

## **DECISION MAKING STYLES OF PRINCIPALS ACROSS FACULTIES: A STUDY**

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### **Abstract**

*Principals of the higher education institutions make decisions about all educational, financial and administrative processes of the institutions. As Decision - making ability of the principal is a pivotal factor in his function and it pervade the entire institutional functioning, there is pressing need to explore the decision – making styles of the principals across the faculties. The aim is to compare decision - making styles of the principals on the basis of faculties. Normative survey method is used and 245 principals from six faculties constitute sample. The data collected using Decision - Making Style Scale by Noorjehan N.Ganihar. The findings show significant faculty wise difference in Routine Decision - Making Style and Heuristic Decision - Making Style whereas for Compromise Decision - Making Style faculty wise difference is not significant.*

**Key words:** *Decision - Making Styles and Principals of colleges*



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### **Introduction:**

Decision - making is an act of choice by which an individual selects one out of available alternatives. It is to choose the best available and most feasible rational alternatives. Decision - making is a very crucial aspect of human life. Authorities are entrusted with the duty of taking decision for the organizations. Decision - making is crucial skill for all the managers, administrators and leaders. Moore (1978) has equated it with management when he says, “management means decision – making.” Hurakadli, B. M. (2002) noted that Decision - making has three aspects of human behavior viz. Cognition, Conation and Affectation. Decision - Making Style is a crucial factor that affects individual performance and actions. It refers to the characteristic ways in which different people behave in decision – making situations. Doktor and Hamilton (1973) states “Decision - Making Style is a part of person’s cognitive style, which is characteristic self-consistent way of functioning that an individual exhibitions across perceptual and intellectual activities”. Decision - Making Style is viewed as a cognitive style. The earliest effort to identify different Decision - Making Styles was by identifying the traits of decision - maker like planner, impulsivity, intuitive etc. The taxonomy of Harren (1979) argues that decision - making varies with the extent to which the

individual assumes personal responsibility or assign the responsibility to fate, peers, others. And with the extent to which the decider is logical or emotional in the decision – making process.

Rowe and Boulgarides (1992) stated “identifying one’s decision style may predict behavior such as reactions to stress, motivation, problem solving abilities and general manner of thinking. The decision profile of any given individual reflects a combination of all four styles. It may be characterized as either one dominant style or as a balanced profile with all four at a similar strength.” The decision – making styles can vary according to different circumstances and since they are learned habits, different decision – making styles can be applied to different decision – making situations. (Brousseau and Driver, 2005)

Most decisions are repetitive in nature and the principal can use his store of information for making these decisions. There are certain other decisions which are repetitive but differ little from earlier decisions. The decision – making process also vary with the importance of the outcome of the decision. The style of decision – making is dependent on several factors operating within and outside the educational institution. Broadly the problem areas of decision – making are entrepreneurial problems, administrative problems, academic problems and personnel problems. Lipham and Hoeh (1974) has given a classification of decision – making styles which envelopes these four areas. They classifies decision – making style as routine, compromise and heuristic decision – making styles. Routine decisions are taken to keep institution going. They are usually structured hierarchically, require coordinated efforts, and utilize formal processes. They are quite like programmed type of decisions. Compromise decision – making style is characterized by amicable compromising strategies used by the decision – maker. A compromising formula is arrived at without offending either party. In this style, the principal takes into consideration the human relations and is able to diagnose, analyze and remediate the occasional ill feelings among staff. Heuristic decision making style is identified by freedom of each individual to explore all ideas. It involves openness, originality and seeking of consensus. Hierarchical structure is not emphasized and emotional and social tone is relatively relaxed. It is a creative type of decision.

Principals of the higher education institutions make decisions about all educational, financial and administrative processes of the institutions. As Decision - making ability of the principal is a pivotal factor in his function and it pervade the entire institutional functioning, there is pressing need to explore the decision – making styles of the principals across the faculties.

The review showed that the variables mostly studied with Decision – Making Styles are teacher morale, academic excellence, conflicts handling intentions, Burnout and organizational health and self – esteem. Some studies also focused on studying effect of gender, age and designation on decision – making styles. Decision – making styles of persons from various professions and jobs was also studied. But study of decision – making styles of principals of higher education institutions and that too covering and comparing faculty wise difference is rare. So the researcher decided to undertake this study.

**Objectives:** The objectives are:

1. To find out decision - making styles of the principals from different faculties.
2. To compare decision - making styles of the principals on the basis of faculties.

**Hypotheses:** Following hypothesis is formulated for the study.

1. Principals from different faculties do not differ significantly regarding their decision - making styles.

**Methodology:**

Normative survey method is followed for the study. The geographical area covered is Maharashtra state in India. The population for the study is the principals of all the higher education institutions from Maharashtra state in India. Total 245 Principals of colleges in the faculty of Arts, Science, Commerce, Pharmacy, law and Education at under graduation levels are selected on random basis as a sample for the study. The faculty wise data showed that the number of colleges in faculties like pharmacy and law are less as compared to arts, commerce and science faculties. So researcher adjusted the number of sample accordingly. The data are collected using Decision - Making Style Scale by Noorjehan N.Ganihar. The scores of the test of respondents were enlisted and were subjected to further processing. The researcher applied statistical measures like Mean, Standard Deviation and ‘t’ – test to draw conclusions.

**Scope and Limitations:**

1. The geographical area under the study is limited to Maharashtra state in India.
2. Only Principals of Higher education institutions are considered for the study.
3. Total 245 Principals of colleges in the faculty of Arts, Science, Commerce, Pharmacy, law and Education at under graduation levels are considered.
4. The variable studied is decision - making style.

**Results and Discussions:**

**Decision - Making Styles of the Principals from Different Faculties**

**Table No. 1: Decision - Making Styles of the Principals from Different Faculties**

Faculty	Number of Principals	Decision - Making Styles		
		Routine	Compromise	Heuristic
Arts	59	31	16	12
Science	56	34	16	6
Commerce	46	31	13	2
Pharmacy	16	4	4	8
Law	12	8	3	1
Education	56	23	11	22
Total sample	245	131	62	52

Table no. 1 shows Decision - Making Style of the Principals of different faculties. Out of total 245 Principals, 131 (53.47%) are high in Routine Decision - Making Style, 62(25.31%) in Compromise Decision - Making Style and 52(21.22 %) in Heuristic Decision - Making Style. In faculty wise distribution more number of principals are found to be higher in Routine Decision - Making Style from arts, science, and commerce and law faculty. Number of principals higher on Compromise Decision - Making Style is around 19 to 25% across faculties. And less number of principals are higher in Heuristic Decision - Making Style in arts, science, and commerce and law faculty. Only in Pharmacy and Education faculty the percentage of principals having higher Heuristic Decision - Making Style is found to be greater than other faculties.

**Comparing Decision - Making Styles of the Principals on the Basis of Faculties**

**1) Routine Decision - Making Style of the Principals on the basis of faculties**

Table no. 2 shows that Routine Decision - Making Style is found to be higher among 31 (52.54%) Principals of Arts faculty, 34 (60.71% ) Principals of Science faculty, 31 (67.39 %) Principals of Commerce faculty and 8 (66.67 %) are Principals of Law faculty. Only 4 (25%) Principals of Pharmacy faculty and 23 (41.07%) Principals of Education faculty are found to be higher in Routine Decision - Making style.

**Table No. 2: Routine Decision - Making Styles of the Principals on the basis of faculties.**

Faculty	Total sample N	No. of Principals high in Routine Decision - Making style	Percentage
Arts	59	31	52.54
Science	56	34	60.71
Commerce	46	31	67.39
Pharmacy	16	4	25
Law	12	8	66.67
Education	56	23	41.07

**Table No. 3: Faculty wise comparison of Routine Decision - Making Style of the Principals**

Faculty	N	Mean	S. D	F - value
Arts	59	23.92	16.61	2.6*
Science	56	26.13	16.11	
Commerce	46	28.59	15.93	
Pharmacy	16	15.94	13.84	
Law	12	27.83	14.56	
Education	56	20.07	15.87	

df<sub>1</sub> = 5; df<sub>2</sub>=239

\* Significant at .05 level

In table no – 3, As ‘F’ is significant at .05 levels the faculty wise mean differences are further investigated using t- test. For mean difference of 10.19 in favor of Principals of Science faculty when compared with principals of Pharmacy faculty ‘t’ – ratio is ‘t = 2.50’ with 70 degree of freedom. The obtained value is significant at .05 level. Comparing Routine Decision - Making Style of the Principals of Science and Education faculty, mean difference of 6.06 in favor of Principals of Science faculty ‘t’ – value is ‘t = 2.00’ for 110 degree of freedom. The obtained value is significant at .05 level and not significant at .01 level. Comparing Routine Decision - Making style of Principals of Commerce faculty and Pharmacy faculty, mean difference of 12.65 in favor of Principals of Commerce faculty, ‘t’ – value is ‘t = 3.03’ with 60 degree of freedom. The value of t= 3.03 is significant at both levels. For mean difference of 8.46 in favor of Principals of Commerce faculty when compared with Education faculty ‘t’ – value is ‘t = 2.69’ with 100 degree of freedom. The value of t= 2.69 is significant at .01 level. For mean difference of 11.89 in favor of Principals of Law faculty as compared to Pharmacy faculty, ‘t’ – value is ‘t = 2.19’ with 26 degree of freedom. The obtained value is significant at .05 level and not significant at .01 level.

2) **Compromise Decision - Making Style of the Principals on the basis of faculties**

**Table No. 4: Compromise Decision- Making Style of the Principals on the basis of faculties.**

Faculty	Total sample N	No. of Principals high in Compromise Decision - Making style	Percentage
Arts	59	16	27.12
Science	56	16	28.57
Commerce	46	13	28.26
Pharmacy	16	4	25
Law	12	3	25
Education	56	11	19.64

Table no. 4 shows that Compromise Decision - Making Style is found to be higher among 16 (27.12% ) Principals of Arts faculty, 16 (28.57% ) Principals of Science faculty, 13 (28.26 % ) Principals of Commerce faculty, 4 (25%) Principals of Pharmacy faculty and 3 (25%) Principals of Law faculty. Only 11 (19.64%) Principals of Education faculty are found to be higher in Compromise Decision - making style.

**Table No. 5: Faculty wise comparison of Compromise Decision - Making Style of the Principals**

Faculty	N	Mean	S. D.	F - value
Arts	59	13.70	12.89	0.12 <sup>#</sup>
Science	56	13.91	12.68	
Commerce	46	13.20	13.49	
Pharmacy	16	12.69	10.74	
Law	12	13.25	12.25	
Education	56	12.32	11.09	

df<sub>1</sub> = 5; df<sub>2</sub>=239

<sup>#</sup> not Significant at .05 level and at .01level

In Table no. 5, As 'F' value is not significant at .05 and at.01 level, it is concluded that there is no faculty wise significant difference in Compromise decision – making style of principals. They are quite similar in their compromise decision making style and mean difference arising is not significant to be attributed to real difference.

**3) Heuristic Decision - Making Style of the Principals on the basis of faculties**

**Table No. 6: Heuristic Decision - Making Style of the Principals on the basis of faculties.**

Faculty	Total sample N	No. of Principals high in Heuristic Decision - Making style	Percentage
Arts	59	12	20.34
Science	56	6	10.72
Commerce	46	2	4.35
Pharmacy	16	8	50
Law	12	1	8.33
Education	56	22	39.29

Table no. 6 shows that higher level of Heuristic Decision - Making Style is found to be among 12 (20.34% ) Principals of Arts faculty, 6 (10.72% ) Principals of Science faculty and only 2 (4.35%) principals of Commerce faculty. Out of total 8 (50%) Principals of Pharmacy faculty, 1(8.33%) Principal of Law faculty and 22 (39.29%) Principals of Education faculty are found to be higher in Heuristic Decision - making style.

**Table No. 7: Faculty wise comparison of Heuristic Decision - Making Style of the Principals.**

Faculty	N	Mean	S. D.	F - value
Arts	59	10.34	11.53	6.99**
Science	56	7.96	8.90	
Commerce	46	6.20	6.76	
Pharmacy	16	19.25	13.18	
Law	12	6.92	7.83	
Education	56	15.61	13.65	

df<sub>1</sub> = 5; df<sub>2</sub>=239

\*\* Significant at .05 level and at .01level.

In table no. – 7, the obtained value of F is significant at .05 level and .01 level. So the faculty wise mean differences are tested further using t- test. For mean difference of 4.14 in favor of Principals of Arts faculty when compared with commerce faculty ‘t’ – value is ‘t = 2.3’ with 103 degree of freedom. The obtained value of t= 2.3 is significant at .05 but not significant at .01 level. Comparing the mean difference of 8.31 between principals of Arts and Pharmacy faculty which is in favor of Principals of Pharmacy faculty ‘t’ – value is ‘t = 2.30’ and 103 degree of freedom. The obtained value of t= 2.30 is significant at .05 level and not significant at .01 level. For mean difference of 5.27 in favor of Principals of Education faculty when compared with Arts faculty, ‘t’ – value is calculated is ‘t = 2.33’ with 113 degree of freedom. The obtained value of t= 2.33 is significant at .05 level and not significant at .01 level. Comparing Principals of science and pharmacy faculty the mean difference of 11.29 in favor of Principals of Pharmacy faculty, ‘t’ – value is ‘t = 3.23 with 70 degree of

freedom. The obtained value of  $t = 3.23$  is significant at .01 level. The mean difference of 7.65 between principals of science and education faculty is in favor of Principals of Education faculty. The 't' – value is 't = 3.51' with 110 degree of freedom. The value of  $t = 3.51$  is significant at .01 level. Principals of Commerce faculty and Pharmacy faculty are compared. The mean difference of 13.05 is in favor of Principals of Pharmacy faculty and 't' is 3.79' with 60 degree of freedom. The  $t = 3.79$  is significant at .05 level and .01 level. For mean difference of 9.41 in favor of Principals of Education faculty when compared with Commerce faculty 't' – value is 't = 4.52' with 100 degree of freedom. The obtained value is higher than the value at .01 level. Hence it is significant. The mean difference of 12.93 is in favor of Principals of Pharmacy faculty when compared with Law faculty. The 't' – value calculated is 't = 3 with 26 degree of freedom. The obtained value of  $t = 3.24$  is significant at .01 level. While comparing principals of Law and Education faculty the mean difference of 8.69 is in favor of Principals of Education faculty. The 't' – value is 't = 2.99' with 66 degree of freedom. The obtained value of  $t = 2.99$  is significant at .05 level and at .01 level.

#### **Conclusions:**

- Principals of different faculties are compared regarding their decision making style. Significant difference in Routine Decision - Making Style of Principals is found among Science and Pharmacy; Science and Education; Commerce and Education; Commerce and pharmacy; Pharmacy and Law faculties. Thus it is concluded that Principals from different faculties differ significantly in Routine Decision - Making Style.
- Comparing principals on the basis of faculty regarding Compromise Decision - Making Style on the basis of 'F – ratio', it is found that F – ratio not significant and there is no faculty wise difference in Compromise Decision - Making Style of Principals.
- Principals from Commerce, Pharmacy and Education faculties are found to differ significantly in Heuristic Decision - Making Style from principals of Arts faculty.
- Principals from Pharmacy and Education faculties are found to differ significantly in Heuristic Decision - Making Style from principals of Science faculty.
- Principals from Pharmacy and Education faculties are found to differ significantly in Heuristic Decision - Making Style from principals of Commerce faculty



- Principals from Pharmacy and Education faculties are found to differ significantly in Heuristic Decision - Making Style from principals of Law faculty
- Thus the findings shows that in case Routine Decision - Making Style and Heuristic Decision - Making Style faculty wise differences are significant whereas for Compromise Decision - Making Style faculty wise differences are not significant.

### **Educational Implications:**

There is a significant faculty wise difference in Heuristic Decision - Making Style of Principals. The differences are more in favor of principals from Pharmacy and Education faculties. This indicates that principals from Pharmacy and Education faculties are higher in Heuristic Decision - Making Style than other faculties. This imply that they exhibit more openness, originality and tendency for seeking consensus. They move away from Hierarchical structure and their emotional and social tone is relatively relaxed. Their decisions are more creative type.

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