

Educational leadership in pakistan: ideals and realities

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EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN PAKISTAN: IDEALS AND REALITIES Book

Review This is the first ever book on educational leadership, published in Pakistan. Dr. Jan-e-Alam Khaki[1] and Dr. Qamar Safdar[2] are the editors of this book. The book consists of a series of empirical studies undertaken by qualified educational researchers in Pakistan, associated directly or indirectly with AKU-IED. There are various thought provoking and insightful topics in this book; each complements our learning experiences. The book is divided into four sections and fourteen chapters; each section and chapter is intertwined with each other and illuminates issues and its remedial measures. Section one describes the development of education leadership in Pakistan. The second sections deals with the Diversity of Leadership: perceptions and practices of leadership in Pakistan. The third session looks at the role of the educational change agents, and the fourth sections explores the future prospects of educational leadership in Pakistan. In order to get in-depth insights from the book, we decided to focus on first two sections and reviewed initial six chapters. In first chapter, Dr. Sajid Ali and Muhammad Babur highlight the issues and nature of governance during pre and post independence. Structure of education during British and after independence is analytically compared. Chapter indicates that involvement of educational leadership is missing in both periods, causing various issues in education system, ineffective management and indistinct teaching methodologies, etc. In the second chapter, Zubaida Bana reflects upon the understanding of effective leadership. Using the Katha (storytelling) approach, she starts the discussion pints of a headteacher who imaginatively discovers the meanings in allegories and metaphors in order to understand

the roles and responsibilities of an effective education leader in his/her school. Katha of leadership described in this chapter stimulates our minds that every person has the capacity to lead. Some may lead in wider space; others may lead in smaller landscape. The third chapter is all about of a female pedagogical leader's journey in a traditional context in Pakistan. The writer reflects upon the critical incidents, she came across in her personal to professional life, which helped or impede her way to become a pedagogical leader. The notion of ' leader as a bridge between management and stakeholders' and ' leader as a life-long learner' is evident from her story. In the fourth chapter, Qamar Safdar explores the roles of two effective headteachers of early years in two private schools. The writer reflects on the capacity and ability for the overall development of children. The chapter 5, deals with an ethnographic study conducted by Mola Dad Shafa in a rural context of northern areas of Pakistan. The author discusses the challenges the headteachers faced and the way addressed them. The chapter six, ' Effective School Leadership Practices' is a doctoral research of Dr. Jan-e-Alam Khaki. In this case study, Khaki explores the roles and beliefs of three effective secondary school headteachers and their influences on the teaching and learning practices in schools. Key Learning from the Book Being a student of Teacher Education, I was very unfamiliar with different kinds of leadership and its characteristics. The very first time, in our PL course, I heard the terms instructional (Duke, 1987; Hallinger, 1992), moral (Hodgkinson, 1991), transformational (Dillard, 1995), participative (Yukl, 1994), managerial (Hallinger, 1992), contingent and pedagogical leadership (Sergiovanni, 1989). But these terms were not much clear to me; I mostly

thought them as just theories with no connection with practical life of a leader. This book review provided me with access not only to understand and differentiate in different kinds of leadership, but also relate it with real-life situations. I have learnt many new things about effective leadership from this book, but due to the limited word limit I will describe some crux of it. While analyzing the first chapter of the book, I feel the same that governance and planning has the role in deteriorated education system in Pakistan. It takes a lot of time in planning and framing the policy, then sending it to the national assembly and senate for debate and translating it into the law. Then piloting of the policy takes long time and when it comes to be implementation, the government gets changed and so the policy. It creates the environment of despair, but when I go through the second chapter (Katha of Leadership), it gives a hope. Here, I learnt that nothing is unachievable in this world. Every person is capable to contribute in the process of change and everyone has capacity to lead. We should not stay waiting for any cosmos power to come to help us; it is high time for everyone to come forward and lead. The third chapter of the book was the most inspiring and learning factor for me. Here, I learned that how a person (particularly a woman), with her/his strong will, sincerity and zeal breaks the chains of traditional rules. While reading that article, I was deeply thinking that someone has to initiate and take the first step toward the collective development. This article took me in my own context, where female is still considered as the property of the man and only the reproductive machine. Education, even the good food is the sole right of male child. Here, my elder sister (who could not get education herself) by sending her daughter into school, proved herself as traditional rule breaker.

Some of other females start following her foot-steps by sending their daughters to the schools. Ten years back, there was no single literate girl in my village, but due to that small step, more than forty to fifty girls have completed their primary education so far. Besides it, I also learnt that leader is life-long learner. He/she learns through self-reflection and negotiating and discussing the issues with others and seeking guidance from them. Overall, this book serves as a pioneer of exploring our thinking about our own role as a leader and proves to be a best resource for the policy makers to develop alternative approaches to deal with school and teaching and learning practices. ----- [1] Dr. Jan-e-Alam, PhD, along with three Master's degrees, is an associate professor and coordinator, PhD programmes at AKU-IED. Dr. Khaki is a pioneer in offering educational leadership and management programs in Pakistan. He is the recipient of the Outstanding Teacher Award of the Aga Khan University (2007). [2]