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Investigating Correlation between Principals' Leadership Practices and Teacher Morale

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ABSTRACT

Aim of the Study: This research study aimed to examine correlation between principals' leadership practices and teacher morale.

Methodology: A quantitative correlational research approach was adopted to conduct the study. Data were collected from 383 teachers based on a survey questionnaire from secondary schools in district Lower Dir, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Two scales: Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) and the Perdue Teacher Opinionnaire (PTO) were used as survey instruments in this research The collected data were tabulated, analyzed and interpreted using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques.

Findings: Findings of the study showed a significant positive relationship between all five dimensions of principal's leadership practices such as (model the way, inspire, challenge, enable and encourage with teacher) with teacher morale.

Conclusion: It is concluded that teacher's morale can be enhanced through demonstrating these leadership practices at school level. Since, the study used a limited sample and was conducted in a geographically and economically backward areas and the results cannot be generalized to other contexts. Therefore, future research is recommended to be conducted in other geographical zones to get more robust and useful results.

Keywords: Principals' Leadership Practices, Teacher Morale, Secondary Schools, Inspiring, Challenge.

Introduction

Principal's leadership behavior is an important factor that affects deeply teacher morale. Studies have already reported positive relationship between leadership practices of school principal and morale of teacher (Roncesvalles & Gaerlan, 2020; Heik, 2013). This is not a new topic for discussion among educational researchers. It has remained a long-debated issue in educational settings worldwide, but its measurement has always been difficult for researchers and practitioners alike due to its ever-changing nature (Hackman & Johnson, 2000; Espinoza, 2013). The leadership behavior of school principal is always considered a key factor regarding enhanced teacher morale and strong determinant of quality of learning environment in schools (Meeks, 2020; Houchard, 2005; Govindarajan, 2012). Researchers have consistently referred to

increased educational status of teachers, support from school management as strong predictors of student progress, teacher job satisfaction and morale (Hackman &Murath, 2018).

Today's school principals are facing more challenges due to frequent government supported educational reforms and uncertain situations (Adams &Muthiah, 2020). Consequently, staff retention, teacher motivation and performance have become pressing problems in schools (Klocko & Justise, 2019; Krasnoff, 2015). Despite these pressing challenges principals need to understand about the effects of their actions on quality of instruction, student learning, teacher morale and overall job satisfaction of faculty (Klassen& Chiu, 2010). In the past few decades, the education system of Pakistan has passed through many changes due to new educational policies introduced by the government related to curriculum, teacher training, and integration of technology to modernize education. All these changes have also affected the degree of relationship between principals' leadership behavior and teachers' role in different ways. This study aims to investigate the relationship between principal leadership practices and teacher morale in the context of secondary schools in district lower Dir, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Teacher Morale

In the last two decades a greater decline has occurred worldwide in schoolteacher morale at school level due to low wages, job security, service rules, health care matters, decreasing initiatives, job turn out, top-down education reforms and so on. As a result, universities are facing decreased student enrollment for teacher preparation programs. Although, teaching degrees once enjoyed great respect and teaching profession was kept in high esteem, but the role of teacher is drastically changing (Morris, 2019). Consequently, decreasing job satisfaction has brought down teacher morale. Low teacher morale affects over all learning environment in schools and negatively impacts students' learning (Adhikari, 2020). This study aims to explore the relationship between principals' leadership practices and teacher morale in secondary schools of Lower Dir Malakand division, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The study will attempt to investigate and determine if leadership practices have a significant effect on teacher morale in these schools.

Morale is used as a term in many situations for describing dispositions and moods of a group of people. It refers to a sense of purpose and effectiveness (Mackenzie, 2007). More specifically, morale is the way an individual think about his or her work and organization they work for (Leithwood, Harris & Hopkins, 2008; Miller, 1981). The researcher further states that when morale of employees is low their participation in organizational work will also be less (Hunter-Boykin, Evans & Evans, 1995). They will do the minimum as requirement. They will put extra hard word or own the mission of the organization. This will ultimately negatively affect the overall performance of the organization (Guinta, 2020). On the other hand, when morale of employees is high, they will take interest in the organizational activities and are likely to contribute more positively towards the organizational development. Their sense of commitment increases, and this will have a positive impact upon the overall organizational performance (Noddings, 2014).

Teachers are key element of the educative process. They play key role in the successes of their students. Hence, they are the epicenter of teaching and learning and are responsible for the quality enhancement of schools and improvement of students' learning outcomes. Unfortunately, the trends of job turnover amongst teachers are on the high worldwide (Meeks, 2020). Teachers are reported to quit teaching profession every year especially in economically low performing and poorer schools in third countries (Martin, 2010; Norwood, 2016). Studies have shown that job satisfaction among teachers has dropped to 59% as compared to 44% one decade ago. This situation has a grave negative impact upon education indicators worldwide. It is predicted that if the issue was not resolved on priority basis, then one teacher in three would leave the profession in the coming five years. It is reported that different factors are responsible for this situation such as less job security, tough career progress, increase duty pressure, budgetary cuts on education and low morale (Ramachandran &Shibu, 2017).

Leadership Practices

Studies have further reported that apart from academic factors there are some other causes such as low perceptions of teachers towards leadership practices in schools and decreasing level of morale. Hence, it is suggested that in to retain the quality and value of learning and teaching and better performance of schools in the current competitive education milieu, it is imperative that management of schools should take positive steps to improve teacher morale (Quin, Deris, Bischoff & Johnson, 2015). This objective could be achieved by identifying those factors which boast up teacher morale. Teacher morale consists of different elements such as relation with principals, relation with teachers, issues related to curriculum and so on. Thus, the relationship of teachers' morale with principals leadership behaviors or practices may increase or decrease teacher morale ultimately. As a consequent, higher teacher morale will have a positive impact on students' achievement and learning and low morale may will have a negative impact and leads the students to poor learning and will decreased organizational productivity (Krasnoff, 2015). Morale of teachers is an important element of teaching learning process which plays a decisive role in teachers' successful classroom interactions (Grant, 2020). Hence, it is essential to advance knowledge that adds to morale improvement practices amongst teachers. School management must be fully equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge (Rosenberg, 2013; Quin et al, 2015). Reports have indicated that in schools of Pakistan different factors have affected teacher morale such as increased workload, less wages, job security and resultant work stress and job increased job turnover among teachers. Thus, writers have suggested to management and leadership of educational institutions to adopt moral boasters to nurture teacher morale (Ward, 2015; Martin, 2010).

It has been observed that improved teacher morale and positive leadership behavior of principals are the strongest predictors of students' learning outcomes. Hence, there is a need to develop understanding on the part of educational administrators such leadership practices which enable teachers to do their level best (Malik, 2021). In this regard, school principals may play a more active and comprehensive role by nurturing and maintaining teacher morale (Ying-Leh, 2016). Basically, the fundamental role of school principal is to create such an environment in the school which boasts up teacher morale. This will have a good effect on human resource management system of the school. As a result of which the recruitment and retention issues of teachers will be resolved and consequently, high quality teachers would be recruited (Ciccone, 2020; Krasnoff, 2015).

Active school principals play a dual role in a school context. They manage as well as lead. They can achieve this goal by different ways. For example, they can create teacher schedules, establish budgets, develop procedures for handling money in different activities and create protocols for the selection of field trips. They can practice a shared leadership model where all stakeholders will have equal chance of participation, sharing and doing. In such a situation, teachers will see themselves as critical for the successes of student and can work as lead learners and change agents. Hence, it is important that principals should explore such potential among teachers and provide them with the opportunities for personal and professional grooming.

Studies have indicated that for the enactment of morale, active principals provide good administrative and leadership support, encourage positive teacher student relationships, positive school environment, increased teacher autonomy, working atmosphere and increased chances of job satisfaction (Roncesvalles &Gaerlan, 2020). Researchers have further indicated that school leaders need to focus on motivation of teachers which will have direct positive impact upon students' academic outcomes. It will also have a highly positive impact upon teacher morale too (Hackman &Morath, 2018). Hence, it is important to develop deeper understanding about teacher issues and demands and morale vis a vis leadership behavior of principals for their motivation, encouragement, and support so that they could reach the maximum level of professional development and work for the organization to their fullest potential.

Theoretical Framework

As many characteristics differentiate leaders from non-leaders, there are varying interpretations of what it means to be a leader. There are three main ways to look at leadership in the modern era: a process or

connection, a set of interrelated features or personality characteristics, or a scenario. According to Wolinski (2010) The idea that leadership is a process that involves influencing a group of individuals to achieve goals is present, at least to some extent, in the more popular theories of leadership, even though most of the current research has moved away from the traditional feature- or personality-based theories in favor of a situation theory. Avolio, Walumbwa and Weber (2009). Noted an increase in the early 20th century in the scholarly interest in leadership and used this to develop his list of eight fundamental leadership theories Charry (2012). While earlier theories focused on what made leaders different from followers, more recent ones have examined how factors like context and aptitude play a role. However, new theories are continually being formulated. Great leaders, according to the views of great men, are not made but born. Many of these theories paint leaders in a legendary light, depicting them as exceptional individuals destined to take over whenever the time is right. It was common to refer to military leaders as "great men" because of the period and the cultural context in which the term originated (Ololube, 2013). The characteristic theory, which has some common ground with great man notions, posits that leaders are born with innate qualities. As trait theories identify, leaders are often characterized by their shared personality or behavioral attributes. It has now been questioned how this theory can account for those who display specific characteristics but lack leadership skills. As a result of the contradictory relationship between leadership attributes and leadership performance, scholars shifted their focus to seeking alternative explanations for effective leadership.

Problem Statement

Numerous studies have indicated that principal leadership behavior is a good predictor of teacher morale (Hauchard, 2005; Krasnoff, 2015; Martin, 2010; Noddings, 2014). Hence, teachers need to be valued and harnessed by principals by recognizing their contributions (Malik, 2021). For keeping and retaining high qualified teachers it is important to identify those factors which influence teacher morale (Grant, 2020; Klocko&Justis, 2019). To run better schools, it is essential to have deeper and better understanding of teacher morale boasters in relation to principals' leadership behavior. This study examines five dimensions of principals' leadership practices of Kouzes and Posner (2002) such as (1) model the way, (2) inspire (3), challenge (4), enable and (5) encourage with teacher morale in secondary schools of District Lower Dir, Malakand Division, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the relationship between principal' leadership practice (model the way) with teacher morale in secondary schools of Lower Dir.

2. To assess the relationship between principal' leadership practice (inspire) with teacher morale in secondary schools of Lower Dir.

3. To determine the relationship between principal' leadership practice (challenge) with teacher morale in secondary schools of Lower Dir.

4. To find out the relationship between principal' leadership practice (enable) with teacher morale in secondary schools of Lower Dir.

5. To assess the relationship between principal' leadership practice (encourage) with teacher morale in secondary schools of Lower Dir.

Conceptual Framework

The following conceptual framework explains relations between the independent variable (principal' leadership practices) and dependent variables (teacher morale) of the study.
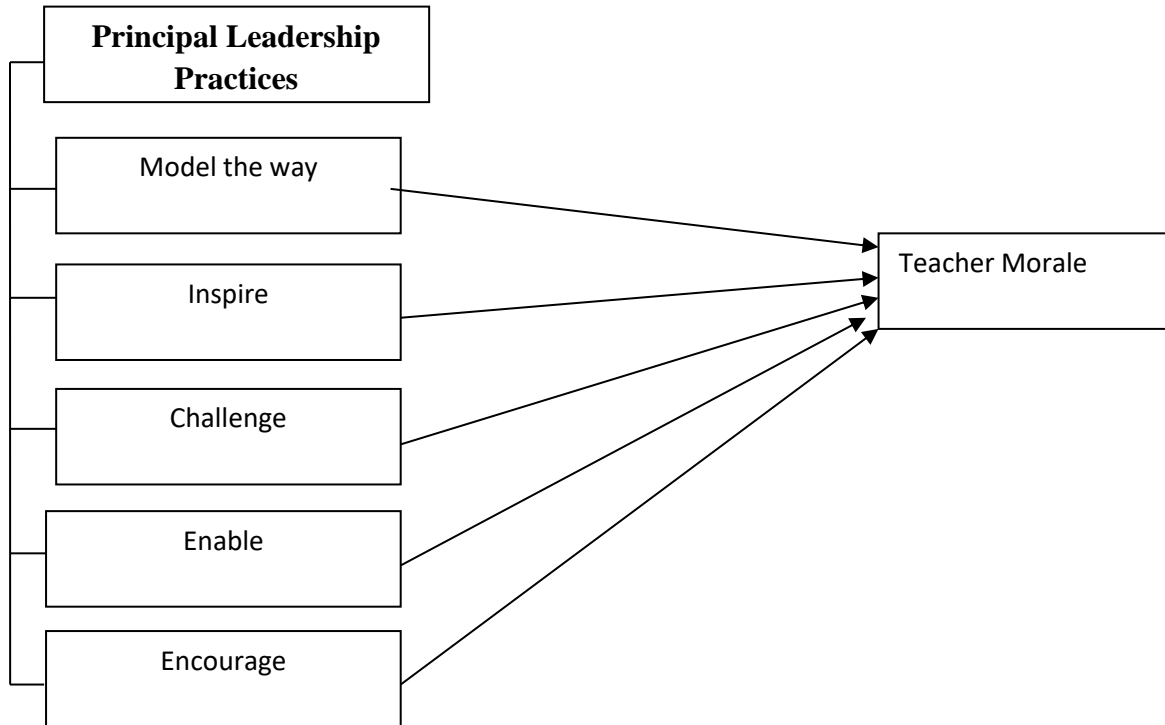
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┌─────────────────────────┐
│  Principal Leadership   │
│       Practices         │
└─────────────────────────┘
     ┌──────────────────┐
     │   Model the way  │ ─────────┐
     └──────────────────┘          │
     ┌──────────────────┐          │
     │     Inspire      │ ─────────┤      ┌──────────────────┐
     └──────────────────┘          ├────► │  Teacher Morale  │
     ┌──────────────────┐          │      └──────────────────┘
     │    Challenge     │ ─────────┤
     └──────────────────┘          │
     ┌──────────────────┐          │
     │     Enable       │ ─────────┤
     └──────────────────┘          │
     ┌──────────────────┐          │
     │    Encourage     │ ─────────┘
     └──────────────────┘
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Figure 1: *Conceptual Framework*

Research Hypotheses

H 1   There is a relationship between principals' leadership (model the way) and teacher morale.

H 2   There is a relationship between principals' leadership (inspire) and teacher morale.

H 3   There is a relationship between principals' leadership (Challenge) and teacher morale.

H 4   There is a relationship between principals' leadership (enable) and teacher morale.

H 5   There is a relationship between principals' leadership (encourage) and teacher morale.

Methodology

Research Design

Based on the objectives of this study, a quantitative correlation design was chosen to investigate the research problem (Basit, 2010). Quantitative correlational research design is used when the collecting data involves a relation between two quantifiable variables and to find that of to what extent the relationship exist (Gay &Airasian, 1992). The most appropriate design for this research was correlational research design because we aimed to determine the degree, direction, and strength of relationship between principal leadership practices and morale of teacher in secondary school of District Lower Dir. Teacher morale and how influential leaders implement those practices are the foci of this study's investigation. As part of this research, we used each teacher's Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) score to characterize the style of leadership exhibited by the school's principal (Webb, 2014). As used here, "leadership practices" refers to the five tenets of administration outlined by Bentley and Rempel (1972) for secondary school principals:

1. Model the way
2. Inspired a shared vision

3. Challenge the process

4. Enable others to Act

5. Encourage the heart

Population and Sampling

The overall population consist of all male and female secondary school principals of District Lower Dir, Malakand Division, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for the purpose of this study. There are a total of 3829 teachers (male:2665 and female:1164) are working in secondary school of District Lower Dir. Out of the total population 383 teachers were selected based on Kregcie and Morgan (1970) sampling method.

Instrumentation

The Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) and the Perdue Teacher Opinionnaire (PTO) were used as survey instruments in this research (Kouzes& Posner, 2003). Several prior studies have utilized both methods and tools extensively (Moore, 2012; Rowland, 2008). To get to teachers' real feelings, the PTO was created in the 1960s and has since become a go-to instrument for academics studying education (Houchard, 2005). Research has relied on the LPI since its third edition's publication in 2003 to characterize educators' perceptions of principals' practices, philosophies, and demeanors (Webb, 2014). Both measures were used in the statistical analysis. Principals' leadership skills were evaluated using the 30-item Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI), and teachers' attitudes were gauged using the 25-item Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire (PTO). The current questionnaire consisted of three parts. Part 1 details about demographic profile of respondents. Part 2 describes the PTO and part 3 describes the details on LPI. The questionnaire was originally designed on 5point Likert scale. Strongly dis agree (SDA), disagree (DA), Neutral (N), Agree (A) and strongly agree(SA). The current study's survey instruments were adapted from previously developed scales, for which permission was sought from their respective original authors. The PTO and the LPI were selected for this study because of their demonstrated reliability and validity in prior research (Moore, 2012; Rowland, 2008; Houchard, 2005).

The Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire (PTO)

The PTO assesses ten indicators of educator satisfaction. The 25 items in the PTO gauge how teachers feel about various aspects of their job. Teachers' relationships with their principals, their peers, their students, the school administration, the curriculum, their professional standing in the community involvement in the education of their children, the quality of their working conditions, and the resources available to them at school are just some of the factors considered. The valid responses to each PTO statement that will be used to evaluate the survey responses are, strongly disagree (SDA) = 1, Disagree (DA) = 2, Neutral = 3, Agree = 4 Strongly Agree (SA)=5. Teacher morale was calculated as a sum; a more significant sum implies a lively group of educators. This survey is a suitable and valid measure of teachers' morale for the high school teachers, who participated in this study, as shown by the existing literature (Moore, 2012), (Rowland, 2008) (Webb, 2014). The PTO copyright has been expired; thus, it can be used without further authorization (Moore, 2012).

The Leadership Practices Inventory

Thirty items comprise the survey's Leadership Practices Inventory Instrument, evaluating teachers' opinions on the principal's leadership style. The questions are answered on a 5-point Likert scale. Each question is associated with one of the five leadership functions:

- Model the way

- Inspired a shared vision

- Challenge the process

- Enable others to Act

- Encourage the heart
- Motivating the spirit.

Based on research conducted by Leong (1997), the test-retest reliability of the five leadership practices that are measured by the leadership practices inventory (LPI) varied.93 to.95. Given the indeterminacy of what defines good leadership, assessing the reliability of a leadership survey can be challenging (Leong, 1997). However, the literature review indicates that the survey used in this study validates how teachers feel about various aspects of principle leadership (Moore,2012; Rowland, 2008; Webb, 2014). Test-retest reliability values of.88 and.92 were obtained by Kouzes and Posner (2002). A letter of authorization for the usage of the LPI is attached as a supplementary document.

Data Collection Procedures

The questionnaire was personally distributed to the sample for data collection. Before, going or data collection, consent of the respondents was obtained using consent letters to participate in the study. Permission was also be sought from administration of the school and District administration. Enough time was given to the respondents to fill out the questionnaire and return it. A permission letter was sent to the District Education Officers District Lower Dir (Male and Female), and then to the principals of the schools that would be taking part in the study so that we could learn more about their procedures for distributing and collecting survey materials to teachers. An introductory letter was written to all the faculty members once it was given the permission by the District Education Officers and the principal. For each educator, the principals of the respective schools gave a roster (Dillman et al., 2009). The survey instruments we utilized are valid and reliable; they have been employed in other studies of teacher morale with good results.

Data Analysis

For the analysis of data both inferential statistics and descriptive were used. Descriptive statistics were used to prepare and summarize the collected data using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 20). Under inferential statistics, exploratory factor analysis and t-test was used. Exploratory factor analysis was used to check the dimensions of the scale based on the data collection in the current study context. The t-test was used to measure comparative perspectives of male and female teachers on the relationship between the independent variable (Principal leadership practices) and dependent variable (teacher morale).

Table 1: *Demographic Details of Respondents*

		Frequency (n)	**Percentage %**
Gender	Male	267	69.7
	Female	116	30.3
	Total	383	100
Qualification	Bachelor	11	2.9
	Master	311	81.2
	Mphil	53	13.8
	Ph.D	8	2.1
	Total	383	100.0
Experience	1-5 years	60	15.7
	6-10 years	90	23.5
	11-15 years	58	15.1
	16-20 years	64	16.7
	Above 20 years	111	29.0
	Total	383	100.0

Table 1 show that out of the total sample of the study, the male participants outnumbered the female respondents. Male constituted 69 percent of the sample and female 30 percent. In terms of qualification, majority of the respondent's 81 percent were master's degree holders. In terms of experience majority of

the respondent's 29 percent had experience above 20 years and 23 percent were having experience of 6-10 years.

Normality Test

The sample normality is determined from values of Skewness and Kurtosis tests. Sekaran (2003) considers that values which fall with the ranges of -2 to +2 for Skewness tests and values from within -3 to +3 for Kurtosis are normal. Hence, the sample of this study is acceptable being within the ranges and are appropriately distributed as shown in Table 2

Table 2: *Skewness, Kurtosis of Principal Leadership Practices*

Variable	Maximum	Minimum	Skewness	Kurtosis
1	1.0	5.0	-.317	.312
2	1.0	5.0	-.119	.221
3	1.0	5.0	-.125	.202
4	1.0	5.0	-.288	.061
5	1.0	5.0	-.127	.010
6	1.0	5.0	-.255	-.122
7	1.0	5.0	-.314	.130
8	1.0	5.0	-.100	.316
9	1.0	5.0	-.277	-.009
10	1.0	5.0	-.247	.080
11	1.0	5.0	-.332	.190
12	1.0	4.0	1.328	-3.524
13	1.0	5.0	-.289	.462
14	1.0	7.0	-1.597	1.848
15	1.0	7.0	-1.933	1.019
16	1.0	7.0	-1.359	1.491
17	1.0	7.0	-1.734	1.367
18	1.0	6.0	1.315	-1.289
19	1.0	7.0	-1.455	2.145
20	1.0	7.0	-1.309	1.517
21	1.0	7.0	-1.644	2.902
22	1.0	7.0	-1.163	1.471
23	1.0	7.0	-1.608	2.730
24	1.0	7.0	-.255	-1.070
25	1.0	7.0	-.172	-1.238
26	1.0	7.0	-.284	-1.230
27	1.0	7.0	-.397	-1.034
28	1.0	6.0	.109	-366
29	1.0	7.0	-146	2.058
30	1.0	7.0	-1.364	1.835

Table 2 indicates that all values of skewness and kurtosis for all variables representing the independent variable 'principal leadership practices' were with the acceptable range ($\pm$ 2) providing clear evidence for data normality.

Table 3: *Skewness, Kurtosis of Teacher Morale*

Variable	Maximum	Minimum	Skewness	Kurtosis
1	2.00	5.00	-.390	.295
2	3.00	5.00	-.281	-.255
3	2.00	5.00	-.370	-213

4	2.00	5.00	.200	-139
5	1.00	5.00	-.195	.184
6	1.00	5.00	-.236	.872
7	3.00	5.00	-.345	-.588
8	3.00	5.00	-.246	-.666
9	2.00	5.00	-109	1.267
10	2.00	5.00	-.240	-.545
11	1.00	5.00	-.425	.583
12	1.00	5.00	-218	.503
13	1.00	5.00	-246	.510
14	1.00	5.00	-.689	-.221
15	1.00	5.00	-.313	.576
16	1.00	7.00	-242	-428
17	1.00	7.00	-263	-439
18	1.00	7.00	-336	-477
19	1.00	7.00	-392	-389
20	1.00	7.00	-366	-358
21	1.00	7.00	-337	-384
22	1.00	7.00	-269	-218
23	1.00	7.00	-2.411	-200
24	3.00	7.00	-534	-279
25	1.00	7.00	-214	-173

Table 3 shows that all values of skewness and kurtosis for all variables representing the independent variable 'principal leadership practices' were with the acceptable range ($\pm$ 2) providing clear evidence for data normality.

Descriptive Analysis

Table 4: *Mean and Standard Deviation of PLP*

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	3.67	.967
2	3.62	.863
3	3.78	.975
4	3.70	.811
5	3.61	.991
6	3.64	.977
7	3.67	.848
8	3.76	.939
9	3.60	.967
10	3.63	.881
11	3.67	1.024
12	3.67	1.644
13	3.72	.947
14	5.53	.882
15	5.73	.923
16	5.41	.954
17	5.82	.842
18	5.83	.857
19	5.68	.947

20	5.56	.864
21	5.83	.999
22	5.62	1.194
23	5.82	1.282
24	4.42	.929
25	4.31	.901
26	4.20	.980
27	4.41	.871
28	4.32	.950
29	5.55	.930
30	5.34	.933

Table 4. reveals that the mean values of all items in 'Principal Leadership Practices' scale ranged between 3.60 to 5.83 and standard deviation ranged between .811 to 1.282. The mean scores of all the computed items for "Principal Leadership Practices' were above 3.00. It provides the evidence that the study participants strongly agreed with all the variables in the scale.

Table 5: *Mean and Standard Deviation of Teacher Morale*

Variable	Mean	SD
1	3.67	1.644
2	3.53	.944
3	3.77	.986
4	3.51	.994
5	3.29	.827
6	3.44	.939
7	5.53	1.382
8	5.73	.723
9	5.41	.954
10	3.67	1.067
11	3.62	1.063
12	3.78	.875
13	3.70	1.111
14	3.61	1.091
15	3.64	.877
16	3.67	.948
17	3.76	.139
18	3.30	.962
19	3.32	1.175
20	3.47	.764
21	3.57	.951
22	3.58	.812
23	3.71	1.183
24	3.59	1.190
25	4.12	1.132

Table 5 showed that the mean values of all items in 'Teacher Morale scale ranged between 3.32 to 3.77 and standard deviation ranged between .939 to 1.190. The mean scores of all the computed items for "Teacher

Morale were above 3.00. It provides the evidence that the study participants strongly agreed with all the variables in the scale.

Validity Test

Validity test is used for determining whether the scale items measure the right concept or construct (Sekaran, 2003). Factor analysis is generally used to assess the validity of a scale. However, according to Pallat (2007), two issues should be addressed before conducting factor analysis. These are sample adequacy and strength of relationship among the variables. Furthermore, Tabachanick and Fidell (2007) have suggested that a sample size consisting of 300 cases are sufficient for factor analysi s. In this study, the sample size is 383 which were aligned with the suggested sample size. Thus, the data size for this sample set was adequate for conducting factor analysis. In this study, the factor analysis was used for validation of the scale based on the principle of appropriateness of the items of used through the designated scale "Principal Leadership Practices". These conditions are established through Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test and Bartlett's test of Sphericity.

Table. 6: *KMO and Bartlett's Test of Principal Leadership Practices*

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.938
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	15492.028
	Df	435
	Sig.	.000

Table 6 indicates that the KMO value being .938 which already exceeded the standard value of 0.50 and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is also significant at ($p < 0.00$). This supports the factorability of the correlation matrix based on the data collected from 383 respondents who participated in the study.

Table 7: *KMO and Bartlett's Test of Teacher Morale*

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.920
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	12284.691
	Df	300
	Sig.	.000

Table 7 shows that the KMO value being .920 which already exceeded the standard value of 0.50 and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is also significant at ($p < 0.00$). This supports the factorability of the correlation matrix based on the data collected from 383 respondents who participated in the study.

Reliability Test

Reliability in a scale deal with freedom of the scale from random error and consistency of results if applied in different conditions with same data sample. It also approves that the data is free from bias in bringing consistent measurements across time and different items in the instruments. In this study, the reliability of the scale was tested based on Cronbach's alpha coefficient test to ensure its internal consistency.

Table 8: *Item-Total Statistics of Principal Leadership Practices*

Variables	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
1	118.3301	456.533	.624	.924
2	118.3144	454.090	.667	.923
3	118.1574	455.433	.646	.924
4	118.0671	455.820	.646	.924
5	118.0543	454.283	.641	.924

6	117.9258	455.445	.634	.924
7	118.0416	454.697	.645	.924
8	118.2094	455.832	.610	.924
9	118.3124	457.980	.525	.925
10	118.2398	458.781	.562	.925
11	118.2594	460.376	.532	.925
12	118.2702	460.396	.519	.925
13	118.3350	459.783	.521	.925
14	118.1387	459.613	.564	.925
15	118.4056	459.867	.547	.925
16	118.1897	456.969	.605	.924
17	118.2241	459.798	.557	.925
18	118.2395	458.588	.727	.923
19	118.2834	459.025	.651	.924
20	118.0578	454.730	.737	.923
21	118.2172	455.136	.759	.923
22	116.3006	460.048	.439	.926
23	116.3742	447.343	.499	.935
24	116.4155	459.211	.421	.927
25	116.1534	458.310	.432	.926
26	116.0847	463.134	.419	.926
27	116.0867	464.424	.422	.926
28	115.7943	462.465	.454	.926
29	115.8316	460.185	.469	.926
30	116.0239	460.961	.464	.926

Table 8 indicates that correlation among all the items in the scale ranges from 4.19 to 7.59 and the alpha value of the variables ranges from .923 to .926. This provides evidence for a strong correlation among all the variables in the scale. Shortly, the results of the reliability test provide a strong support for the suitability of the scale and concept use in the study for measuring principal leadership practices.

Table 9: *Item-Total Statistics of Teacher Morale*

Variables	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
1	99.0563	312.509	.605	.905
2	98.8836	311.519	.628	.905
3	98.7933	311.766	.630	.905
4	98.7805	310.613	.623	.905
5	98.6520	311.554	.616	.905
6	98.9356	311.793	.594	.905
7	99.0386	313.237	.516	.907
8	98.9856	315.327	.521	.907
9	98.9964	315.165	.513	.907
10	99.0612	314.538	.517	.907
11	99.1318	314.979	.534	.906
12	98.9159	312.475	.595	.905
13	98.9503	314.544	.554	.906
14	98.9658	313.991	.712	.904

15	99.0096	314.149	.642	.905
16	98.7840	311.045	.716	.904
17	98.9434	311.395	.738	.904
18	97.0268	314.588	.437	.908
9	97.1004	303.495	.696	.922
20	97.1417	314.236	.612	.909
21	96.8109	316.543	.531	.908
22	96.8129	317.811	.431	.908
23	96.5205	316.132	.464	.908
24	96.5578	314.522	.472	.907
25	96.7501	314.915	.473	.907

Table 9 indicates that correlation among all the items in the scale ranges from 4.31 to 7.38 and the alpha value of the variables ranges from .904 to .908. This provides evidence for a strong correlation among all the variables in the scale. Shortly, the results of the reliability test provide a strong support for the suitability of the scale and concept use in the study for measuring principal leadership practices.

Correlation Analysis

Correlation test is used to assess relationship between independent variable (IV) and dependent variable (DV). The correlations coefficient provides a numerical overview of the direction and strength of relationship between the independent and dependent variable in a study. The Pearson correlation coefficient ranges from -1 to +1 to show a positive or a negative relationship between the variables. In this study, using Pearson (r) correlation coefficient, the correlation between the independent variable 'Principal Leadership Practices' and its five dimensions (Model the Way, Inspired a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable others to Act and Encourage the heart) was correlated with the dependent variable 'Teacher Morale.

Table 10: *The Correlation between Model the way and Teacher Morale*

		Model the way	**Teacher Morale**
Model the way	Pearson Correlation	1	.861[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	383	383
Teacher Morale	Pearson Correlation	.861[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	383	383

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.8 indicates the correlation between 'Model the Way' (DV) and Teacher Morale (IV). The results of correlation analysis based on Pearson (r) correlation coefficient shows a strong significant positive correlation between independent variable and the dependent variable as r= 861 and $p< .001$. This provides evidence to accept the hypothesis *"There is a relationship between principals' leadership (Model the Way) and Teacher Morale".* To reinforce, based on the test of the hypothesis it is inferred that those principals who becomes model for their teaching staff have high morale.

Table 11: *The Correlation between Inspire a Shared Vision and Teacher Morale*

		Inspire the Shared Vision	**Teacher Morale**
Model the way	Pearson Correlation	1	.873[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	383	383
Inspired the shared vision	Pearson Correlation	.873[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	383	383

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 11 indicates the correlation between 'Inspired the Shared Vision' (DV) and Teacher Morale (IV). The results of correlation analysis based on Pearson (r) correlation coefficient shows a strong significant Positive correlation between independent variable and the dependent variable as r= 873 and $p< .001$. This provides evidence to accept the hypothesis "*There is a relationship between principals' leadership (Inspired the Shared Vision) and Teacher Morale".* To reinforce, based on the test of the hypothesis it is inferred that those principals who inspire their teaching staff through shared vision and creating a shared environment have high morale.

Table 12: *The Correlation between Challenge the Process and Teacher Morale*

		Enable others to Act	Teacher Morale
Model the way	Pearson Correlation	1	.690[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	383	383
Challenge the Process	Pearson Correlation	.690[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	383	383

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 12 indicates the correlation between 'Challenge the Process (DV) and Teacher Morale (IV). The results of correlation analysis based on Pearson (r) correlation coefficient shows a strong significant Positive correlation between independent variable and the dependent variable as r= 690 and $p< .001$. This provides evidence to accept the hypothesis "*There is a relationship between principals' leadership (Challenge the Process) and Teacher Morale".* To reinforce, based on the test of the hypothesis it is inferred that those principals who inspire their teaching staff through shared vision and creating a shared environment have high morale.

Table 13: *The Correlation between Enable others to Act and Teacher Morale*

		Enable others to Act	Teacher Morale
Model the way	Pearson Correlation	1	.899[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	383	383
Enable others to act	Pearson Correlation	.899[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	383	383

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 13 indicates the correlation between 'Enable others to Act' (DV) and Teacher Morale (IV). The results of correlation analysis based on Pearson (r) correlation coefficient shows a strong significant Positive correlation between independent variable and the dependent variable as r= 899 and $p< .001$. This provides evidence to accept the hypothesis "*There is a relationship between principals' leadership (Enable others to Act) and Teacher Morale".* To reinforce, based on the test of the hypothesis it is inferred that those principals who create an enabling environment for the professional growth and development of their teaching staff to through have high morale.

Table 14: *The Correlation between Encourage the Heart and Teacher Morale*

		Encourage the Heart	Teacher Morale
Model the way	Pearson Correlation	1	.786[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	383	383
Encourage the Heart	Pearson Correlation	.786[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	383	383

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 14 indicates the correlation between 'Encourage the Heart (DV) and Teacher Morale (IV). The results of correlation analysis based on Pearson (r) correlation coefficient shows a strong significant Positive correlation between independent variable and the dependent variable as r= 786 and $p< .001$. This provides evidence to accept the hypothesis "*There is a relationship between principals' leadership (Encourage the Heart) and Teacher Morale*". To reinforce, based on the test of the hypothesis it is inferred that those principals who encourage their teaching staff have high morale.

Discussion

This study found that there was a positive correlation between principal leadership practice such as model the way and teacher morale. This finding is in line with results of previous research. In one of the studies, researchers have already stated that the positive leadership behavior such as becoming a model for staff to follow has always a positive effect on teacher behavior and motivation (Meeks, 2020). Successful principals present a positive behavior through practical examples for others to follow. In such as practical and motivating working environment teachers get prepare to undertake the responsibilities with more vigor and zest (Houchard,2005). Furthermore, studies have further discovered that principals' positive behavior leads to enhanced teacher morale and strong determinant of a quality learning environment within schools (Govindarajan, 2012). Researchers have consistently referred to increased educational status of teachers, support from school management as strong predictors of student progress, teacher job satisfaction and morale (Hackman &Murath, 2018).

This study found a strong positive correlation between principal leadership practices such as inspired the shared vision and teacher morale. This finding supports results of previous studies. For example, Klassen and Chu (2010) have stated that pressing challenges principals need to understand about the effects of their actions on quality of instruction, student learning, teacher morale and overall job satisfaction of faculty (Klassen& Chiu, 2010). Active working environment is one of the key factors for the success of an organization. Leaders' main job is to share the objectives and goals of the organization with all the members. Recent studies have revealed that in a working environment where there is lack of trust among the leader and team, the success and motivation rate of workers decreases. Consequently, decreasing job satisfaction has brought down teacher morale. Low teacher morale affects over all learning environment in schools and negatively impacts students' learning (Adhikari, 2020).

This study discovered that there was a positive correlation between principal leadership practice such as challenge the process and teacher morale. This finding further supports other results of other research studies. Researchers shave already stated that active leaders provide an enabling work environment for the followers (Ciccone, 2020; Krasnoff, 2015). Their sense of commitment increases, and this will have a positive impact upon the overall organizational performance (Noddings, 2014). This helps them to become confident and take interest in the organizational tasks. They will do the minimum as requirement. The teachers will put extra hard work or own the mission of the organization. This will ultimately positively affect the overall performance of the organization (Guinta, 2020).

This study further revealed a strong positive correlation between principal leadership practice such as enable others to act and teacher morale. Studies have already suggested that one of the principal role of school head is to create an enabling and motivational working atmosphere in which all stakeholders should be able and ready to contribute (Norwood, 2016). Principals play a key role in not only enabling the teachers to work with motivation but also work for the successes of their students (Ying-Leh, 2016). Hence, they are the epicenter of teaching and learning and are responsible for the quality enhancement of schools and improvement of students' learning outcomes. Studies have shown that there is a close correlation between teacher job satisfaction and positive engaging behavior of school principals (Rosenberg, 2013; Quin et al, 2015). Unfortunately, current research has revealed that the trends of job turnover amongst teachers are on the high worldwide (Meeks, 2020). Previous research has already reported that in schools where principals

do not create a supportive working environment, teachers are reported to quit teaching profession every year especially in economically low performing and poorer schools in third countries (Martin, 2010).

This current study found a strong positive correlation between principal leadership practices such as encourage the heart and teacher morale. This finding gives further evidence for previous research studies. For example, research has already hinted towards high turnover among schoolteachers due to low motivation. It has been predicted that if the issue was not resolved on priority basis, then one teacher in three would leave the profession in the coming five years (Grant, 2020). It is reported that different factors are responsible for this situation such as less job security, tough career progress, increase duty pressure, budgetary cuts on education and low morale (Ramachandran &Shibu, 2017). Another study found that the relationship between teacher morale and principal leadership behavior or practices may increase or decrease teacher morale ultimately (Malik, 2021). As a consequent, higher teacher morale will have a positive impact on students' learning and low morale may lead to poor students' learning and decreased organizational productivity (Krasnoff, 2015).

Conclusion

Morale of teachers is an important element of teaching learning process which plays a decisive role in teachers' successful classroom interactions. Hence, it is essential to advance knowledge that adds to morale improvement practices amongst teachers. School management must be fully equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge. It has been observed that improved teacher morale and positive leadership behavior of principals are the strongest predictors of students' learning outcomes. This study revealed a positive correlation between principal leadership practices and teacher morale. Hence, there is a need to develop understanding on the part of educational administrators such leadership practices which enable teachers to do their level best. In this regard, school principals may play a more active and comprehensive role by nurturing and maintaining teacher morale. Basically, the fundamental role of school principal is to establish such a school environment which boasts up teacher morale. This will have a good effect on human resource management system of the school. As a result of which the recruitment and retention issues of teachers will be resolved and consequently, high quality teachers would be recruited.

Based on the results of this study it is further hypothesized that those principals who become model for their teaching staff have high morale. It is further inferred from the results of this study that those principals who inspire their teaching staff through shared vision and creating a shared environment have high morale. It can be concluded that those principals who inspire their teaching staff through shared vision and creating a shared environment have high morale. And also, it is confirmed through the findings of this study that those principals who create an enabling environment for the professional growth and development of their teaching staff to through have high morale. It is also concluded that in schools where school principals encourage their teaching staff have high morale.

Implications of the Study

The results of this study have several implications. The findings of this study may further enhance the understanding of the perceptions of teachers and principals about the importance of association between principals' leadership practices and teacher morale in secondary schools. The findings of the study will add to the knowledge of school management and administration about the close connection between principal leadership practices and its impact on teacher morale. The results also add to the prior knowledge of the researchers on related literature on principal leadership and teacher morale. Even though there have been many studies conducted on principal leadership and teacher morale, this study is unique as it focuses on secondary schools of District Dir Lower, Malakand Division, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. More specifically, the finding of this study may inform policy makers and educational planners about the crucial aspects of leadership characteristics and its effect on the morale of schoolteachers. Finally, the results of this study may be specifically beneficial to the participating schools of district Dir Lower in understanding the important association between principal leadership practices as mentioned above and its impact on morale of teachers.

Limitations and Future Direction

This study was conducted in the context of government high schools in Lower Dir Malakand Division with a limited sample. However, future studies are recommended to be conducted with large sample in other cultural context for wider conclusions and better understanding of the problem.

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