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Innovative Leadership: Impact and Challenges in Secondary and Higher Secondary Institutes of Pakistan

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Authors:

Muhammad Pervez Khan: (Corresponding Author)
PhD Scholar, Department of Management Sciences, AL-HAMD Islamic University, Islamabad, Pakistan.
Email: (spk386@gmail.com)

Nazakat Ali: Assistant Professor, Department of Management Sciences, AL-HAMD Islamic University, Islamabad, Pakistan.

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Innovative Leadership: Impact and Challenges in Secondary and Higher Secondary Institutes of Pakistan

Abstract

This study investigates the impact of innovative leadership and identifies the challenges faced by such leadership in educational institutes in Pakistan. The study used a qualitative research technique of a research design for investigation and data was collected through open-ended questionnaire-cum interview. Innovative dimensions like Creativity/brainstorming, technology innovation, and skilled development innovation in teaching pedagogies have been focused on in this study. The results of this study suggest that there is a significant impact of innovative leadership dimensions on the implementation considering organizational improvement, efficiency, and performance. Challenges faced by innovative leadership were also discussed/identified through results that need to be addressed accordingly for the consistent growth in secondary and higher secondary educational institutes of Pakistan.

Keywords: Innovative Leadership, Creativity/Brain Storming Innovation, Skill Development Innovation, Technology Innovation, Innovative Leadership Challenges

Contents

Authors:

Muhammad Pervez Khan: (Corresponding Author) PhD Scholar, Department of Management Sciences, AL-HAMD Islamic University, Islamabad, Pakistan. Email: (spk386@gmail.com)

Nazakat Ali: Assistant Professor, Department of Management Sciences, AL-HAMD Islamic University, Islamabad, Pakistan.

Introduction:

Background Information

According to the study of Jabeen, Siddique, Mughal, Khalid, and Shoukat (2022), educational growth is based upon a suitable and satisfactory environment that contains different factors like motivation and improvement. Not only this, Shannaq et al. (2024) also mentioned that educational development can also be dependent on administration and technical activities. The cited author also pointed out that, innovative leadership can also contribute to the creation of such a climate which encourages innovative work, motivating employees and teachers, and adopting modern implementation methods. This study will explore the impact of innovative leadership

dimensions and the challenges to their implementation within the secondary and higher secondary educational institutes of Pakistan.

Statement of the Problem

In the knowledge area of innovative leadership concerning educational institutions around the world, many credible as well as interesting research studies both (qualitative and quantitative) have been conducted aiming to explore and establish a comprehensive approach to innovative leadership. The study of Mamula, Perić, and Vujić (2019) states that different approaches of research methodology were used by many researchers but only a handful of the researchers were able to explore new multidisciplinary techniques of innovative leadership. A few examples of such studies around the world used both quantitative and qualitative research techniques.

The study of Ngibe and Lekhanya (2019) investigated the effective implementation of innovative leadership in SMEs in South Africa. Another study by Bag, Gupta, Choi, and Kumar (2021) examined innovative leadership in terms of its role in the health sector during the pandemic. There are many other studies relating to examining innovative leadership that are not in the educational sector. The aim of the cited studies was to establish the role of innovative leadership in a particular area for implementation, efficiency, and effectiveness. However, studies in educational institutes in terms of innovative leadership and its impact are limited to a specific demography. For instance, the study of Othman and Abd Rahman (2013) was limited to Malaysian demography, the study of Zhang, Siribanpitak, and Charoenkul (2018) investigated innovative leadership in secondary schools in China, Al Sharija and Watters (2012) in Kuwait, Ridwanulloh, Huda, and Umam (2022) was in Indonesian schools, and last but not least the study of Moonsarn, Sanrattana, and Suwannoi (2019) was on the context of secondary schools principles in Thailand.

In the context of Pakistani educational institutions, only a handful of studies can be found that address the impact of innovative leadership on secondary and higher secondary educational institutions in Pakistan. According to Faisal et al. (2023) multiple models of leadership are being used however, none of those models were practiced in the educational institutions of Pakistan. Accordingly, the aim of this article is to establish the impact of innovative leadership in the educational institutions of secondary and higher secondary Schools as well as to investigate the challenges to innovative leadership styles in such organizations.

Research Objectives and Questions

1. The first objective of this research study is to examine the impact of innovative leadership in educational institutions in Pakistan.
2. The second objective of this research is to investigate the challenges faced by the implementation of innovative leadership practices/dimensions in the secondary and higher secondary educational institutions of Pakistan.
3. What kind of impact the innovative leadership can have on secondary and higher-secondary educational institutions in Pakistan?
4. What are the challenges faced in the implementation of innovative leadership practices/dimensions in secondary and higher secondary educational institutions in Pakistan?

Significance of the Study

As mentioned in the problem statement, there is a lack of research studies on innovative leadership in the context of educational institutions in Pakistan. This research tends to contribute to the knowledge area of innovative leadership. Due to the need to develop leadership in the educational institutes of Pakistan, this research creates a pathway for the development of such institutions in terms of implementing change and creating equity for the ongoing reforms in Pakistan.(Sarwar, Zamir, Fazal, Hong, & Yong, 2022). This study has basically two points of significance, The first one is the theoretical significance which is exploring the importance of innovative leadership and the faced challenges by this construct in secondary and higher secondary educational institutes of Pakistan. Secondly, the practical part of its significance will establish the need for innovative leadership due to its impact on said institutions and how to tackle the challenges faced by the implementation of innovative leadership dimensions in such institutions.

Literature Review:

Overview of Existing Research

In order to develop positive change in an organization, organizational innovativeness provides the process for that change (Kaya, 2021). The cited author also perceives that innovativeness is not limited to excluding only technology but involves bringing changes to the procedures practiced by educational institutions. Anwar, Zaman Khan, and Ali Shah (2019) also claim that technology in

organizational innovation supports the development of new processes and products for achieving superior performance. Therefore, in the increasing competition in the schooling industry, innovativeness is considered a key driver for achieving success and competitiveness, which is why this study is examining the impact of innovative leadership and challenges in Pakistani educational institutions.

According to Goh and Sigala (2020), diffusion also known as Roger's diffusion, is a process that communicates an innovation through specific channels in the social system of an organization. The reason for choosing this special type of communication is that the data or the messages are concerned only with new ideas and every member of that social system needs to innovate their own decision through the five-step mechanism of diffusion (Orr, 2003).

The study by Gruenhagen and Parker (2019) stated that diffusion of innovation is not a specific process therefore, it is not a one-size-fits-all. So it seems that understanding and utilizing diffusion networks can aid strategy aimed at quickly inducing system-wide change (Orr, 2003). According to the study of Makhdum, Elahi, Faisal, and Tariq (2022) the quality of a person, ensuring the wellness of its team or followers selflessly is said to be leadership. Leadership is a skill, that is considered to be a soft skill, that leads to the success of an organization in terms of, the development of the organization, expansion of the organization, and implementation of change in the organization. Mythili (2019) also identified some important leadership qualities which are fostering collaboration, building resilience and adaptive capacity, dispute resolution through dialogue, and engaging other concerned stakeholders. Diallo and Sukkar (2021) described leadership as a process through which a person influences its team or other persons to accomplish tasks and to achieve organizational goals more effectively and more efficiently. However, in an educational institution, achieving quality education is a complex phenomenon, and multiple factors like lecturers, students, and administrative staff, must be considered. Diallo and Sukkar (2021) also concluded that an innovative leader can have a significant impact on an educational institution depending on the innovative strategy of the leadership.

Key Theories and Concepts

Due to its significance, leadership is considered to be one of the most important soft skills of the 20th and 21st centuries. Multiple theories regarding leadership are available e.g. (Great-Man theory, Trait theory, Contingency theory, Style and Behavior theory, Process Leadership theory, Transactional theory, and Transformational Theory) however, only transformational theory will be discussed here. The reason for discussing this theory is the relevance of transformational leadership theory to this study in terms of implementing innovativeness through technology, brainstorming, creativity, and skilled innovation. Transformational theory unlike the other theories due to the alignment of the greater good, and the involvement of the followers, significantly impacts organizational performance and achievement of goals. According to the study of Nawaz and Khan (2016), transformational leadership can enhance the morality and motivation of both the followers and the leader as well. The advantage of transformational leadership is the engagement in interaction on common beliefs, values, and goals which is the exact kind of leadership needed for the secondary and higher secondary educational institutions of Pakistan.

Innovative leadership is the combination of multiple leadership dimensions aiming to motivate and influence the employees in order to develop creative ideas whether it be a product, service, or results (Diallo & Sukkar, 2021). The study of Nebieridze (2023) concluded that, in order to achieve success, innovativeness in school leadership and management must be adopted through the use of knowledge, experience, and insight into the educational institution for effectiveness and efficiency as well. Faisal et al. (2023) investigated the technological aspect of innovation for its effect on competency along with decision-making in educational institutes. The results of the cited study suggest that innovative leadership prompted by technology has more effect on the success of such organizations. According to Cortes and Herrmann (2020), for the achievement of competitive advantage implementation of innovativeness is the key for an organization. As far as innovative leadership in educational institutions in Pakistan is concerned, the implementation can face multiple challenges in terms of technology, change, and other aspects of organizational behavior. Research findings of Erhan, Uzunbacak, and Aydin (2022) state that employee in an organization perceives leadership with digital skills positively as well, and they tend to adopt innovative behavior due to the leadership quality. The study of Memon, Joubish, and Khurram (2010) concluded that the quality of education in Pakistan is affected due to the improper transformation of teachers which is one of the key challenges in terms of implementing innovativeness using innovative leadership dimensions. An organization or an institution can have different types of challenges due to its role which

varies according to the strategy implementation. However, overcoming these challenges successfully can be a competitive advantage for an organization. The study of Paxton and Van Stralen (2015) identifies many elements that were the source of contribution for an organization. Interestingly, these elements are considered a significant challenge in secondary and higher secondary educational institutes in Pakistan.

Now as far as this study is concerned, few of the challenges faced by innovative leadership in educational institutions of Pakistan have been considered. The first one is the need for innovation in an organization, the most needed element of the 21st century. The second one is the building of capacity and proficiency in terms of utilization of technology for capacity, performance, and benefits. Thirdly, willingness for learning and adopting change, employees, of an organization must be willing to learn and ready to adopt changes in the organization. The fourth challenge is the commitment to navigate chaos and discomfort, this one in particular is considered the most important challenge in the educational institute of Pakistan due to the nature of innovation. The nature of innovation is to upset the patterns of an organization to which we are accustomed and the employees need to let go of the accustomed operations in order to innovate for effectiveness and efficiency (Paxton & Van Stralen, 2015).

Gaps in the Literature

The current study tends to fill the gap in the secondary and higher secondary educational knowledge areas. This gap consists of introducing the innovative leadership dimensions i.e. creativity/ brainstorming innovation, skilled development innovation, and embedding technology innovation in teaching pedagogies vis a vis impact on the quality of education in education institutions. Besides this, the identification of challenges faced in the implementation of innovative leadership dimensions needs to be explored. This gap has a link to the performance, effectiveness, and efficiency of said institutions in Pakistan.

Methodology:
Research Design

Every research has two frameworks first one is the theocratical framework work which is also known as literature and the practical framework which is the methodology selection (Neuman 7th edition). A research design is a combination of different procedures, techniques, and tools that will be operationalized during the study (Cresswell). According to the cited authors the selection research framework or research design is entirely up to the researcher. The methodology selection can and will be according to the needs of the study. Different approaches are available for instance, descriptive, explanatory, exploratory, etc. This study used the approach of explanatory for examine the impact and to identify the challenges faced by the leadership dimensions. This research will use a qualitative method for answering the research question. The reason for choosing qualitative methodology is due to the research objective which is the examine the impact of innovative leadership and investigate the challenges faced by the implementation of innovative leadership in secondary and higher secondary educational institutions. Another reason for the selection of the qualitative method is to extract as much data from a limited sample size. According to Hair, Risher, Sarstedt, and Ringle (2018) extracting data based on the experiences of a person can be done through the qualitative approach of a research design which is why this study is using the qualitative research methodology. Moreover, other studies e.g. (Othman & Abd Rahman, 2013) also used qualitative methods for the understanding of innovative leadership in educational institutes which makes this study eligible for adopting qualitative design.

Population, Sample, and Sampling

The targeted population for a research study plays an important factor due to relevance with the study because irrelevant data will be of no use, only a waste of time and resources. As per the requirement of this study and limited constraints, the targeted population for this study is teachers working in the secondary and higher secondary institutes within Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Sample size in research must be adequate to ensure credibility, generalizability, and viability. Accordingly, data have been collected by conducting 9x interviews from the targeted population. As far as the sampling technique is concerned, this study used a purposive non-probability technique which provides a filter for the population who have more than three years of experience. By this method, research /study facilitated in establishment of impact on the educational institute of Pakistan.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1

Conceptual framework of this study.
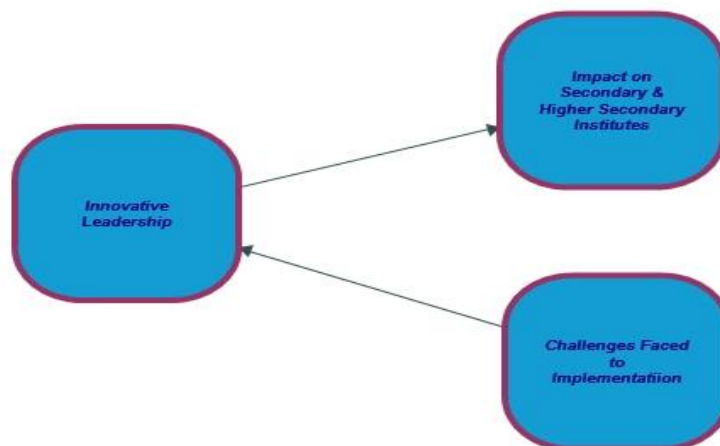
Data Collection Methods

This research study collected primary data through in-depth interviews using a semi-structured questionnaire with open-ended questions tool. To begin, demographic questions were asked about their age and number of years of teaching experience. Afterward, open-ended questions for the interview were created in accordance with the study's goals, and detailed responses were obtained. Besides, the researcher will also rely on probing questions to gather detailed responses. In the end, participants will be asked to share any remarks that would be useful for the study.

Data Analysis Procedures

As per the qualitative data set of this study, the analysis method for this study is known as the thematic analysis method. According to Byrne (2021), this method was found by Braun and Clarke in the early twentieth century. This particular method has a wide range of applications in different kinds of academic studies. The reason for using the thematic method of analysis is the establishment of a relationship between the innovative leadership impact and faced challenges in secondary and higher secondary educational institution in Pakistan. A phase process for the data analysis of the thematic method was proposed by Virginia Braun and Clarke (2012, 2019); V Braun and Clarke (2020); and Byrne (2021) which tends to facilitate the analysis for a researcher in a suitable manner. The thematic analysis method also helps the researcher to attend to and identify the

basic aspects of the ongoing study. The six phases of the analytical process used in the analysis for this study are as under:

Phase One: Familiarization of Data

As per the study of Clarke (2013) the data set was transcribed orthographically, took notes and other necessary sifting were made in order to identify appropriate information relevant to the research question. As the name of this phase speaks for itself, I familiarized myself with the data set by listening to the interview recording to develop an understating of the primary areas relating to the research objectives.

Phase Two: Generating Initial Codes

As per the study of Byrne (2022) themes can be extracted from the codes and coding is undertaken for the development of brief, shorthand descriptive, or interpretive labels from the dataset that may be relevant to the research questions. This process was carried out in a systematic manner with equal consideration for the identification of recent aspects in order to develop the themes.

Phase Three: Generating Themes

The phase of generating themes follows the phase of generating codes which establish the aggregated meaning across the dataset. The codes were reviewed and analyzed in order to combine them according to the shared meaning for the formation of themes and sub-themes.

Phase Four: Reviewing Potential Themes

In this phase, I conducted a recursive review of the eligible themes relating to the coded items from the dataset. This review was conducted based on a few questions suggested by Virginia Braun and Clarke (2012) for reviewing potential themes. These are the following:

- Is this a theme?
- If it is a theme, what is the quality of this theme?
- What are the boundaries of this theme?
- Are there enough data to support these themes?
- Are the data too diverse and wide-ranging?

Phase Five: Defining and Naming Theme

This is the decisive phase of the thematic framework which expresses each theme and sub-theme in relation to both dataset and research questions. Considering this I have identified and extracted the items which is used for the writeup in this analysis. The illustrations and descriptions are available in the results section of this paper.

Phase six: Producing Report

The distinction between phases five and six is quite confusing (Byrne, 2022). Because this phase is basically the inspection of the work done during the analysis. All the themes were connected in a logical and meaningful manner in order to develop a cogent narrative of the data. Relevant themes were developed, upon the defined themes during phase five, to the research questions and objectives.

Ethical Considerations

According to Suri (2013), the phases of ethics were considered for this research. Firstly, appropriate epistemological orientation was identified. Secondly, as the objective of research is an important aspect of credible research, appropriate research objectives were selected. Thirdly, the most relevant literature was searched. Fourthly, primary data was collected and the privacy of the participants was kept as per the criteria of research ethics. Fifthly, systematic and connected understanding was developed through thematic analysis. Finally, a proper result is generated which is the crux of research.

Results

This section entirely consists of the data analysis results, tables, and matrix relating to codes, thematic maps, spelling frequency presentations, and text queries. This section represents graphs, tables matrices, and diagrams according to the questions in chronological order.

RQ1. *What kind of impact the innovative leadership can have on secondary and higher-secondary educational institutions in Pakistan?*

In order to answer the research question, the data analysis was carried out in the manner /process as explained in the last section. After familiarizing with the data, the codes were generated, codes were categorized and then labeled according to the following table:

Table 1

Codes label for research question 1.

Proficiency/efficiency in Technology and Resources	Enhancing Performance and Learning	Organizational Improvement	Developing Individual Skills
- Use of Technology - Efficient Use of Resources	- Teacher Performance Improvement - Influence on Learning	- Interactive Change - Brainstorming Enhancement - Creating Diversity to Address Needs	- Motivation - Improvement in Management Skills - Transparency

For more comprehensiveness and credibility, the coding matrix was conducted in order to examine the relationship of derived themes with the case count.

The following graph matrix represents the relationship of the themes with the participants' points of view in terms of innovative leadership.
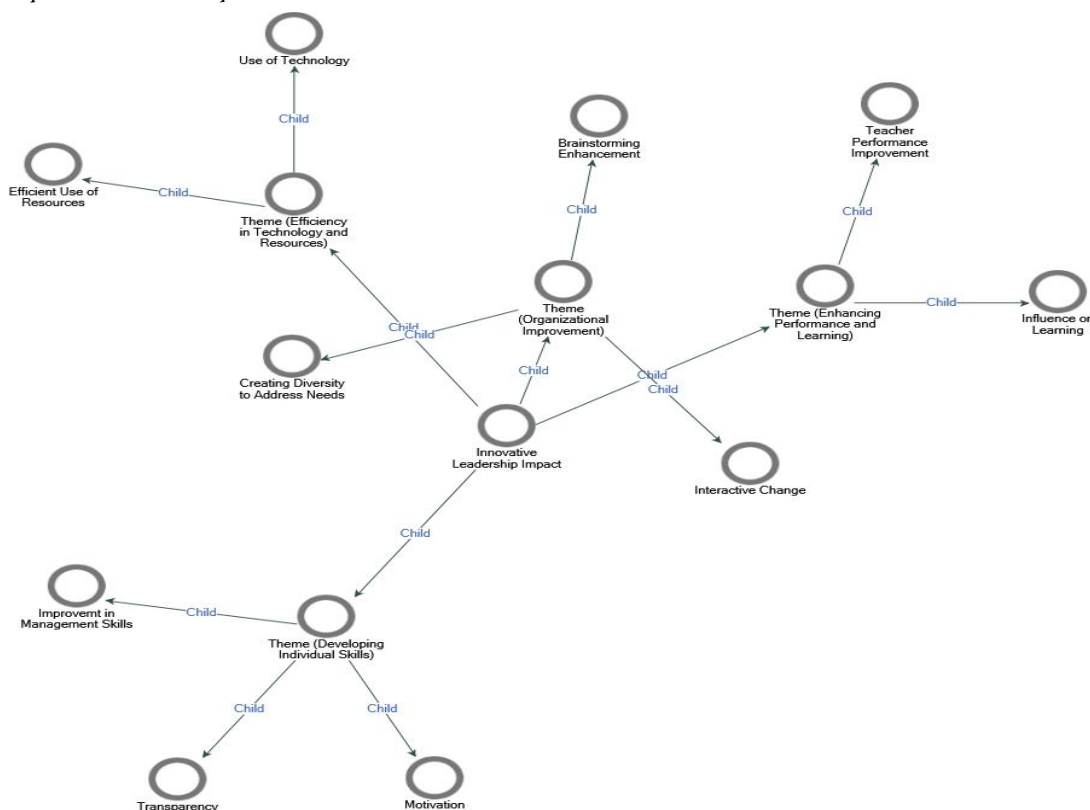
Figure 2

Coding matrix for themes research question 1
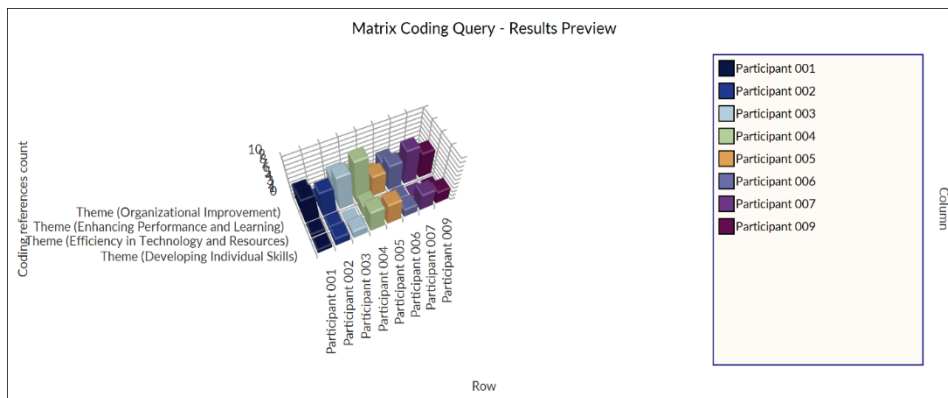
The next item is of thematic analysis of the research objective. The following figure represents the initial codes, themes, and the impact of innovative leadership on these themes. As this entire section consists of the results and its presentations, the detailed interpretation follows the next section.

Figure 3

Thematic map for research question 1.

After labeling the categorized codes and examining the relationship through matrix coding, another analysis was conducted in order to evaluate the frequency of the most pop-up/projected words through word frequency. The following figure represents the frequency of the words in the context of research question one which is the impact of innovative leadership in secondary and secondary institutes of Pakistan.

Figure 4

Word frequency of case count.

The following figure is also associated with the coding which in terms is known as text search query. It conveys the meaning of the most significant impact term which influences the overall impact of a concept that is under study. The term shown in the figure is improvement which is supported by a different set of qualities amplified by the innovative leadership dimensions.

Figure 5

Text search Query of improvement from case count.

Another term motivation is also extracted from the case count, which has significant importance in the impact of innovative leadership. Implementing the innovative leadership dimensions in the said institutes, the influence of motivation reaches the employees, teachers, and most importantly the students.

Figure 6

Text search query of motivation from case count.

Now coming to another main aspect of this research examination which is the analysis of the second research question. As explained earlier, the analysis process was conducted on the same principles simultaneously for both questions. The research question and results are the following:

RQ2. *What are the challenges faced by the implementation of innovative leadership practices/dimensions in secondary and higher secondary educational institutions in Pakistan?*

The codes, which are also said to be the sub-themes of qualitative research analysis, for the second research question are given in the following table. The codes are categorized accordingly and then labeled as resource allocation, social flaws, improper mechanisms, and incompetency. These challenges were identified in the implementation of innovative leadership practices/dimensions in the secondary and higher secondary institutes of Pakistan.

Table 2

Labeled themes for research question 1.

Resource Allocation	Resistance /Social Flaws	Improper Mechanism	Incompetency
▪ Lack of Resources	▪ Resistance/Social Barriers ▪ Lack of Privacy ▪ Less Inclusiveness ▪ Accountability (Social & Performance)	▪ Collaboration ▪ Inconsistency	▪ Improper Trainings ▪ Curriculum Implementation ▪ Compatibility ▪ Use & Access to IT

The matrix for the code was developed in order to examine the relationship between the identified challenges and case count which is illustrated in the following figure.
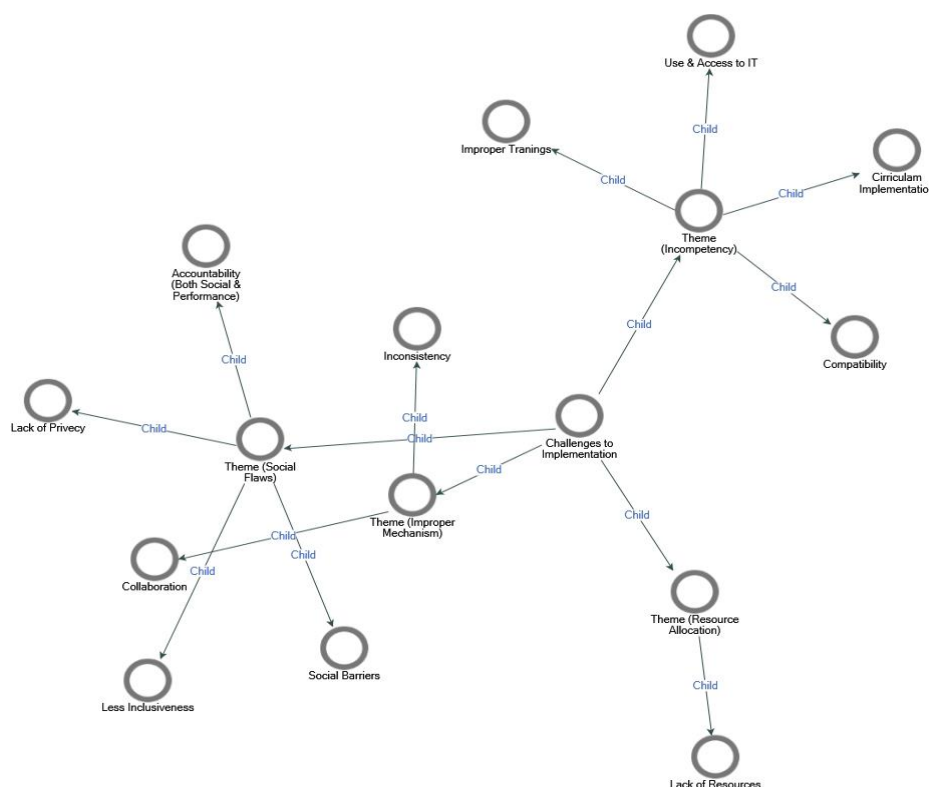
Figure 7

Coding matrix of case counts for RQ 2.
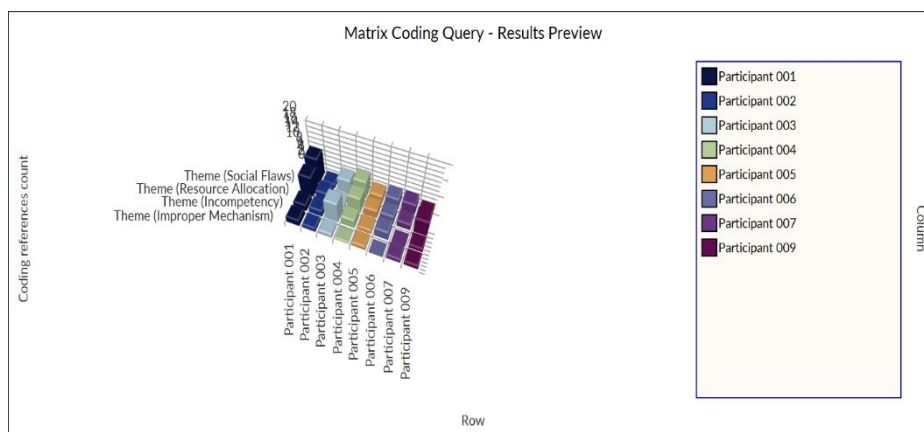
Thematic analysis for question two is represented in the following figure which reveals the derived themes from the data set also the sub-themes from the code count. Addressing research question number two the figure below represents the challenges faced in the implementation of innovative leadership dimensions are incompetency, improper mechanisms, resource allocation, and social flaws.

Figure 8

Thematic map for research question 2.

Similarly, word frequency was conducted for this second question as well. In the following figure, it illustrates the significance of resistance to change and resource constraints. The number of these two challenges was pointed out in the case count of the data set.

Figure 9

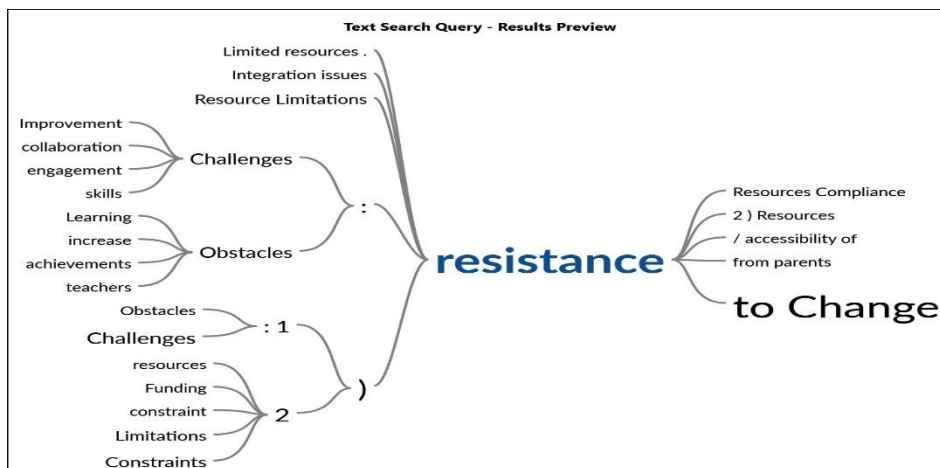*Word Frequency of code count for RQ 2.*

The term resistance, as mentioned and illustrated earlier, is identified as a significant challenge to the implementation of innovative leadership due to the data behind its support in the form of participant point of view shown in the figure.

Text query of resistance to change from code count.

Summary of Key Results

This section shows the total analysis and results of the analysis in a very comprehensive manner. This section addressed two of the research objectives. The first is to examine the impact of innovative leadership dimensions and the second one is to the challenges faced by the implementations of these leadership dimensions. The results consist of some key findings. Firstly, the innovative leadership dimensions have a significant impact on the overall performance of the secondary and higher secondary institutes in Pakistan. This impact can be seen in results through organizational improvement, enhancing the performance of learning, embedding technology & efficient use of resources, and the development of individual skills. The second is the identification of key major outputs like motivation of both teacher in performance and students in learning. Thirdly, the identification of challenges or barriers to the implementation of leadership which are, incompetency, social flaws, improper mechanisms, and inadequate resource allocations. Last but not least, major factors identified causing barriers to the implementation of innovative leadership practices are resistance to change, lack of resources, improper pieces of training, and lack of use of technology dovetailing with curriculum implementation.

Discussion:

Interpretation of Results

Every research analysis needs the interpretations of the researcher to clarify what things are and how is it carried out. After the results are generated, this section will explain them according to the criteria of the research objective and answer the research question. I will start with Table 1 which categorizes the codes of the research question one and then labels it accordingly. For instance, efficiency in technology and resources is a theme that is labeled for the codes of use of technology and efficient use of resources. The codes consist of participants' views about the impact of innovative leadership dimensions on the use of technology and the efficient use of available resources in the organization. And same goes for the rest of the themes for the research question one. A matrix shown in Figure 2 showcases the number of participants' perspectives about the derived themes in the context of innovative leadership and its impact. Figure 3 represents the relationship map of the themes and their sub-themes with the impact of innovative leadership dimensions on secondary and higher-secondary institutes in Pakistan.

Figure 4 clearly illustrates the significant impact of innovative leadership dimensions on organizational improvement and enhancement of the performance of teacher and student learning. The other themes, individual skills development, and efficiency in technology & resources, also have significance but unlike the first two. Then the text query was searched in order to find the relationship with the above-said impact shown in Figures 5, and 6. Both figures represent two concepts of Improvement and Motivations, which were extracted from the cease count, and have a relation with impact and challenges.

Now, this study also has another objective of examining the challenges faced by the implementations of innovative leadership dimensions. For that, table 2 starts answering research question two which categorizes the challenges faced by the implementations. The most dominant code count from the case count was a lack of resources /allocation within the organization. Then, the

challenge of the social flaw was also themed due to its codes of social barriers, lack of privacy, less inclusiveness, and accountability. The challenge of improper mechanisms for collaboration and inconsistency was also identified. Finally, incompetence is also identified due to improper training, curriculum implementation, compatibility, and most importantly due to advanced tech age, use, and access to information technology. The matrix shown in Figure 7, represents the significance of themes through code count from the case count in which the social flaw and resource allocation have much significance. Figure 8, draws a thematic map for the challenges identified and their relations.

Another analysis was conducted which was the word frequency of code count shown in Figure 9 which clearly illustrates the most significant challenge to the implementation of innovative leadership dimensions is resistance to change and Figure 10 provides the details of resistance.

Comparison with Existing Literature

The results of this study support Diallo and Sukkar (2021) due to the significant impact of innovative leadership dimensions on secondary and higher secondary institutes in Pakistan. Also, it supports the arguments of the cited author in terms of collaboration, influencing the effectiveness and efficiency of an organization. The results of this research also support the conclusion of (Nebieridze, 2023) about innovativeness adaptation in schooling organizations in order to achieve success. The results also show support for the study investigation of Faisal et al. (2023) which is the use of technology and its impact on educational institutes. Figure 5 supports the arguments of (Erhan et al., 2022) for the positive perception of employees through motivation.

Implications of the Study

This study can implicate multiple factors on the knowledge area of education in terms of research, organization improvement, organizational assessment, organization competitiveness, and organizational productivity /output. In research this study can provide direction for future research, developing mechanisms for greater organization's performance through innovative leadership practices/ dimensions.

Limitations

The main limitation is the number of participants who made themselves willing to interview. The number of participants from which data was collected was 11 in numbers. After transcription and translating only 8x interviews fulfilled the criteria of analysis from which the results were generated. Another limitation was the demographic range which was restricted to Islamabad and Rawalpindi region.

Suggestions for Future Research

This study was restricted to secondary and higher secondary education institutions of Rawalpindi and Islamabad with a prime focus on teachers and the resultant impact on learning. The future researcher should select students as the target population to ascertain their viewpoint on innovative leadership in education institutions besides widening the canvas to the provincial/national level. Another area can be to identify the impact of innovative leadership practices on the administration of education institutions or a combination of administrative staff and teaching faculty on the performance of the organization.

Conclusion

Innovative leadership has a significant impact on the performance of secondary and higher secondary educational institutions in Pakistan. Innovative leadership consists of positive dimensions/aspects that contribute significantly to shaping an organization's environment and resultant productivity as well as achievements. The effective use of technology innovation, skills development innovation, and brainstorming/creativity innovation will always yield the best results besides opening avenues for success. This study also identified challenges and barriers affecting the growth of institutions which need to be taken care of while implementing innovative leadership practices.

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