal supports creativity, innovation and practice of new skills	5	3
Principal plans and executes new in-service seminars or teachers training programs for teachers	4	3
Principal actively supports the use of skills in the classroom that were acquired during in-service training	4	4
<b><i>Roles About Infrastructures and Resources</i></b>		
Principal preserves all the maintenance facilities in the school	4	3
Equipment/facilities for teaching learning (e.g. television, projector, laptop and others) were adequately provided	4	4

Principal checks water tanks, first aid box, toilets, electrical wiring	4	4
Principal fairly distributes funds in schools	4	3
Principal asks the teaching staff to check the cleanliness of the students everyday	5	3

A total of five statements on Likert Scale (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree) were provided to the respondents to know about the roles about supervising and evaluating instructions of school principal. In the roles about evaluating and supervision instruction, that majority of teachers agreed upon the statement that the principal makes effort with the goals of school and gives feedback to teacher after observation (Median = 5). While all statements are agreed by the respondents, the respondents have varied opinions as signified by the values of range in each statement. In monitoring students; progress, majority of respondents strongly agree to the statement that the principal arranges meeting with teachers to discuss student school performance. While in all other statements to analyze the roles related to monitoring students' progress, the median value is 4 signifying that the majority agreed on the given statements. The measurement of dispersion with the help of range also signifies that there is not so much variation in dispersion. In the reaction of the respondents about principal's roles about providing motivation to teachers. the value of median is 4 meaning that the respondents agreed on the given statements. The value of range in the statement 'Principal facilitates teachers' work' is 2 which signifies that majority of the teachers agreed upon this statement and did not vary their thought in this regard. In majority of statements on the respondents' reaction while asking them about roles of principal about professional development, the respondents agreed on all the statements. The variation in the statement 'Principal actively supports the use of skills in the classroom that were acquired during in-service training' is the maximum (Range = 4). Majority of the teachers strongly agreed on the statement 'Principal supports creativity, innovation and practice of new skills' but with less dispersion value (Range = 2), the statement 'Principal new ideas of the teachers' is the most strongly agreed by the respondents. Responses on the fifth characteristics shows how the teachers have reacted on the statements they were asked to know about the roles of principal about infrastructure and resources. All the statements were agreed by the respondents but the statement 'Principal asks the teaching staff to check the cleanliness of students everyday' is strongly agreed by the respondents. In this characteristics, the range has varying values signifying that the opinions are dispersed from the central value.

### **Bivariate Analysis**

Based on the total scores from Likert Scale, the values were summed together and treated as dependent variable (evaluated as 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree). An independent sample t-test was applied to create the difference between the teachers' perception on school principal's instructional leadership on the basis of gender and teaching subject (independent variable).

Table 3: Independent Sample t-test for Difference among Teachers regarding Instructional Leadership Practices on the Basis of Gender and Subject

Variable			N	Mean	SD	t-value	Sig.	Cohen's d
Instructional Leadership	<b>Gender</b>	Male	144	106.362	14.090	-1.246	0.214	0.13
		Female	292	107.972	9.265			
	<b>Subject</b>	Technical	108	108.296	10.812	0.923	0.356	0.10
		Language	328	107.158	11.199			

In independent sample test, the t-value is -1.246, degree of freedom (df) is 205.888 and significance level (p value) is 0.214 ( $p > 0.05$ ). It means that there is no statistically significant difference between the perception of teachers on principal's instructional leadership on the basis of gender. The significant level does not suggest whether this effect is strong or weak. So, we calculated Cohen's d to find out the effect size. The Cohen's d value was calculated as 0.13. It meets the criteria of (0 – 0.20) which signifies that there is weak effect. So, we can conclude that the difference between the perception of two groups is weak. However, the statements 'Principal ensures the classroom objectives' based on gender ( $t = -3.460, p = 0.001$ ), 'Principal evaluates the academic performance of the students' ( $t = -3.386, p = 0.001$ ), 'Principal gives equal opportunities to the teachers for professional development' ( $t = -3.775, p = 0.000$ ), 'Principal encourages new ideas of the teachers' ( $t = -2.270, p = 0.024$ ) and 'Principal supports creativity, innovation and practice of new skills' ( $t = -2.296, p = 0.023$ ) have statistically significant difference on the perception on these statements on the basis of gender.

In addition, independent sample t-test was used to check the difference between the technical subject and language subject teacher respondents' perceptions regarding instructional leadership practices. There was no statistical difference between the scores of technical subject teachers ( $M= 108.296, SD= 10.812$ ) and language subject teachers ( $M= 107.158, SD= 11.199$ ),  $t(434) = 0.923, p = 0.356$ . There is no significant difference between technical subject and language subject teachers' perceptions regarding instructional leadership practices. The Cohen's d value was calculated as 0.10 which signifies that there is weak effect. So, we can conclude that the difference between the perception of two groups is weak. But if we observe the individual statements, 'Principal provides guidance and counseling sessions to foresee problems of teachers' ( $t = 2.452, p = 0.015$ ), 'Principal praises and supports teacher's performance' ( $t = -4.446, p = 0.000$ ), 'Principal compliments teachers openly for their efforts and performance' ( $t = -2.041, p = 0.043$ , and 'Principal gives special opportunities to the teachers for professional development' ( $t = -2.419, p = 0.017$ ) have statistically significant difference on the perception of teachers on instructional leadership of school principal on the basis of teaching subjects.

Table 4: One way ANOVA for the Difference among Teachers regarding Instructional Leadership Practices on the basis of Qualification



Variable		Sum of Squares	<i>df</i>	Mean Square	<i>f</i>	Sig.
Instructional Leadership	Between Groups	2983.917	3	994.639	8.484	0.000
	Within Groups	50643.533	432	117.230		
	Total	53627.450	435			

Table 4 shows results of one way ANOVA explore the difference in means scores of instructional leadership practices  $F(3, 432) = 8.484, p = 0.000$ . Since the p value is less than 0.05, there was significant difference among the views of respondents with respect to their qualification regarding instructional leadership practices of school principal.

### **Discussion**

This study opens a new frontier in the study of perception of teachers on school principal as instructional leader in the context of Kathmandu. It was found that the roles of school principal about supervising and evaluating instruction, monitoring students' progress, providing motivation for teachers, professional development and roles regarding infrastructure and resources are agreed in majority of the cases and sometimes strongly agreed by the respondents. It may be because the principals are well aware of their roles in driving their schools towards right direction with perfection. They are more advantageous than the principals of other parts of the country as they have easy access to any kind of resources being grounded in Kathmandu.

The study did not find any significant difference between the perception of male teachers and female teachers on school principal as instructional leader. Also, there is no significant difference on perception of technical subject and language subject teachers on instructional leadership of school principals. The reason could be that the principals of Kathmandu are more qualified with all potentials and competence to guide and support teachers of any subject. The challenging roles of principals especially in Kathmandu have moulded them into excellent instructional leaders to cope with the fierce competition in densely populated educational institutions. While evaluating difference among teachers regarding instructional leadership practices on the basis of qualification, it was found that there was significant difference on the views of respondents on the basis of their qualification. The reason could be the academic qualification opens up the vision and priorities of the individuals. They may have different perception on viewing the same thing as inspired by the degree of their academic qualification.

### **Conclusion**

The study was conducted to explore the role of school principal as an instructional leader at the school level. The sample of the study was school teachers of Kathmandu district. On the basis of findings, it was indicated that principals are aware of their roles in school and spend the majority of their day carrying out instructional leadership responsibilities. It was also concluded that there was no significant difference between male and female teachers'

perceptions regarding instructional leadership practices. There was no significant difference as well on the basis of subjects the teachers teach in the schools. However, the findings of the study indicated that there was significant difference between teachers' perceptions about instructional leadership practices on the basis of their qualification. They possessed a different opinion with respect to their qualification.

This study has several strengths, such as its significant sample size, sufficient number of statements to explore the instructional leadership practices in the context of the capital city. However, its limitations should be recognized. First of all, it was conducted in Kathmandu, the capital city where principals get easy access to any kind of resources and materials that enhance their capabilities. The principals should prove themselves in adverse circumstances here because of fierce competition among schools to resist and enhance their institutional position in the society. Therefore, the analysis can only provide evidence of statistical association between the variables which are considered to be privileged. We also need to be cautious to interpret the result because all the information was gathered online from the respondents. So the rapport building procedure was missed out that introduce reporting bias whereby some respondents may be less likely to accurately recall instructional leadership practices as it has already been five months staying at home, not going to school because of lockdown.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations were offered for future:

1. Principals may give proper attention to innovative education at all levels by keeping in check the methods of teaching. The good school culture is impossible to build without such support from all concerned authorities. This study emphasizes the school principals to not only attend but also implement the various trainings and seminars to develop the school. Also, it is important to create trust and good cooperation and collaboration with teachers.
2. Principals may be motivated to teachers by giving different awards for bringing innovation in school.
3. Instructional leadership practices may be revised innovatively for better teaching according to the demands of modern society.
4. Government may take some steps to promote in service training in schools by conducting seminars or workshops on the importance and benefits of instructional leadership.
5. There may be an observation schedule of teachers' classes during their lectures by the principal of the school.

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