CrossMark | Cite Us

Role of Headteachers as an Instructional Leader

Muneeba Tahira [*] | M. Imran Yousuf [†] | Abdul Saboor [‡]

Abstract: *To create a better grasp of the important concepts, topics, and difficulties in the area, this paper evaluates the current theoretical and empirical literature on the headteacher as an instructional leader. We investigated the role of the "headteacher as an instructional leader" in this study. We provided a working definition of instructional leaders, discussed the various roles played by headteachers in educational institutions, identified challenges faced by headteachers, identified gaps in current knowledge in the field, and analysed data collected from workshop participants from across Pakistan. A 19-item questionnaire was utilised as a data-gathering instrument. Analyses were carried out to understand more about the job of the headteacher and the obstacles that he or she faces. The paper concluded with recommendations to address the problems that headteachers encounter in order to improve their efficiency and effectiveness as instructional leaders.*

Introduction

A school's principal is a teacher, administrator, coach, and mentor who is involved in all aspects of the school's operations. The principal's role has changed over time, from a lone top-down authority charged with saving failing schools to an effective leader who inspires students and staff to convert the school into a learning environment that extends beyond the classroom (Hallinger, 2015). Even though the principal is still the school's official leader, leadership nowadays is dispersed among a variety of people and situations - it's more like patterns of influence among diverse actors. How this influence promotes leader and teacher growth (and, in some situations, parent learning) in ways that increase all kids' engagement, learning, and well-being determines the success of leadership. This isn't due to the efforts of a single person.

When the principal diffused leadership, he did not cede authority to others while remaining uninvolved in classroom activities. Interacting with teachers and developing appropriate learning tools, routines, and processes are all necessary steps (Timperley, 2011). The school leader's influence on classroom instruction is mediated more by the school's culture and modelling than by direct monitoring and assessment of instructors, according to research undertaken over the previous 25 years (Reeves, 2008).

An instructional leadership strategy is defined by a moral purpose centred on promoting profound student learning, professional investigation, trusting relationships, and finding evidence in action (Timperley, 2011). Strong leadership includes things like creating a safe and secure learning environment, as well as effective interventions for students in need, catching exceptional teachers doing things correctly, and supporting them with genuine gratitude and emotional intelligence.

Educational leadership encompasses a wide variety of responsibilities and is more than a title on a company's organisational structure. Leadership at all levels has been found to have a positive impact on organisational health in

---

[*] Ph. D Scholar, Department of Education, PMAS-Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi, Punjab, Pakistan. Email: muneeba.tahira05@hotmail.com

[†]Chairman, Department of Education, PMAS-Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi, Punjab, Pakistan.

[‡]Dean, Department of Social Sciences, PMAS-Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi, Punjab, Pakistan.

general and student accomplishment in particular, both in terms of quality and practice (Reeves, 2008).

According to Helen Timperley, if principals are to guide teacher learning and advancement, they must know their class of teachers. They must be aware of what teachers already know and can do, as well as when they must learn new material. They must also be able to distinguish between instructor and student learning and utilise this knowledge. Principals learn how to lead teacher development and growth when they participate in a cycle of inquiry for leadership learning (Timperley, 2011).

The Rationale of the Study

In light of the introduction and past study, it was decided that the function of headteachers as instructional leaders should be investigated. We can educate our young generation to tackle the difficulties of the competitive world around us by focusing on education, the environment, and school leadership in today's fast-changing world. We can instil principles and provide instruction at the individual level so that children can grow into responsible citizens and economic backbones (Alam, 2012). This work of generational grooming can only be accomplished if headteachers play a key and dynamic role in the classroom as instructional leaders. As a result, a research study is urgently needed to determine the role of headteachers as instructional leaders. The second goal of this research is to look into the issues that headteachers experience when it comes to communicating their function as instructional leaders. As a result, the study's goal is to uncover the gaps in headteachers' roles as well as to look into measures to make them more successful (Bass, 1985).

Significance of the study

This research will give students a thorough grasp of the terms "headteacher" and "instructional leader" in general, as well as in the context of schools. The investigation will also reveal the flaws in the function of the headteacher in order to identify corrective actions.

By promoting instructional leadership in schools, the study will benefit students, teachers, and administrators. Because there is very little study on this topic in Pakistani schools, this work

will add to the literature on instructional leadership in educational settings. The findings of this study are also intended to provide useful guidance for school academic development in terms of raising awareness of the position of the headteacher as an instructional leader in Pakistan (Tahira & Haider, 2020).

Objectives of the study

The study's goals were to:
1. investigate the role of the headteacher as an instructional leader.
2. To determine the difficulties that head instructors encounter.
3. Make proposals to address the issues that headteachers encounter.

Delimitation of the study

Due to scheduling constraints, the study was limited to participants in the 11th Four Week National Training Program on Educational Leadership and Institutional Management (ELIM) in Islamabad (January 29th, 2018 to February 23rd, 2018). Because data collection from the field was not possible, the training participants were emailed a questionnaire, which was collected during the session.

Literature Review

As a result, the capacity to work with others has become a defining characteristic of leadership. Teacher leaders must enlist the help of their peers, build consensus across various groups of educators, and persuade others of the importance of what they're proposing and the long-term feasibility of their bigger reform strategy. They should be praised for their ability to teach (Bensimons, 1993). They must also recognise the need of focusing on those components of the school's curriculum that will significantly boost student learning.

Certain personality features and attitudes make certain people ideal candidates for teacher leadership roles. Effective teacher leaders are open-minded and accepting of different points of view. They exude self-assurance, determination, optimism, and zeal. They don't give up and don't let failures derail an important project. They, on the other hand, are versatile and ready to try a new tactic if the old one doesn't work (Bajunid, 1996).

Teacher Leadership

Three crucial components of school life are aided by teacher leaders. This involvement may take place within the teacher leader's own department or team, throughout the school, or beyond the school in each area (Coles & Southworth, 2005). There is no such thing as an "advanced" setting; each has its own set of requirements and necessitates the use of specific talents and abilities.

Role of Head Teacher

For the school to run correctly and successfully in accordance with the expectations of the students and staff, the Head Teacher has a variety of tasks. The ten responsibilities listed below are only a few of the many ways that principals can help their schools become more successful (Mestry, Moonsammy, & Schmidt, 2013).

Resource Provider

As instructional leaders, teachers can help their colleagues by distributing educational materials. They include websites, educational materials, textbooks, and other resources for use with students (Siamoo & Peter, 2013). Articles, publications, lesson or unit plans, and assessment tools are all examples of professional information that can be shared.

Instructional Specialist

An instructional specialist aids colleagues in implementing effective teaching methods. This help could take the shape of diversified instruction ideas or collaborative class preparation with other teachers. Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock (2001) recommend that teaching experts conduct research into evidence-based classroom practises, evaluate which instructional approaches are ideal for their school, and communicate their findings with their colleagues.

Curriculum Specialist

Maintaining uniform curriculum implementation across a school requires an understanding of topic standards, how different curriculum components interact, and how to use the curriculum in planning instruction and evaluation (Kaur et al., 2014). Curriculum specialists assist teachers in establishing standards, adhering to the

curriculum they have chosen, developing shared assessments, and utilising common pacing charts.

Classroom Supporter

Classroom supporters aid teachers in integrating new concepts into the classroom by performing a lesson, teaching, or watching and providing feedback. Peer consultation enhanced teachers' self-efficacy (confidence in their own talents and capacity to successfully confront teaching and learning challenges) as they reflected on practice and evolved together, and it also established a bias for action (growth through collaboration) on their behalf (Blase & Blasé, 2006).

Learning Facilitator

Teacher leaders are also in charge of coordinating professional development opportunities for their peers. When teachers collaborate and learn from one another, they may concentrate on what directly improves student learning. Their professional development becomes more relevant, centred on teachers' classroom work, and aligned to help children bridge learning gaps. Isolationist traditions abound in many schools, yet such learning groups have the power to overcome them.

Data Coach

Despite having a wealth of information at their fingertips, principals rarely use it to guide classroom instruction (Hyland, 2007). Facilitating conversations can assist headteachers in facilitating conversations in which their colleagues analyse and apply data to improve education.

Catalyst for Change

Headteachers can be visionaries who are "never happy with the status quo but always looking for a better approach" (Larner, 2004). Teachers who execute the spark function are self-assured in their talents and dedication to lifelong learning. They ask questions to learn more about the students' progress.

Learner

The role of a learner is one of the most crucial tasks that headteachers have. Learners serve as role models for self-improvement, lifelong learning,

and using what they've learned to help other students reach their goals (Blase & Blase, 2006).

Roles for All

Leadership is demonstrated by headteachers in a variety of ways, some of which overlap. Some positions of leadership are formal and have particular responsibilities. Teachers take on new, more casual responsibilities when they interact with their students. Because of the variety of vocations available, teachers can choose ways to lead that match their talents and interests. Regardless of their roles, teacher leaders have an impact on the climate of their schools, support student learning, and encourage peers to practise.

Methodology

The research was descriptive, which means it was a survey. This type of research focuses on examining the current issue and addressing it in a systematic and organised manner. A survey design also evaluates a sample of a population to provide a numerical or quantitative description of trends, attitudes, and views. Based on the sample data, the researcher generalises or makes statements about the population. Creswell is a fictional character who appears in the film (Creswell, 2009).

Population

The population of the study were all participants of the ELIM training project conducted by Academy of Educational Planning and Management.

Sample

The sample size for this investigation was determined using Gay's formula (2009). We employed stratified random sampling techniques.

As a result, each province has deemed strata, and the entire population of each stratum was sampled (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009).

Data were obtained via a self-administered questionnaire encompassing demographic characteristics and 19 items, which was given to participants in the ELIM training project.

Research Instrument

A Likert scale questionnaire was created, which is often used in research questionnaires.

"The Likert scale is a psychometric scale commonly employed in research survey surveys." When responding to a given Likert questionnaire item, respondents on an asymmetric agree-disagree scale describe their level of agreement or disagreement for a succession of items. The range of the Likert scale captures the intensity of their feelings about a certain item. Through the analysis of multiple pieces, however, a pattern with scaled features develops."

According to Robson (1993), the procedure of conducting surveys through questionnaires is very successful and efficient because the information is provided in a relatively short amount of time and at a cheap cost. Because of these factors, the researcher chose a descriptive research approach and created a questionnaire survey instrument to evaluate the role of the headteacher as an instructional leader.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The percentage approach was used to gather, organise, and analyse the data for the current study, "Role of the Head Teacher as an Instructional Leader." the study's quantitative findings are presented and discussed. The details are as under:

Table 1. Population and sampling of Respondents for Questionnaires.

Respondents Group-A	Population	Sample	Questionnaires Distributed	Questionnaires Returned	Useable Questionnaires
Participants of ELIM	20	20	20	20	20

Table 1 from the research study for participants in the ELIM training project shows that the total number of respondents in the study is 20. A sample of one hundred percent (100%) of the population was taken. This sample included all training participants. All 20 participants gave good responses and returned the completed questionnaires.

Role of a headteacher

Table 2. The statistical examination of the role of a headteacher.

Item No.	Statements	Agree		Undecided		Disagree	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
1	I use students' performance and evaluation results to develop schools educational goals and programs.	18	90	2	10	0	0
2	I have developed a professional development plan for my school teaching staff.	18	90	0	0	2	10
3	I consult with teachers to solve classroom discipline problems.	17	85	2	10	1	05
4	I observe the teaching-learning process in classrooms.	20	100	0	0	0	0
5	I facilitate my teaching staff to develop new teaching practices.	17	85	2	10	1	05
6	I share the students' performance with parents or guardians on a regular basis.	14	70	01	05	05	25
7	I ensure the implementation of the timetable in the school.	20	100	0	0	0	0
8	I ensure equal work distribution on teachers as per their competencies.	16	80	2	10	2	10
9	I consult and share with headteachers of other schools in the area.	15	75	1	05	4	20

Table 2 revealed that 90% of respondents believe a head teacher's role is to use students' performance and evaluation results to develop educational goals and programmes for the school, as well as to develop a plan for teacher professional development and that 100% of respondents agree that a head teacher's role is to observe teaching-learning processes in the classroom and to ensure the school's timetable is followed. Furthermore, 85% of respondents felt that a head teacher's responsibility includes consulting with teachers to resolve classroom discipline issues as well as assisting teaching staff in developing innovative teaching approaches. In addition, 80% of respondents believe that a head teacher's task is to ensure that instructors accept responsibility for their students' learning results. While 75% of respondents agree that a head teacher's role as an instructional leader is to ensure that teachers take responsibility for their own professional development and discuss and share with other headteachers in the area. According to the data, 70% of respondents believed that a head teacher's responsibility as an instructional leader includes sharing students' performance with parents or guardians on a frequent basis.

Challenges Faced by headteachers

Table 3. A statistical examination of the challenges that a headteacher faces.

Item No.	Statements	Agree		Undecided		Disagree	
		F	%	F	%	f	%
1	Teachers in my school are habitual of absentees.	5	25	01	5	14	70
2	I have an adequate budget and resources in my school.	4	20	0	0	16	80
3	I have parental support and involvement in my school.	4	20	01	5	15	75
4	I have opportunities for my own professional development.	5	25	02	10	13	65
5	I have the powers to deal with poor students' behavior.	2	10	0	0	18	90
6	I have the powers to deal with the misconduct of teachers.	6	30	0	0	14	70

Item No.	Statements	Agree		Undecided		Disagree	
		F	%	F	%	f	%
7	My grievances are heard by senior management.	2	10	1	05	17	85
8	I am overburdened by work and responsibilities.	16	80	1	05	3	15

According to Table 3, 70 percent of respondents dispute that instructors are frequently absent, and 80 percent disagree that their schools have appropriate budgets and resources. Furthermore, 75% of respondents disagreed that their parents support and participate in their children's education. A head teacher's role is to consult with teachers in order to resolve classroom discipline issues and to assist teaching staff in developing innovative teaching practices (Coles & Southworth, 2005). Furthermore, 65 percent of respondents disagree that they have prospects for personal growth. Whereas 90% of those polled disagree that they have the authority to deal with problematic student behaviour. Furthermore, 70% of respondents disagreed that they have the authority to deal with teacher wrongdoing. 85 percent of those polled did not believe their complaints were heard by senior management. Eighty percent of respondents felt that work and obligations had overloaded them.

Discussion and Conclusions

Findings

1. According to the study's findings, 90 percent of respondents believe that a head teacher's role is to use students' performance and evaluation results to develop schools' educational goals and programmes, as well as to develop a plan for teacher professional development, while 100 percent of respondents believe that a head teacher's role is to observe teaching-learning processes in the classroom and to ensure that the timetable is followed.

2. The study's findings also revealed that 85% of respondents felt that a head teacher's responsibility is to confer with teachers to manage classroom discipline concerns and to assist teaching staff in developing new teaching techniques.

3. In addition, 80% of respondents believe that a head teacher's task is to ensure that instructors accept responsibility for their students' learning results.

4. According to 75% of respondents, a head teacher's function as an instructional leader is to ensure that instructors take responsibility for developing their teaching skills and that they consult and share with the headteachers of other schools in the area. According to the data, 70% of respondents believed that a head teacher's responsibility as an instructional leader includes sharing students' performance with parents or guardians on a frequent basis.

5. The study's findings also looked at the challenges that a headteacher has, with 70 percent of respondents disagreeing that instructors are frequently absent and 80 percent disagreeing that their schools have adequate budgets and resources.

6. In addition, 75% of respondents disagreed that their parents support and participate in their children's education. A head teacher's role is to consult with teachers in order to resolve classroom discipline issues and to assist teaching staff in developing innovative teaching practices. Furthermore, 65 percent of respondents disagree that they have prospects for personal growth.

7. In contrast, 90% of respondents disagree that they have the authority to deal with problematic student behaviour. Furthermore, 70% of respondents disagreed that they have the authority to deal with teacher wrongdoing. 85 percent of those polled did not believe their complaints were heard by senior management. Eighty percent of respondents felt that work and obligations had overloaded them.

8. The aforementioned findings and literature analysis may help people understand the importance of the head teacher's work as an instructional leader and the problems that they encounter.

Conclusions

Conclusions based on findings from data analysis revealed that the headteacher plays a significant role in the smooth operation of the institution and the improvement of its performance. As an educational leader, the headteacher has various roles to play and must be watchful due to multiple obligations. According to the current study, her many tasks include developing the school's educational goals and activities, as well as developing a professional development plan for the teaching staff to improve their performance. A headteacher is responsible for dealing with student discipline issues, observing the teaching-learning process in the classroom, and assisting teachers in developing their teaching skills and increasing students' learning results. The role of the headteacher also includes sharing information about children with their parents, implementing a timetable, distributing work evenly among staff, and consulting with other area headteachers.

The findings also indicated the challenges that headteachers face, such as a lack of resources, parental support, professional development opportunities, limited abilities to deal with students, and teacher misbehaviour. Another important issue investigated was that, despite their heavy workloads and responsibilities, the problems of headteachers are not heard by high management.

Recommendations

Based on data analysis and research findings, it is recommended that the following actions be implemented to assist headteachers in performing their duties efficiently and effectively. Following are some recommendations based on the findings:

1. Enough resources and funding may be provided to headteachers to ensure the smooth operation of the institution.
2. A comprehensive plan for parent counselling might be devised so that they are interested in their children's education and provide adequate support.
3. At regular intervals, different training programmes for head teachers' professional growth may be launched.
4. Headteachers may be given authority and obligations to deal with student and teacher difficulties.
5. A mechanism might be devised for senior management to hear the problems of headteachers so that they do not feel isolated.
6. Incentives for extra work and outstanding performance may be granted to head instructors.

References

Alam, S. (2012). Crafting leaders for educational change: Head teacher's perspectives. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Education, 2*(1), 193-210.

Bajunid, I. (1996). Preliminary explorations of indigenous perspectives of educational management: The evolving Malaysian experience. *Journal of Educational Administration, 34(5),* 50-73.

Bass, B. M. (1985). *Leadership and performance beyond expectation.* New York: Free Press.

Bensimons, E. (1993). *Redesigning Collegiate Leadership: Teams and Teamwork in Higher Education.* Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Blase, J., & Blase, J. (2006). *Teachers bringing out the best in teachers: A guide to peer consultation for administrators and teachers.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Coles, M., & Southworth, G. (2005). *Developing leadership: creating the schools of tomorrow.* Berkshire: Open University Press.

Gay, L. R., Mills, G. E., & Airasian, P. (2009). *Educational Research Competencies for Analysis and Applications.* Columbus: Pearson.

Glover, I. (2013). Play as you learn: Gamification as a technique for motivating learners. *World Conference on Educational Multimedia, Hypermedia and Telecommunications. 1,,* 1999-2008.

Hallinger, P. W. (2015). *Assessing instructional leadership with the principal instructional management rating scale.* Dordrecht: Springer.

Hyland, K. (2007). Genre pedagogy: Language, literacy and L2 writing instruction. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 16*(3), 148–164. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2007.07.005

Larner, M. (2004). *Pathways: Charting a course for professional learning.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Leithwood, K. H. (2008). Seven strong claims about successful school leadership. *School Leadership and Management 28(1),* 27-42.

Luo, W., Hogan, D., Tan, L. S., Kaur, B., Ng, P. T., & Chan, M. (2014). Self-construal and students' math self-concept, anxiety and achievement: An examination of achievement goals as mediators. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology, 17*(3), 184–195. https://doi.org/10.1111/ajsp.12058.

Marzano, R., Pickering, D., & Pollock, J. (2001). *Classroom instruction that works.* Alexandria: ASCD.

Mestry, R., Moonsammy-Koopasammy, I., & Schmidt, M. (2013). The instructional leadership role of primary school principals. *Education as Change, 17*(1), 549–564. https://doi.org/10.1080/16823206.2014.865990.

Pansiri, N. O. (2008). Instructional Leadership for Quality LearningAn Assessment of the Impact of the Primary School Management Development Project in Botswana. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership, 36*(4), 471–494. https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143208095789

Reeves, D. B. (2008). *Reframing Teacher Leadership to Improve Your School.* Alexandria: Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development.

Siamoo, & Peter, N. (2013). Developing the Instructional Leadership Skill for High School Principal in Tanzania: A Problem Based Learning Approach. *Dissertation and Thesis, 10,* 157-60.

Tahira, M., & Haider, A. G. (2020). Role of headteacher in the whole school development. *Turkish International Journal of Special Education and Guidance & Counseling, 9*(2), 1300 –7432.

Timperley, H. (2011). *Realizing the Power of Professional Learning.* New York: Open University Press.

Annex-I

Role of Head Teacher as an Instructional Leader Questionnaire for Head Teachers

Gender: 1. Female   2. Male

Age: 1. 25---35   2. 36----45   3.46-----55   4. 56--------60

Provinces: 1. Punjab 2. Sindh 3. KP 4. Balochistan 5. ICT Qualification: ------------------------------

Experience as Head Teacher:1 -3years, 4-6years,7-10years,11years or above Status: 1. Permanent 2. Contract

Please tick one.

S. No	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	I use students' performance and evaluation results to develop the school's educational goals and programs.					
2	I have developed a professional development plan for my school teaching staff.					
3	I consult with teachers to solve classroom discipline problems.					
4	I observe teaching-learning process instructions in classrooms.					
5	I facilitate my teaching staff to develop new teaching practices.					
6	I ensure that teachers take their responsibility for improving Teaching skills.					
7	I ensure that teachers take responsibility for their students' learning outcomes.					
8	I share the students' performance with parents or guardians on a regular basis.					
9	I ensure the implementation of the timetable in the school.					
10	I ensure equal work distribution on teachers as per their competencies.					
11	I consult and share with headteachers of other schools in the area.					
12	Teachers in my school are habitual of absentees.					
13	I have an adequate budget and resources in my school.					
14	I have parental support and involvement in my school.					
15	I have opportunities for my own professional development.					
16	I have the powers to deal with poor students' behavior.					
17	I have the powers to deal with the misconduct of teachers.					

S. No	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
18	My grievances are heard by senior management.					
19	I am overburdened by work and responsibilities.					