Global Educational Studies Review

GESR

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Assessment of Followership Styles Among Teachers Teaching in High Schools

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Abstract: *Teachers having effective followership styles are considered crucial for school success. However, school leaders are frequently observed complaining about the reluctant behaviour of many teachers in fulfilment of their professional responsibilities, which indicates the lack of teachers having an effective followership style. Therefore, the study investigated the proportion of teachers in terms of their followership styles, i.e. exemplary, conformist, pragmatic, passive, and alienated. A survey was conducted to obtain data from 1209 teachers selected through the two-stage random sampling technique. Data was collected using a self-developed scale to assess the teachers' followership. Results revealed that pragmatic followers are highest in number and alienated are the lowest. However, teachers having exemplary followership styles are at the fourth number with less than the desired proportion. Hence, authorities of teachers' recruitment and professional development may sufficiently focus on effective followership styles among the teachers.*

Key Words: Schooling, Teaching, Followership, Followership Styles

Introduction

Teachers are the most contributing agents to the success of any school (Luján, 2021). Teachers' efficiency is indicated through their commitment to the profession, supportive behaviour, and effective teaching (Fu et al., 2021). However, the supportive behaviour and commitment to teaching are caused by their satisfaction and happiness with teaching at the school level (Khun-inkeeree et al., 2021). Therefore, if teachers are not happy or satisfied in serving at the school level, they may present irresponsible behaviour that indicates a lack of effective followership. Kellerman (2008) explains followership as a position that is considered less influential, powerful, and authoritative than leadership. The display of leaders' roles as more important and influence-based is closely linked to organisations having structured leadership positions. This famous argument in academia causes less focus on the follower-centric approach to prevail.

The follower-centric approach assumes that effective leadership is the result of the mutual relationship between a leader and followers for the achievement of goals (Mannion et al., 2015). As earlier, Kellerman (2007, p. 1) asserts that "there is no leadership without followership". Similarly, Martin (2015) claims that the heart of successful leadership is the leader-follower relationship. Even in organisations where leaders are in more authority and power, the followers have the opportunity to promote the actions of the leaders (Hollander, 1992). Leadership prospers, giving identity, roles, and responsibilities to the followers (Kellerman, 2007; Martin, 2015). Moreover, Kotzé and Nel (2015) recommended the exploration of

antecedents of effective followership development among subordinates because there is little work available on this aspect.

Leadership effectiveness is basic to the success of schooling (Arshad et al., 2021). However, followership is "the willingness to go along with a leader" (Ricketts, 2009). However, followership, as a unique concept, was introduced as 'subordinancy' in the mid-1960s (Kellerman, 2008). Later on, in 1992, Robert Kelley, in his book, '*The Power of Followership*,' was the first who breaks the convention of focusing more on the role of leadership by presenting followership theory. First of all, it was Kelley (1992) who considered effective followership as the foundation of effective leadership.

Two major approaches to followership are preferred by the researchers (Arshad et al., 2021). The first studied followership as style based approach, and the second studied it as a trait-based approach. The followership styles are somewhat similar but nominated differently by different researchers. However, the most famous are the styles presented by Kelley (1992). However, the qualities of followership have little variation from researcher to researcher. However, competency, commitment, courage to question, and self-regulation are among the most frequent qualities of followership, according to Kelley (1992), Kellerman (2008), and Chaleff (2009).

Effective followership among teachers is considered an antecedent of school success because teachers positively influence the development of cognitive and social traits among students (Arshad & Zaman, 2020). However, the prevailing practices in schools and complaints of the school leaders indicate that the schools are working with a reasonable number of teachers having an undesired followership style. The presence of teachers having undesired followership styles in the school is no less than an emergency to focus and control things in time (Arshad & Zaman, 2021). Therefore, the study investigated the proportion of teachers in terms of their followership styles, i.e. exemplary, conformist, pragmatic, passive, and alienated.

Research Question

What is the percentage proportion of the teachers having alienated, passive, conformist, pragmatic, and exemplary followership styles?

Literature Review

Subordinates having effective followership styles are considered important for the success of any organisation. Ricketts (2009) defines followership of followers as "the willingness to go along with a leader". Moreover, Uhl-Bien et al. (2014) clarified the role-based approach to explain followership. They classify employees based on their roles in the institutions. Therefore, followership can be described as followership can be defined as a subordinate's response to the seniors in rank in an organisation. According to this concept of followership, teachers are the followers of school leaders, who are senior to them in the school education context. However, literature has presented a variety of clarifications to underpin followership, such as Merriam-Webster's (2009) dictionary recorded followership as "the capacity or willingness to follow a leader". This definition seems fundamental but not enough to understand the followership in the school education context because this definition shows the followers at a total subordination stage. The definition also shows a follower as a person, who blindly follows, what the leader is going to impose on him, and even in today's society, people have similar explanations if they listen to the word 'follower' at first. However, Kelley (1992) theorised followers as efficiently competent and partners of the leader in organisational matters. The explanation of Kelley seems most justified with the school organisation where the leaders are probably facing many issues without effective teachers as followers, and the teachers need those leaders to work effectively. While exploring antecedents of effective followership, theorists identified followership styles ranging from least to the most effective.

Among the followership theorists, the researchers most frequently use the work of Kelley (1992). However, leadership researchers are still lacking to place considerable attention on the importance of followership in an organisation. Bligh and Kohles (2012) highlighted a possible cause of paying little attention to followership is the misconception that followership is less important than leadership. However, followership should be studied appropriately because; Kelley (1992) believed that organisational success is approximately 80% attributed to the followers. However, Uhl-Bien et al. (2014) also highlighted the understudied concept of followership. Williams (2008) considered followership as the opposite side of the coin of leadership. In leadership theories, the follower is considered less important as compared to leaders (Avolio & Reichard, 2008). Carsten et al. (2010) explain that leaving the followers in the shadows of leaders forced the researchers to avoid followership discipline.

Models of Followership

Zaleznik, Kelly, Chaleff, and Kellerman were the theorists having remarkable work on followership. They have categorised followers in terms of their characteristics. This categorisation is based on characteristics of active physical and mental engagement ranging from lowest to highest level. The detail of the models/theories explored by the researchers is explained below.

Followership Model by Zaleznik

Zaleznik (1965), in his study of 'The Dynamics of Subordinancy', suggested recognising individuals as a follower rather than subordinates. Abraham Zaleznik was the first who presented the idea of followership through types of followers in 1965, using a 2x2 matrix. The axis of the 2x2 matrix is based on dominance vs submission, while the other is on active vs inactive behaviours with the leader. Zaleznik explored four categories of followers, i.e. impulsive, compulsive, masochistic, and withdrawn (Kellerman, 2008).

The first two types of followers are observed to work for dominance. However, compulsive followers have the least control over their activity to achieve the goal as compared to impulsive followers. On the other hand, the masochistic and withdrawn followers could be observed through submissiveness in their behaviour. However, the masochistic followers remain active but do not show any authority in the organisation. At the same time, the withdrawn followers have a lack of desire for control and remain inactive in the organisation (Kilburn, 2010). Zaleznik's effort to categorise followers provided the base for the researchers for further studies. The existing literature (e.g. Kelley's followership typology, 1992; Chaleff's followership characteristics, 2009; and Kellerman followership styles, 2007, 2008) is evident regarding the importance of Zaleznik's work on follower types. The next model of followership presented in this section is Kelley, and it is the most frequently cited one.

Kelley's Model of Followership

Robert Kelley's contribution to followership literature is the most important one (Jaussi et al., 2008) as this is the most cited work in this field as well (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). Kelley (1992) explained five followership styles, *i.e.* alienated, passive, pragmatic, conformist, and exemplary. He theorised these styles based on two followership dimensions: active engagement and critical thinking. On the dimension of active engagement, the followers are indicated as willing and available for all types of work, whereas passive followers are reluctant. To understand the detail of these dimensions, the following followership styles are presented with an explanation; however, a little understanding of them can be gained just by reading the nomenclature of Kelly's followership styles.

According to Kelley (1992), alienated followers do not like to participate in group work and organisation work. They consider themselves devil's advocates and remain cynical, and they show the least level of interest in doing their job. Moreover, when the organisation starts making progress, they

produce hurdles in progress and provide reasons to stop the continuity of good work.

Kelley also highlighted their approximate proportion as 15 to 25 per cent.

Table 1. Indicators of Different Followership Styles

Alienated	Passive	Pragmatist	Conformist	Exemplary
Intentionally resist the leader	Depend on leaders' thinking	Average performer	Good performer	Intellectual criticism of the leaders
Dissatisfied	Needs consistent supervision	Independent thinkers but rarely question the leader	Positive relationship with the leader	Like to serve more than duty
Absenteeism	Low enthusiasm	Moderately commitment	Avoid extra work	Always support the leader
Low performer	Avoid new task	Work in troublesome	Independently perform duties	Creative

Finally, based on these findings, Kelley (1992) proposed some essential qualities for effective followership and four of them are particularly critical. The first of which is self-management which supports a follower to work effectively even in the absence of the leader. The second is the commitment that the followers work beyond their job requirements. The third is the competence that they have professional skills and work on updating their skills. The fourth and the last is courage, that the followers should oppose or support the leader for the achievement of organisational goals. Kelley's theory is a highly cited work in the field of followership; however, the work of other researchers is essential to consider.

Chaleff's Followership Model (1995; 2009)

'The Courageous Follower' of Challef was published in 1995 after three years of Kelley's work on followership styles. Later on, Challef (2009) presented his model of followership typology. The model differs from Kelley's model as Challef presented the typologies as they should be instead of what the actual behaviours are exhibited by the followers (Crossman, B. & Crossman, J., 2011).

Similar to the existing typology, Chaleff's categorisation also provided a two-by-two matrix which means it also contains two dimensions of courageous followership

(Kilburn, 2010). The 1st is about the level of support provided by the follower to the leader. Later on, Chaleff (2009) named it an act of courage to support. The 2nd dimension is the willingness of an employee to challenge the leader on certain important issues and is named 'courage to challenge'. Chaleff's four followership styles are almost similar to Kelley's, but there is no place for alienated followers. Challeff (2009) named them "partners; implementers; individualists; and resources. Chaleff's model considers the implication of motivation and professionally developing followership skills, which are required for organisational success.

Kellerman (2007) views Chaleff's followership model in the book titled 'The Courageous Follower' as a source to empower followers. In Kellerman's words (2007, p. 5), this required "encourage them to actively support leaders they deemed good and to actively oppose those they deemed bad". The book claims that the importance of institutional or organisational success is followership instead of leadership. Moreover, Chaleff (2009) demanded proactive followers because they become paired with the leaders to perform their roles effectively.

Kellerman's Model of Followership

Kellerman (2008) believes that followership can be defined through their ranks and

behaviours as "a relationship (rank) between subordinates and superiors, and a response (behaviour), of the former to the latter" (p. 20). Opposite to the previous followership models with two dimensions of followership, Barbara Kellerman (2007) introduced a single continuum in the article published in Harvard Business Review. Then, she described the detail later on in the book "How Followers Are Creating Change and Changing Leaders (2008)".

Kellerman (2008) also claims the contextual nature of followership. She claims that followership and followership styles differ with the variation in organisational structure and situation. Kellerman (2007) accepts the foundational contribution of Zaleznik, Kelley, and Chaleff; however, he criticises their work based on the conceptualisation of leader-follower relationships. She considers followership as a unidimensional concept for measurement that is the engagement level for achieving organisational goals. The engagement continuum ranges from feeling and doing nothing to feeling engaged in the work of the organisation. Moreover, Kellerman (2008) believes that the relationship between

the leader and the subordinate can be observed through the engagement of the subordinate.

Kellerman (2007) categorises five follower types, "isolates, bystanders, participants, activists, and diehards". The typology of Kellerman (2007) and Kelley (1992) are almost the same. Isolates are similar to alienated; bystanders are similar to pragmatic; participants are similar to passive; activists are similar to conformists, and diehards are similar to exemplary followers. Kellerman (2008) differentiated the two basic purposes of followers, i.e. theoretical and practical. For theoretical purposes, it focused on a simple standard to differentiate the type of follower. Practically, it provides a different aspect to see the leader-follower relationship and suggest what they should need to improve for organisational success. Alone the identification of the type of follower is not enough and does not provide a clear solution.

Kelley (1992) presented the detail of followership styles in non-education organisations in his book "The power of followership; How to create leaders people want to follow and followers who lead themselves".

Table 2. Percentage of Followership Styles in Non-Education Organisations

Style of Followership	Per cent
Alienated	15-25%
Passive	05-10%
Pragmatic	25-30%
Conformist	20-30%
Exemplary	5-10%

Follower contributions are just as important as leaders; nevertheless, importance is given to leadership (Shondrick et al., 2010). Study shows that follower roles contribute to eighty per cent of an organisation's success, but leadership roles are prioritised in organisations (Kelley, 1992). Moreover, previous researches show that there is a wide gap between research on leadership and followership (Chaleff, 2009; Kellerman, 2008; Ye, 2010; Zogjani & Llaci, 2014). Furthermore, systematic reviews of articles, books, and conference papers show that leadership is a more popular area of the

the research compared to followership.

Over the past decade, Kelley's Followership Model has been used to investigate follower types within organisations (Al-Anshory & Ali, 2014; Oyetunji, 2013). Furthermore, research has also emphasised follower styles and organisational outcomes (Gatti et al., 2014; Morgan, 2014). However, not many researched the teachers' effectiveness as followers to school principals. Furthermore, it is suggested that more research on followership be carried out in educational contexts with different social and cultural backgrounds (Hinić et al., 2017).

Research Methodology

The study employed a descriptive research design to determine the proportion of followership styles among the teachers. The target population of the study comprises 1125 schools in 6 districts of the division Gujranwala, Punjab, Pakistan. A multistage random sampling technique was employed to select the sample. In the first stage, three districts were randomly selected. These three districts collectively have 765 high schools and 15309 teachers. Then, 25% of schools were selected from each selected district using SPSS random selection technique. Out of 765 high schools, 192 high schools were randomly selected, including 65 schools from district Gujranwala, 70 schools from district Gujrat, and 57 schools from district Sialkot were part of the study. In the third stage, 08 teachers from each school were randomly selected. The total sample size for the research comprised 192 high schools and 1536 teachers teaching in high schools.

Research developed a scale to assess followership among teachers because the existing scale lacks psychometric evidence (Favara, 2009; Tanoff & Barlow, 2002). The scale was initially validated through the judgment of fourteen experts, and the content validity index (CVI) was estimated at 0.79. Then piloting was conducted to run exploratory factor analysis and then confirmatory factor analysis. The finalised scale contains 16 items fulfilling the measure of unidimensionality that supports the researcher to use Kelley's (1992) procedure to nominate the followers as per their styles. The questionnaires were administered to 1536 teachers. However, 1209 responded to the scale.

Results

Frequency and percentage, along with a pie chart, are used to present the percentage proportion of the teachers based on their followership styles.

Table 3. The proportion of Teachers based on Followership Styles

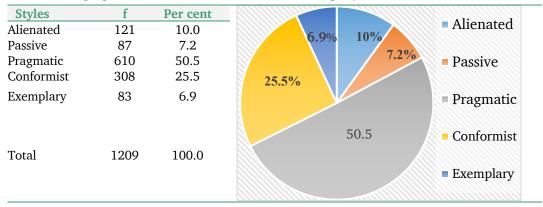| Styles	f	Per cent
Alienated	121	10.0
Passive	87	7.2
Pragmatic	610	50.5
Conformist	308	25.5
Exemplary	83	6.9
Total	1209	100.0

Table 3 presents frequency, percentage, and pie chart. These followership styles are created by dividing the overall score into 05 equal groups ranging from lowest to highest, and nomination is made as per followership theory of Kelley. The tables illustrates 121 (10%) alienated, 87 (7.2%) passive, 610(50.5%) pragmatic, 308 (25.5%) conformist, and 83(6.9%) exemplary followers. The pie chart shows the percentage proportion of teachers in terms of their followership styles. The pie chart

is attached with the table to make the proportion of teachers' followership styles more reader-friendly.

Discussion

Followership is very important for leadership success, and effective leadership is reflected through effective followership (Grint, 2010). The results indicate that the competence, commitment, courage, and self-management of the teachers are close to the scale mean score.

The reason may be the average level of EI among the school leaders, as Komives et al. (2013) claim that effective leadership and effective followership exist at the same time. However, the situation alerts the stakeholders because Hauge et al. (2014) assert the high dependability of school leaders on the teachers. Gooty et al. (2010) proved the negative emotional status of the followers restricts their performance.

The followership styles theory of Kelley (1992) is employed to nominate the followership styles for the teachers. Kelley (1992) provides the ratio of followership among employees in non-education organisations and guides that the ratio can differ from profession to profession and culture to culture. The results indicate that the highest percentage (50.5%) of followership style among the teachers is pragmatic, and the first rank of pragmatic followers is similar to Kelley's (1992) claim (25-30%), but the percentage of pragmatic followers is high among the school teachers in Pakistani context than the Kelley's (992) claim. Moreover, Oyetunji (2013) found that the most frequent followership style among university lecturers is pragmatic. Results indicate that the second in the hierarchy are conformist followers (25.5%). Kelley (1992) also ranks the conformist followers as the second number in terms of proportion, but the indicated proportion of findings is in the range of Kelley's (1992) claim of 20 to 30%. Results indicate that teachers having an alienated followership style are in the third position with a 10% proportion. Kelley (1992) also claims the rank of alienated followers is third with 15 to 25%. The findings of the study are similar in rank but slightly lower than Kelley's claim. The reason for the less alienated proportion can be that in the teaching profession, most of the followers are highly educated. Furthermore, the results indicate that the fourth and fifth in rank are the teachers with passive (7.2%) and exemplary followers. Kelley (1992) claims that the proportion of passive and exemplary followers is between 5 to 10%. The findings of the study are similar to Kelley's claim.

Conclusion

The most effective followership style is the exemplary followership style for the teachers, and the second most reliable category is confirmatory followers. However, the remaining three styles are below the standard because the teachers have to perform crucial duties that are directly linked to the students. Results indicate that the proportion of exemplary teachers is lowest among the five-followership styles. Exemplary followership is essential for teachers because employment in teaching is different from other professions. Teachers have to perform many tasks independently, similar to a leader. The low proportion of exemplary teachers affects not only the quality of teaching but also the improper support to the leaders for the progress of schools. The undesired level of effective followership among teachers may affect their performance along with the performance of the school leader and the learners. Therefore, the school education department and professional development organisations are recommended that they may assess the teacher's followership style during recruitment and professional development. Policymakers in general, and school leaders in particular, may enhance their level of trust in the teachers and rationally appreciate their efforts to develop competence, commitment, courage, and self-management among them. Moreover, concerning authorities may explore the antecedents of followership styles for the development of effective followership styles among the teachers.

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