

**Female School Heads Perceptions about the Importance of Teacher
Leadership in Secondary Schools of Pakistan**

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate how female school administrators in Pakistan see the value of teacher leadership in secondary education. The purpose of this research is to investigate the immediate and long-term benefits that teacher leadership can have on student learning. This study used a descriptive qualitative n=2 research design. The findings of this research might be used by school administrators and other school leaders to develop policies and procedures that inspire their employees and ultimately improve student achievement. It will also aid in gaining a more holistic view of the state of gender and leadership studies in Pakistan's academic community.

Purpose of Research

The significance of teacher leadership in schools was examined in this research of the perspectives of Pakistani female school principals. This investigation of principals' viewpoints adds to the literature on the importance of teacher leadership in and out of the classroom. Understanding how school administrators' value leadership and teamwork among teachers is crucial to improving education outcomes for kids. The study is significant for the Pakistani setting since school principals have considerable sway on their employees and pupils. The thesis might read, "To assess how Pakistani female school principals value teacher leadership in secondary schools."

Research Question

- How do Pakistan's female secondary school principals feel about teacher leadership?

Research Significance

This research contributes to the growing body of literature on the topic of women in leadership roles in the classroom. The results of the survey show that principals agree that teachers should take on leadership roles in secondary schools. It has also shown the views of school administrators on the importance of teacher leadership and its long-term benefits for pupils. There are two reasons why these results are a significant addition to the literature: First, in the last four years, no studies have been conducted in Pakistan on the topic of gender and teacher leadership. The second is the need for teacher leadership to be adopted in secondary schools and the dearth of internationally significant research in this area. The study's findings might be used to fill in the blanks in future teacher leaders' preparation courses.

Scope of Research

This study's focus is on educational institutions in Lahore, Pakistan, and the province of Punjab. Female principals of highly regarded secondary institutions in Lahore are the subjects of this study. This research explains why teacher leadership is essential in the classroom and how it may be used to improve student achievement. Two secondary schools in Lahore, Pakistan, will be the primary study sites for this project.

Literature Review

Key factors of the current investigation and findings from previous studies on the effects of gender and leadership styles on classroom instruction are presented in this chapter.

Leadership

Every person has his or her own idea of what leadership entails, hence there is no universally accepted definition (Bush, 2003). Leadership entails inspiring those one is accountable for and assisting in their efforts to improve the group or institution. In order to better an organisation, a competent leader will collaborate with others to achieve their goals. Finding, nurturing, and encouraging future leaders ought to be the top priority of each effective leader. Leaders may make a difference at every level of an organisation, not only at the very top.

Teacher Leadership

The major focus of educational leadership literature is on making a teacher, rather than developing a teacher into a leader (Brownlee, 1979). Leadership among educators is not a novel idea. For a long time, educators have filled the positions of team and department heads, but without truly leading their teams or departments or taking on the duty of inspiring their colleagues to work towards the school's betterment (Harris & Mujis, 2005). It's commonly believed that only teachers should be in charge of classrooms and that only school administrators should have administrative responsibilities. The value and need of leadership within an organisation has been highlighted by recent research.

Importance of Teacher Leadership

There are several reasons why teacher leadership is crucial. Teachers are the ones closest to their pupils, thus it's in their best interest to have a say in school policy. Teachers are in the front lines

and have the most up-to-date information about their kids. While schools have statistics and data teams to analyse data, it's not always easy to tell which group or subgroup is struggling without taking a closer look. It has been argued that a leader's job is to create an office environment that encourages innovation, knowledge sharing, and productive work. The leader may not always be able to influence the work environment's complexity or appropriateness, but he or she may affect the working conditions and the employees' motivation to improve and grow (Sokol, Gozdek, & Figurska, 2015).

Teacher Leadership Model

The present study will adhere to the Danielson 2006 model of Teacher Leadership, which is based on the idea that "The components of teacher leadership in this model affect school culture through the creation of new relationships with fellow teachers, schools, and communities to prepare teachers to deal with the 21st century" (Hamzah, Asri, Noor, & Yusof, 2016) .

Key Findings of Prior Researches

Over the course of the previous two decades, several researchers and educators have studied and investigated the topic of Teacher Leadership. Research has conclusively demonstrated that effective school reform begins with teachers in a leadership role. Teachers are second only to parents as the primary source of inspiration, guidance, education, and caring for their children. Teachers have a crucial role in developing and maintaining an atmosphere conducive to learning. Leaders in the classroom help both themselves and their colleagues develop by collaborating with one another and exchanging ideas for enhancing their classroom management and instruction. According to the findings of the current research (Faiza & Arris, 2021), teacher leadership is a crucial factor in raising both school and student achievement. According to

research (Hamzah, Asri, Noor, & Yusof, 2016), effective classroom leadership has far-reaching consequences for students' academic performance in a classroom.

The literature on teacher leadership is only now starting to appear. However, the conventional idea of a leader is that only someone without any teaching responsibilities may be a leader, and vice versa for a teacher. However, things have changed, and the notion of teacher leadership has evolved, calling for teachers to work together and collaborate in order to boost student achievement and the quality of their schools (Silva, Gimbert, & Nolan, 2000).

Data Methodology

The ontological assumption underlying the research paradigm I choose for this investigation is grounded in the constructivist tradition. It is assumed ontologically that principals' views on teacher leadership and its significance do not exist. These thoughts are entirely conceptual and live just in one's head (Delanty & Strydom, 2003). Thus, I pieced together the truth from the comments of the school administrators' perspectives on teacher leadership.

Research Design

The study employed a qualitative, descriptive approach to research. Female school administrators' perspectives on the value of teacher leadership and its practical application are the focus of this research. Because it allows researchers to get to know their subjects and how they think about the topics at hand, qualitative descriptive research methods were favoured (Sandelowski, 2000).

Sampling

In this investigation, school administrators' opinions were sought using a non-probabilistic purposive sampling strategy. Due to the limited sample size, the study included just two female secondary school principals from Lahore, Pakistan.

Instrumentation

To get insight into the viewpoints of school administrators, an interview format with three free-form questions was used. Two questions made up the entirety of the interview:

1. What does it mean to be a leader in the classroom?
2. Why do secondary schools require teacher leadership, and what role does it play?
3. What can you do to help the teachers who have the potential to become school leaders?

Both participants were interviewed, and their comments were gathered by email. Both respondents were guaranteed complete anonymity in their separate studies.

Data Interpretation

In vivo and descriptive coding was used to decipher the results of the current investigation. The collected data from the answers to the questions were read and reread several times before the final codes were written.

Research Findings

The following are the answers to the interview questions asked of female Pakistani secondary school principals.

Female School Head 1

1) How do you define teacher leadership?

A teacher leader, in my view, is one who actively seeks to improve their teaching both within and outside the classroom. You are not only a leader for your kids but also for your fellow educators, therefore your job extends outside the classroom.

2) Why is there a need of teacher leadership and why is it important in the secondary schools?

Being a teacher leader is crucial to me because it allows me to lobby for the kinds of improvements I've observed in my classroom and that I believe are necessary, but which legislators seem mostly oblivious to. Showing others what they can do to turn their communities around is incredibly motivational. Pupils who are underserved need someone to speak up loudly on their behalf, and educators must be ready to take risks for their pupils in order to create a more conducive learning atmosphere.

3) What can you do for the potential teacher leaders at your school?

If planned properly, teacher leadership has the potential to completely transform classrooms and schools. I may choose a group of outstanding educators to serve as role models for the rest of my school's student body. Both the teacher leaders and the students will benefit from this, increasing the likelihood of their success. I can contribute to a more secure teaching force by providing

incentives for educators to remain in the profession and assist their colleagues in developing their skills. As the head of the school, I am responsible for not only considering how to best provide support for teacher leaders but also for reaching out to the faculty to find out who among them feels prepared to take on such a position. Perhaps this will encourage them to keep on, seeing this as a chance.

Female School Head 2

1) How do you define teacher leadership?

A teacher leader serves in several roles, including those of coach, mentor, observer, and cheerleader for colleagues and students. Teacher leadership, in my opinion, is a special position in which an educator applies what they have learned in the classroom to the larger school community and beyond.

2) Why is there a need of teacher leadership and why is it important in the secondary schools?

Teachers have the most direct contact with the most important part of the equation: the pupils. Teachers have the unique ability to connect with their pupils, impart knowledge, and provide emotional support like no one else. In my school, teacher leaders have a significant role in determining crucial matters, such as the creation and modification of educational programmes.

3) What can you do for the potential teacher leaders at your school?

Well, there are plenty of opportunities for teachers to develop their leadership abilities, even if I can't bring them all at once for professional learning. To ensure that every educator has the chance to excel, we must utilise teacher leadership and robust models of professional

development. I have the ability to identify the most promising educators in my school and provide them with opportunities to develop their leadership skills through participation in workshops and seminars.

Data Analysis

Due to the limited scope of the investigation, novice coders were used. By comparing the two sets of codes and drawing conclusions about the underlying themes, we have. Codes were taken from the responses of both groups, and those categories were used to generate themes.

Respondent	Codes	Themes
1	Effectiveness In & out of classroom Leader for students & teachers Disconnection between policy makers & education Advocate for students Powerful in communities Better learning environment Game changer New level of achievement for students & teachers Stable teacher workforce Incentivizing Opportunity Responsibility	Teacher leader effective inside and outside classrooms Teacher as an advocate for students Teachers provided opportunity for leadership responsibility

<p>2</p>	<p>Coach Mentor Observer Supporter Unique role Extending & applying learning Outside class Across school</p> <p>Closest to a piece of puzzle Connection with student Support Students Involved in decision making Changing or creating curriculum</p> <p>Professional learning Deserve opportunity Exceptional Leveraging teaching leadership Professional learning Educational workshops Seminars</p>	<p>Teacher leader considered a unique role for extending the learning outside class</p> <p>Teacher leader closest connection to students</p> <p>Exceptional teachers deserve opportunity for leadership roles</p>
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The research question could now be answered.

- How do Pakistan's female secondary school principals feel about teacher leadership?

Effective Teacher Leader inside and outside Classrooms

Both participants' responses show that female principals value teacher leadership in secondary schools. This is because an effective teacher leader is one who can influence students both in and out of the classroom.

Closest Connection to Students

Both participants' responses show that female principals value teacher leadership in secondary schools. This is because teachers are familiar with their students and may utilise this knowledge to inform curricular decisions.

Exceptional Teachers deserve Opportunity

According to the data provided by both respondents, teacher leadership is seen favourably by female secondary school principals since it provides both a challenge and a chance for outstanding educators.

Discussion

Findings from this study's focus groups with two female school principals suggest that teacher leadership is more than just a job description; it's also a set of responsibilities that extend beyond the classroom. According to the Danielson (2006) model of Teacher Leadership, which was adopted for this study (Hamzah, Asri, Noor, & Yusof, 2016), a teacher leader is someone who builds relationships with their peers, schools, and communities in order to help their fellow educators get ready for the challenges of the twenty-first century. When teachers work together and take what they've learned in the classroom into the wider world, they create a collaborative school culture led by a teacher leader. A community might gain motivation from hearing a teacher leader talk about their job. Both respondents' perspectives on teacher leadership were interconnected in this study on female school administrators' perspectives. Leaders in the classroom, both parties agreed, have responsibilities that extend beyond the classroom. Also, teacher is the most connected with the students as they are with them in the classroom so they

know what students want and how can they achieve better results in the long run. So they play a major role in making decisions and sometime designing and modifying the curriculum and then translate it to other teachers as well. Teacher leaders develop and enhance their skills and help in the growth of their colleagues as well as themselves. Teachers deserve the opportunity to be exceptional.

The findings of the present study shows that a teacher leader can be a great change agent by becoming the change agent for their school by helping their peers and coaching them so that they can contribute in producing great outcomes for the school. This would help students achieve good results and help in the students' efficacy in the long run as well. Furthermore, the findings also showed that teacher leadership is defined as one of the most important components in improving a school's and students' performance and that it is very important in today's education system (Harris & Mujis, 2005). This is because teacher leadership is described as one of the most significant components in increasing the performance of a school and its pupils. Teacher leadership, according to the findings, involves creating an environment where educators feel welcome and have the authority to make decisions based on the school's strategic goal. It's about giving individuals the tools they need to do their jobs in a way that helps realise that vision and has a constructive effect on students' development as learners and as achievers. The effectiveness of both school administration and student learning is directly tied to the quality of teaching. Therefore, a teacher's leadership role has far-reaching effects on student achievement (Smylie, Conley, & Marks, 2002).

Conclusion

As an education management major, I recognised the need for qualitative research methods and used them well. I am now better able to present and write clearly on the subject at hand. I was able to collect data, analyse it, and apply it to shape the way schools operate today.

As this was a pilot study based on only two interviews, we may conclude that teacher leadership entails taking the initiative not just in the classroom but also in the wider school and community settings. The best method to improve our schools and the lives of our children, in my opinion, is via teacher leadership. When we choose to lead instead of avoid responsibility, when we choose to let our courage guide our actions instead of our fear, and when we choose what is right instead of what is easy or convenient, we become the kind of leaders who can prevent and solve problems, improving the system as a whole.

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