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# Leadership Practices That Foster Moral Consciousness in Elementary Schools at Pallandri, Azad Kashmir

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## ABSTRACT

**Aim of the Study**: The main aim of the study was to explore the leadership practices that foster the moral consciousness in elementary school students and also identify the factors that affect the implementation of leadership practices to enhance the moral consciousness in elementary school students.

**Methodology:** To achieve this purpose, qualitative research was conducted for data collection; elementary principals of five schools were selected through convenience sampling technique. The sample comprises of five participants and five semi structured interviews were conducted to explore the leadership practices that enhance moral consciousness in elementary school students.

**Findings:** Findings indicate that effective school development, fostering teachers' professional growth, promoting a positive learning environment in schools, and strong leadership characteristics as well as abilities are crucial for developing moral consciousness in students.

**Conclusion:** The study recommends that school leaders and parents should work together in order to promote moral consciousness in schools to groom students into peaceful citizen and responsible member of society. Policy makers may establish comprehensive professional development programs for schools leaders. These programs may focus on schools leaders' skills and strategies to develop the moral consciousness among students. The experiences shared by participants emphasized the importance of effective leadership practices that fosters the moral consciousness in elementary school students, to integrate values, ethics, and moral principles into teaching practices and student learning experiences.

**Keywords:** Moral Consciousness, Leadership, Moral development, Elementary School, Students.

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background of the Study

Moral consciousness is a critical component of education at every level. It refers to a set of cognitive structures and intellectual principles, supported by affective motivational states that enable individuals to distinguish between right and wrong. This, in turn, guides the appropriate use of personal freedom in relation to oneself and others (Manea, 2014). Developing moral consciousness is essential for shaping students' personalities and helping them learn moral standards and requirements. The process involves instructive educational activities centered on three components: cognitive, affective, and volitional. The moral dimension focuses on three value axes that indicate how internalized standards of right and wrong develop throughout life. This includes the formation and development of moral judgment and self-control skills necessary for adhering to these internalized standards (Manea, 2014). The methods for fostering social consciousness aim to create an understanding of societal rules and norms, including morals and labor relations, within students' social consciousness. Through education, these rules and norms become ingrained in individuals' beliefs, confidence, and life views. Consequently, social moral habits, attitudes, and behaviors are formed in students (Turakulova & Jakhongirovich, 2022).

Moral consciousness is foundational for moral development. This development occurs when individuals' selfish desires are repressed and replaced by the values imparted by significant socializing agents (Freud, 1962). Moral development involves learning to differentiate between right and wrong. Gray and Welsh (2012) define moral development as the thoughts, behaviors, and feelings regarding standards of right and wrong. According to Kohlberg, moral development progresses through different stages (this sentence is incomplete, make it complete and give in –text citation). The school environment comprises relationships among members of the school community, shaped by structural, personal, and functional factors. These factors provide schools with their distinctiveness. Studies have shown that the physical, social, and academic conditions, as well as the administrative organization of schools, influence student well-being (Corral-Verdugo et al., 2015). Empirical research increasingly highlights the impact of school environments on student well-being. For instance, safe school environments are strongly correlated with student well-being (Kutsyuruba et al., 2015).

Furthermore, the role of leadership in this context is equally substantial since effective leadership practices are recognized globally as essential for school improvement. International literature demonstrates that effective leaders exert a significant, although indirect, influence on school effectiveness and student achievement (Leithwood et al., 1999). Teacher leadership, which involves enhancing leadership roles and decision-making powers for teachers without removing them from the classroom, is also crucial (Harris & Muijs, 2003). Desmarais (2015) identifies essential elements of effective leadership, including developing collective goals and objectives, instilling knowledge and appreciation of work activities, and embodying the elements of effectiveness (George, 2000; Yukl, 2013). Leaders who personalize these elements create constructive workplace environments, paving the way for organizational and individual achievement. Thus, exploring leadership practices that foster moral consciousness in elementary schools, particularly in regions like Pallandri, Azad Kashmir, is essential for advancing educational standards and promoting holistic student development.

## 1.2 Problem Statement

Moral consciousness, essential for ethical decision-making and societal contribution is particularly crucial during elementary school years (Lagattuta et al., 2015). However, in Pallandri, Azad Kashmir, there is a notable gap in understanding how leadership practices within elementary schools can effectively nurture this aspect of character. Despite recognizing the importance of moral development, there is a lack of effective leadership practices aimed at instilling moral awareness among students. This highlights the need for a comprehensive investigation into the strategies employed by school leaders to cultivate moral values within the elementary schools located in Pallandri, AJK. Through this research, actionable insights

can enhance moral education initiatives, fostering a culture of ethical awareness among elementary school students in the region.

## 1.3 Purpose of Statement

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the specific affective leadership practices that contribute to the enhancement of moral consciousness among elementary school students in Pallandri, Azad Kashmir. Additionally, this study aimed to identify the factors that influence the implementation of these leadership practices within elementary schools in the region. By addressing these research questions, this study intended to provide a deeper understanding of how school leaders can effectively promote moral development and ethical awareness among students in Pallandri, Azad Kashmir.

## 1.4 Research Questions

1. What specific affective leadership practices contribute to the enhancement of moral consciousness among elementary school students in Pallandri, Azad Kashmir?
2. What are the factors that influence the implementation of leadership practices aimed at promoting moral development within elementary schools in Pallandri, Azad Kashmir?
a) What are the suggestions of the school leaders regarding the successful implementation of moral consciousness raising leadership practices in elementary school level?

## 1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of the current research study lies in its potential to impact several key stakeholders in the educational sector. By exploring the leadership practices that influence moral consciousness among elementary school students and identifying the factors affecting the implementation of these practices, this research aims to provide valuable insights and practical recommendations. The findings of this study are particularly significant for the following:

**School Leaders:** The study offered school leaders evidence-based strategies and practices to enhance moral consciousness among students. Understanding effective leadership practices can help principals and administrators create a positive and ethical school culture, fostering moral development in students.

**Students:** By promoting moral consciousness, the research can directly benefit students, helping them develop a strong sense of ethics and values. This moral foundation is crucial for their personal growth and their ability to contribute positively to society.

**Policy Makers:** The insights gained from this study can inform policy makers about the importance of leadership in moral education. This knowledge can guide the development of policies and initiatives that support the implementation of effective leadership practices aimed at moral development in schools.

**Curriculum Developers:** The study's findings can aid curriculum developers in integrating moral education into the school curriculum. Understanding the leadership practices that foster moral consciousness can help in designing curricular content and educational activities that promote ethical awareness and moral reasoning among students.

## 1.6 Delimitation

The research study was delimited to:

1. Five elementary schools located in Tehsil Pallandri District Sudhnoti, AJK.
2. All schools contain co-education system.

## 1.7 Operational Definition

### 1.7.1 Effective Leadership Practices

Effective leadership practices are widely accepted as being a key constituent in achieving school improvement. The evidence from international literature demonstrates that effective leaders exercise an

indirect but powerful influence on the effectiveness of the school and achievement of students (Harris & Muijs, 2002).

### 1.7.2 Moral Consciousness

Moral in consciousness can be defined as an ability to perceive that a social situation involves moral dimensions. It is the awareness that the consequences of one's actions for the concerned parties is a morally pertinent issue and an ability to think of potential consequences (Ammert, Edling, Löfström, & Sharp , 2022).

### 1.7.3 Elementary Level

Elementary level refers to the initial years of formal education, typically spanning from Grade 1 to Grade 5 (ages 6-11).This stage is also known as primary education (UNESCO, 2019).

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Moral consciousness is understanding right and wrong, and good and evil (Wellock, 1979). It involves beliefs about moral values that align with stages of moral development; implying moral behavior should reflect moral judgment (Cheung et al., 2012). This awareness enables individuals to perceive the moral aspects of social situations, recognizing the ethical implications and potential consequences of their actions (Ammert & Niklas, 2023). The development of this moral understanding, known as moral development, is the process by which individuals internalize norms to regulate their behavior (Molchanov, 2013). This involves cognitive understanding of norms and their consequences, as well as emotional responses to behavior. Traditional cognitive theories, rooted in Piaget's work and expanded by Kohlberg, emphasize the role of developing cognitive structures, moral judgment, and reasoning in shaping moral consciousness (Molchanov, 2013).

This understanding of moral development is particularly relevant to leadership, which is the process of influencing others to achieve common goals and foster organizational cohesion (Sharma & Jain, 2013). Leaders apply their knowledge and skills to support subordinates, ensuring duties are performed effectively and ethically (Kapur, 2020). Effective leadership is a dynamic process where leaders guide followers toward shared objectives, integrating ethical principles into decision-making and problem-solving (Parsons & Beauchamp, 2012). Importantly, effective leadership increasingly emphasizes creation and innovation alongside conscious awareness, moving beyond purely reactive approaches. Consequently, some scholars advocate for leadership constructs that incorporate intuition, inner feelings, compassion, and thoughtful reflection into practice (Smith & Jones, 2020).

### 2.2 Moral Consciousness

Tucker (1994) defines moral consciousness as a heightened awareness that allows individuals to discern the complexity of a situation, understand the impact of potential actions, and make conscious choices rather than instinctive ones (as cited in McGregor, 2005). This awareness includes a sense of interconnectedness and the ability to recognize the moral quality of one's choices (McGregor, 2005). Conscience, closely related to moral consciousness, guides individuals in distinguishing right from wrong (Frimannsson, 2017). It's a fundamental aspect of human existence, linking moral and historical consciousness (Frimannsson, 2017). Donnelly and Donovan (2014) argue that conscience is a cluster concept, not merely a moral sense, encompassing principles that support conscientious thought and action. Consciousness, from birth, enables the distinction between good and evil, implying "with knowledge" or the "ability to know" (Insight, 2017).

### 2.3 Types of Moral Consciousness

### 2.3.1 Communitarianist

The Communitarianist type balances norms of active creativity with societal expectations, such as fair compensation and legal equality. They actively assist those in need, viewing freedom as internal

purposefulness and the realization of abilities despite external circumstances. This type is more prevalent among women and is not strictly linked to education or profession. Communitarianists prioritize family, love, and believe in the human capacity for good actions (Paramonova, 2015).

Communitarianism posits that human identity is shaped by communities, which should inform moral and political judgments. It emphasizes communal harmony, shifting focus from individual freedom to community as a source of meaning and values (Bell, 2001; Koh & Kwak, 2021; Chang, 2022). It advocates for shared understandings and communal solidarity, challenging individualistic liberalism by asserting that culture and shared values form individual identity and support a politics of the common good (Leeuwen, 2016).

The Transitional type of moral consciousness is often found in leaders at the initial management level in urban areas. This type combines a high orientation to creation and self-perfecting (similar to communitarianism) with a focus on earnings (like pragmatism). Their consciousness often presents a duality between spiritual aspirations and rationalized desires for material possessions (Paramonova, 2015).

### 2.3.2 Hedonist

The Hedonist seeks pleasure and enjoyment, often possessing a higher education and coming from humanitarian intelligentsia. They typically work in state enterprises or service sectors. Predominantly women, their hedonism is sometimes linked to fertile periods, though male hedonists are more common in favorable environments. Hedonists prioritize and consciously maintain their health, often concerned with work conditions and ecological issues (Paramonova, 2015).

### 2.3.3 Pragmatist

The Pragmatist embodies economic rationality, believing in legal equality and defining freedom through legal permissibility, inner freedom, non-interference from the state, and financial means. Pragmatism levels increase closer to financial centers and are more common among men. Many pragmatists come from lower-income families or intelligentsia who advanced through education. Their social circle is limited to necessary contacts, and they assist those who can reciprocate. Male pragmatists often express high job satisfaction (Paramonova, 2015). Pragmatism is a philosophical method where principles are derived from activity and experimentation; truth, reality, and morality are relative and constantly evolving (Adeleye, 2017). It's a consequentialist philosophy, valuing activities based on their utility. Pragmatism emphasizes change, asserting that truths are not absolute but context-dependent (Adeleye, 2017). More broadly, it's a method for inquiry, determining the meaning of concepts by their practical consequences, emphasizing that knowledge is meaningful only if it solves practical problems (Biesenthal, 2014).

## 2.4  Moral Development

Moral development is a universal human process where individuals mature from childhood innocence to adult moral responsibility, sensitivity, and judgment (Frimannsson, 2017). It begins early in life, with children developing a sense of right and wrong influenced by experiences, rewards, and punishments (Anasuri, 2021). Theories vary, from those suggesting humans are born without a moral sense to those believing in innate moral potential or self-oriented drives (Anasuri, 2021).Contemporary studies are heavily influenced by Piaget and Kohlberg's cognitive developmental approach (Naito, 2013). It's crucial to distinguish between ethical moral relativism (different cultural values are equally right) and descriptive moral relativism (moral values vary factually across cultures) (Naito, 2013). Moral development involves a progressive understanding of right and wrong, moving from simple to complex distinctions (Dorough, 2011). It's a recognized field in moral psychology, assuming that humans can improve in recognizing and responding to moral situations, allowing for moral education (Berges, 2012).

Moral development is founded on three considerations:

1.  Cognitive capacities for rational analysis of behavior regarding rights, duties, and consequences.

2. Affect/emotion in controlling and integrating behaviors and needs (empathy, caring, commitment).

3. Educational practices that foster both cognitive and emotional aspects (Brito & Pereira, 2024).

Similar to developmental psychology, moral development follows a typical path of psychological evolution, with certain moral understandings emerging at specific ages as a natural process (Berges, 2012). This process, typically beginning in childhood and often considered continuous into adulthood, is influenced by social and cultural norms, and laws (Langford & Schissel, 2023). It is linked to cognitive abilities like abstract reasoning and planning, as well as social perspective-taking, parenting, and peer socialization (Murphy & Langdon, 2010).

## 2.5 Stages of Moral Development
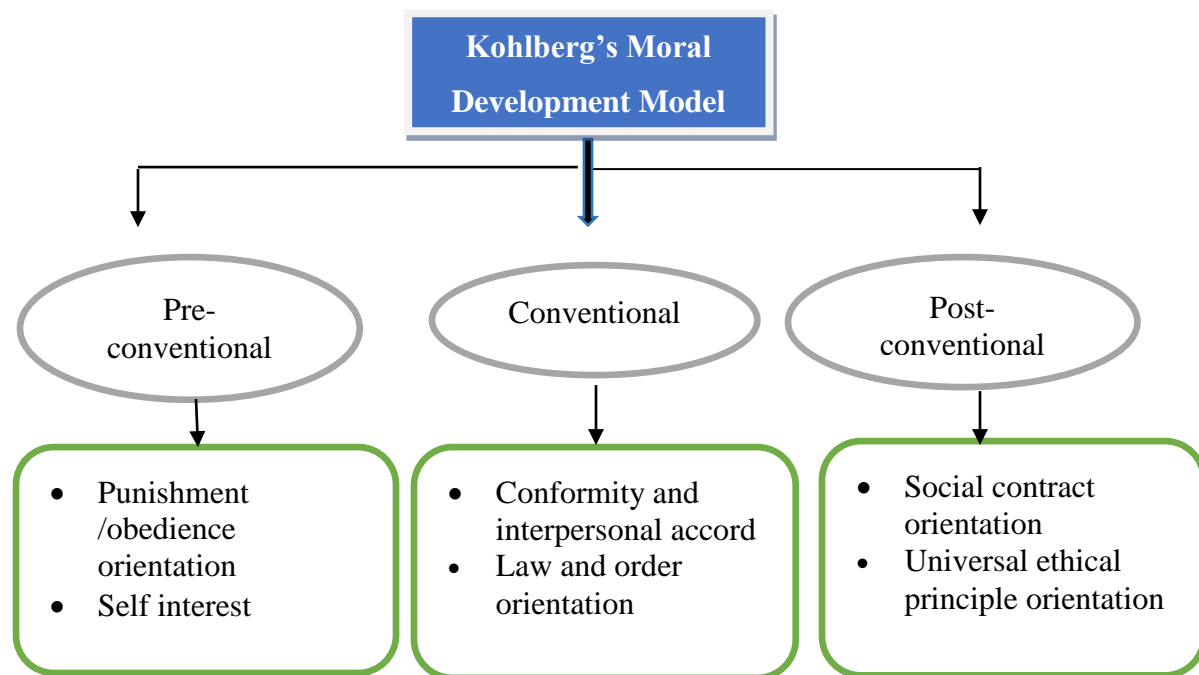


*Kohlberg's Moral Development Model*

Moral development focuses on the question of how moral reasoning arises, and is viewed from the cognitive development theory of Piaget (1964) and Kohlberg (1969). Moral development is the maturation of moral decision-making, including the development of moral reasoning and emphasizes the importance of perspective taking. Kohlberg's (1969) model of moral reasoning comprises three levels consisting of six stages in total, which are graduated sequentially (Tonnaer & Cima, 2023).

Three stages are:

### 2.5.1 Pre-conventional Level

Moral reasoning at the pre-conventional level is marked by a limited ability to consider others' perspectives and relies on external authority (Naito, 2013). This level has two stages:

1. **Heteronomous morality (Stage 1) / Punishment and obedience:** Moral reasoning is driven by avoiding punishment and obeying authority to escape negative consequences (Naito, 2013; Tonnaer & Cima, 2023).

2. **Individualism, instrumental purpose, and exchange (Stage 2):** Moral reasoning is self-centered, with actions motivated by personal advantage and the exchange of favors (Naito, 2013; Tonnaer & Cima, 2023).

Individuals prioritize their own welfare, defining "good" actions as those that bring personal satisfaction or prevent punishment (Coleman & Wilkins, 2020).

### 2.5.2 Conventional Level

At the conventional level, moral values are defined by maintaining interpersonal relationships and societal norms, sometimes including religious codes (Naito, 2013). Conformity to social expectations is crucial; "good" behavior pleases or helps others and shows respect for authority (Rahim et al., 1999). This level includes:

- **"Good" boy/girl orientation:** Individuals seek approval and recognize social roles (Tonnaer & Cima, 2023).

- **Maintenance of social order:** Individuals understand the importance of social rules and legal authority in upholding society (Tonnaer & Cima, 2023).

### 2.5.3 Post-conventional Level

Individuals at the post-conventional level develop self-chosen, abstract moral principles, adopting a "prior-to-society" perspective for impartial judgments applicable across cultures (Naito, 2013). Their ethical framework includes concepts like morality, utilitarianism, reciprocity, and justice, with actions judged by their consistency with these ideals. Unlike conventional individuals, "post-conventionals" may question norms and laws that violate universal principles (Rahim et al., 1999). This level includes:

- **Social order maintenance:** Individuals understand societal order is upheld by legal authority but recognize circumstances where laws may be violated (Tonnaer & Cima, 2023).

- **Individual principles of conscience:** Moral reasoning is guided by self-chosen ethical principles that define right and injustice (Tonnaer & Cima, 2023).

## 2.6 Leadership

Leadership is the process of guiding and motivating others to achieve goals (Prentice, 2004; Pandey, 2022). Effective leaders are risk-takers who challenge the status quo, drive innovation, and measure success by team achievements (Pandey, 2022). The concept of leadership has evolved from individual charisma to a team-based approach where roles are fluid, fostering better decisions through diverse perspectives and consensus (Klingborg et al., 2006). Effective leadership requires self-awareness, organization, continuous communication, vision, and the ability to motivate followers, balancing high performance with strong interpersonal relationships (Klingborg et al., 2006). In education, leadership aims to enhance practices for effective goal achievement, focusing on decision quality and commitment (Amalia et al., 2019). School principals, as key leaders, are responsible for effective decision-making and fostering a positive environment (Amalia et al., 2019).

Good leaders possess emotional intelligence, embrace change, and are open to new ideas, understanding that leadership skills can be developed through effort and planning (Schooley, 2023). Leadership is a complex concept, often described as facilitating goal achievement, inspiring shared aspirations, a learned art focused on change, and influencing a group towards common goals (Toma et al., 2020). Ultimately, leadership positively influences people to realize their potential and provides direction (Baker, 2023), with strong leaders demonstrating clear communication, empathy, and strategic vision (Twin, 2024).

## 2.7 Leadership History

Early leadership theories (late 1800s-1930s) emphasized control, notably the "Great Man" theory. This evolved into "trait" theories (1930s-1940s), which Stogdill (1948) found insufficient. The late 1940s

brought psychoanalytical theories, and by the 1960s, "exchange theories" and situational leadership theory emerged, the latter proposing that context and subordinate characteristics influence leader effectiveness. House (cited in Klingborg et al., 2006) identified key leader behaviors and situational variables. Historically, leaders have significantly impacted societies (Eerkens et al., 2010), with leadership concepts adapting to each era's needs (Dimitrova, 2018).

## 2.8 Leadership Practices

In the 21st century, value-based leadership is vital for school leaders, enabling them to adapt to evolving educational needs and rapid technological advancements (Vikaraman et al., 2021). Research consistently shows that a combination of effective leadership practices optimizes both school development and student learning outcomes (Cabral et al., 2019). Key practices include clearly defining the school's mission, expertly managing instructional programs, and actively fostering a positive learning climate (Brewster & Klump, 2005). Successful head teachers typically achieve this by developing shared visions, cultivating collaboration and trust, distributing leadership responsibilities, and engaging various stakeholders in decision-making and school improvement efforts (Salfi, 2011). Governments worldwide are prioritizing educational advancement, recognizing that effective school governance hinges on competent leaders collaborating with stakeholders to enhance efficiency and maintain strong relationships (Aquino et al., 2021). To achieve operational efficiency, school heads fulfill five core functions: planning, staffing, organizing, controlling, and directing (Aquino et al., 2021).

## 2.9 Cultivating Leadership Skills and Impact

Improving leadership skills is essential for both recruiting and retaining high-performing teachers. Successful leadership encompasses a blend of personal, interpersonal, and group skills (Aquino et al., 2021). Leaders must be able to inspire, motivate, innovate, and collaborate to achieve success (Srisaen et al., 2014). Building on the work of Whetten, Kouzes and Posner identified five exemplary leadership practices critical for school officials: modeling the way, inspiring a shared vision, challenging the process, enabling others to act, and encouraging the heart (Aquino et al., 2021).

The primary challenge for school leaders remains the continuous improvement of teaching and learning (Ahmad & Hamid, 2021). School leaders act as crucial agents of change, actively promoting student learning and enhancing educational quality (Manangan, 2022). Effective instructional leadership, which includes a deep understanding of methodologies and strong classroom management, directly impacts student success (Spillane, as cited in Manangan, 2022). Research consistently confirms the positive influence of instructional leadership on student learning and overall school quality, with leader behavior being a key determinant for high-performing institutions (Asimiran et al., 2022). These instructional leaders are instrumental in setting a clear vision, coordinating efforts to improve learning, and cultivating a supportive school culture (Asimiran et al., 2022). Ultimately, the principal's leadership profoundly influences the organizational culture of the school, with various leadership styles shaping this environment (Al Shebli & Alhosani, 2022).

## 2.10 Leadership Styles

A leadership style defines a leader's methods in directing, motivating, and managing others, influencing strategy and team well-being (Becker, 2023). Effective styles inspire movements, social change, and drive performance and innovation through strong communication, delegation, confidence, and honesty (Hassaan, 2024). In education, leadership is vital for school culture and student learning, with various effective styles applicable based on needs (Mathias, 2023).

**Instructional Leadership** focuses on teaching quality and teacher development to optimize student learning (Mathias, 2023), empowering teachers to leverage their knowledge and experience (Mountuser, 2024).

**Coaching Leadership** style, effective for long-term development, encourages experimentation and self-awareness in teachers and students, helping them develop strengths and address weaknesses (Mathias, 2023). Coaching leaders believe in others' potential, offering guidance to achieve capabilities (Toftdahl, 2020). While nurturing, it's high-maintenance, requiring consistent feedback and potentially facing resistance (Ferguson, 2024).

**Democratic Leadership,** also known as participative leadership, this style encourages collaborative problem-solving and discussion. School administrators use it for curriculum and operational decisions, while teachers use it to foster teamwork in students (Mathias, 2023). Democratic leaders share information and seek employee input, building trust and promoting creativity, though the leader retains final decision-making authority (Toftdahl, 2020; Ferguson, 2024; Bwalya, 2023).

**Constructivist Leadership** style deepens student understanding through interaction and exploration, empowering them and building confidence. Teachers initiate problems and guide students to collaborative solutions, fostering critical thinking (Mathias, 2023). This leadership style focuses on identifying a problem and allowing students to develop creative solutions, promoting collaboration, problem-solving, confidence, and critical thinking (Smith & Jones, 2022).

**Transformational Leadership** is an effective model for education, where leaders influence, inspire, and encourage positive change by role-modeling. Leaders work with teams to identify needed changes and create guiding visions, fostering an innovative culture and shared purpose where voices are heard (Mathias, 2023). This style inspires followers to achieve exceptional performance by creating a vision, setting high expectations, and challenging them to exceed self-interests for the organization's benefit. Transformational leaders encourage creativity and personal growth, leading to higher motivation and commitment by fostering a positive, supportive, and inclusive work environment (Bwalya, 2023). It is associated with positive change, characterized by strong vision, open-mindedness, charisma, and trust in the team, with leaders' personal well-being also inspiring their teams (Boogaard, 2024).

## 2.11 Leadership Influences Students

All school reform initiatives aim to enhance teaching and learning, yet their success fundamentally depends on the **motivations and capabilities of local leadership**. Leaders must effectively integrate external reforms with local efforts, provide essential support, and foster cooperation from parents and the broader community (Covalin et al., 2007). This underscores why **effective leadership is crucial for successful school reform**, demanding a clear understanding of its characteristics and mechanisms (Covalin et al., 2007). A key aspect of this is **instructional leadership**, which directly focuses on student academic progress. This involves establishing clear educational goals, meticulous curriculum planning, and thorough evaluation of teaching quality (Cruikshank, 2017). This model aims to improve student outcomes and enhance classroom instruction. Specifically, instructional leadership seeks to achieve three primary goals: defining school goals, overseeing curriculum delivery, and cultivating a positive learning environment within the school (Cruikshank, 2017).

Beyond the school level, successful leadership extends to both institutions and individuals. In higher education, for instance, **institutional leadership** is reflected internally through policies and externally through stakeholder perceptions and rankings. Moreover, strong **academic leadership** is not exclusive to managerial staff but also characterizes teachers who significantly influence student learning (Platis & Magdalena, 2017).

## 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section describes the qualitative method. The purposive sampling techniques were used to collect data for this study. This qualitative study was to explore the specific affective leadership practices that influence moral consciousness among elementary school students. This study aimed to identify the factors that influence the implementation of these leadership practices within elementary schools in the region. By understanding the factors that influence the implementation of leadership practices, this study will

contribute the exploring affective leadership practices that foster moral consciousness in elementary school setting. This chapter caries the research approach, research design, participants, sampling techniques, sample size, research instruments, data collection procedure, data analysis and ethical considerations. This study focused on exploring leadership practices and impact of these practices on moral development of elementary school students.

## 3.1 Research Approach

The researcher uses a qualitative method for this research. Qualitative research involves collecting and analyzing non-numerical data (e.g., text, audio or video) to understand concepts, opinions or experiences. It can be used to gather in-depth insights into a problem or generate new ideas for research. According to Cress well (2012), qualitative research is a "means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social human problem".

Qualitative research methods include interviews, focus groups, discussion and observations, which allows the researcher to collect data from participants in their natural setting. The qualitative research approach chosen due to its ability to provide an in-depth exploration of teacher experiences and perceptions as well as leadership practices that enhance moral consciousness.

## 3.2 Research Design

The nature of this research was phenomenological. Phenomenology requires in depth understanding of the audience thought and perceptions. Phenomenological research involves studying the essence and meaning of a phenomenon as it was experienced by individuals. This type of research was based on the philosophy of phenomenology, which emphasizes the importance of consciousness and lived experiences. In the realm of phenomenological research design, the focus was on delving into the distinct perspectives of individuals who have encountered a specific phenomenon. Interview protocol was used with semi-structured questionnaire for data collection.

## 3.3 Participants

The participants of the study were school principals of elementary level schools in Pallandri AJK.

## 3.4 Sampling Techniques

Convenience sampling is used to collect data. Convenience sampling involves using respondents who are convenient to the researcher. Convenience sampling is a qualitative research sampling strategy that involves selecting participants based on their accessibility and availability to the researcher. Rather than being drawn at random from a bigger population, participants in this strategy are picked because they are easily available to the researcher.

## 3.5 Sample Size

The sample was three male and two female principals of private schools.

## 3.6 Research Instruments

The study explored affective leadership practices that foster moral consciousness in elementary school level. For this study, semi-structured interviews were used to know teacher's experience. The semi-structured interviews were helpful in collecting qualitative information for the study.

## 3.7 Data Collection Procedure

Qualitative research data collection methods are time consuming. Therefore, data is usually collected from a smaller sample this makes qualitative research more elaborative. The researchers visited different private schools. The researcher met different male and female teachers and told them briefly about the research. The researchers took appointment from the participants for the interviews. Then the researchers

met the participants on scheduled time. Before taking the interview, the researchers took the permission from the participants for recording the interview and organized and described the data set in detail.

### 3.8 Data Analysis

Qualitative data was analyzed by making themes. This section was analyzed through thematic analysis using coding technique. Analysis involves working with the data, organizing, coding and synthesizing data.

➢ **Transcription**

Audio recording of focus group interviews was initially transcribed to get meaning of the whole data.

➢ **Coding**

After transcription coding of qualitative data was done. Coding was a convenient process to analyze qualitative data because it provided meaningful information from participants' data.

➢ **Thematic Analysis**

Themes were derived from coded data in order to analyze the data. While deriving themes, research questions kept in mind.

### 3.9 Members Checking

Creswell and Miller (2000) stated that member checking involves taking data back to the participants, in this way Participants can approve the credibility of the data. The researchers believe that member checking facilitated them in data analysis stage; as member checking helped them to understand the narrative through the lens of participants. After transcription of interviews and making the codes of qualitative data. Researchers went back to study participants for verification of the codes and proceeded to the further analysis.

### 3.10 Audit Trial

They have done open coding, analytical coding, axial coding and selective coding of interviews. Afterwards completing the coding: the researchers consulted other two experts from the relevant field to go through the original and translated transcription for assessing the authenticity and appropriateness of research data which lead the researchers to make categories, subcategories and emergent themes for qualitative analysis.

### 3.11 Ethical Consideration

In the process of this research the secrecy of the participants was considered. Permission was taken from the participants who will part in research. There was no emotional harm to the subject. As part of research, norms were in consideration, the researcher explained the purpose and objectives of the study. Researchers explained to participants, they are free to participate on their own  and can withdraw without giving explanations. Researchers showed their interview guide to participant so they feel ease and don't get confuse. Researchers made sure that they felt secured and comfortable in participating in the research. Consent form from all participants also signed before starting interview.

## 4.  DATA ANALYSIS

This research aimed to explore effective leadership practices that foster moral consciousness in elementary schools and also explore the factors that influence the implementation of leadership practices in elementary schools. The goal was to understand school leaders' views and thinking about effective leadership practices and how they implement it in the schools. The research analyzed qualitative data from transcribed interviews to identify themes and evidence.

**Table 1:** *Demographic Profile of Participants*

|   | Participants | Qualification | Experience | School Type |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | Participant 1 | Masters in Urdu & Education | 2 years | Private |
| **2** | Participant 2 | M.Phil. in Education | 15 years | Private |
| **3** | Participant 3 | M.Sc. in Mathematics | 16 years | Private |
| **4** | Participant 4 | Masters in English | 20 years | Public |
| **5** | Participant 5 | M.Phil. in Education | 10 years | Public |

In this demographic data the researchers have discussed the qualifications of leaders their experienced and school type. The researcher collects demographic data from 4 school's leaders which include 3 private and 2 public school's leader. This data gives useful information about school's leaders. Qualification and experience are important factors that demonstrate an individual's level of skills and expertise in a particular field.

## 4.2 Themes Derived From Participants' Responses

### 4.2.1 Good School Management

The perspectives of the participants provide effective information about the good management of school. Good school management is essential for creating or supportive and productive learning environment. Effective school management plays a pivotal role in promoting moral consciousness among students, teachers and staff. By fostering a culture of respect, empathy, and inclusivity, schools can cultivate a sense of social responsibility and ethical awareness. Good school management encourages open communication, active listening, constructive feedback, creating a safe and supportive environment where individuals empowered to make positive choices. Through transparent decision-making, fair policies and accountability, schools demonstrate the importance of integrity, honesty, and compassion. Moreover, by incorporating character education, service-learning, and community engagement into the curriculum, schools can help students develop essential life skills, such as self-awareness, self-regulation, and social awareness, ultimately shaping morally conscious and responsible citizens. By prioritizing moral consciousness, schools can inspire a lifelong commitment to ethical behavior, social justice and community service.

> *"A teacher school head generally has three responsibilities. Make a plan, he executes and after that evaluation is done. Generally, these are three responsibilities whether you are talking about elementary or secondary. There are two types there is an academic planning. In this plan you have a calendar to plan it. In this you have to plan your curriculum. Then you have to plan your parents meeting".*

(Participant 01)

> *"A school head has many responsibilities. He looks after all the matter of the school and manages the staff. He does the welfare of students. Then you have to plan parents meeting".*

(Participant 02)

> *"One is that management take place in your role within management, planning, organizing, staffing, implementing and decision making".*

(Participant 03)

> *"I look after all school activities and co-curricular activities. I also look after administrative work. School head has many responsibilities to manage staff and communicates with parents".*

Participants identified several key elements that play a vital role in effective school management. Effective school plays a vital role in promoting moral consciousness among students and staff. School management leads to improved students outcomes and positive school environment. Effective curriculum planning and implementation lead to improved student outcomes. Good management creates a supportive and inclusive environment that fosters moral consciousness among students.

### 4.2.2 Students' Holistic Development

Participants put various thoughts about student's holistic development. Student's holistic development refers to the cultivation of a student's entire being encompassing intellectual, emotional, social, physical, spiritual and creative expression. Student holistic development encompasses a comprehensive approach to education, fostering intellectual, emotional, social, physical, and spiritual growth. By integrating moral values and principles into academic learning, students develop a strong sense of purpose, empathy, and responsibility. This holistic approach encourages students to think critically, make informed decisions, act with integrity, promoting moral consciousness and a commitment to creating a better world. Through character-building activities, community service, and role-modeling, students learn to navigate complex social issues, resolve conflicts, and cultivate a culture of kindness, respect, and inclusivity. By embracing student holistic development, we enhance moral consciousness and empower future generations to become compassionate leaders, thoughtful citizens, equipped to drive positive change and create a brighter future for all.

> *"The development of student is basically in three domains. A cognitive, psycho motor and affective domain .A leader who develop the students in these three domains. Then there will be holistic development of students".*

(Participant 01)

Second participant share their thoughts,

> *"Students development include cognitive development, social development, and emotional development".*

(Participant 02)

> *"There are basically three areas for student to develop. An area called cognitive development; mentally you develop the child in intellectual skills. The second is called psycho motor development. It look how much child is progressing in term of physical development. Third one is affective domain is what is happening to child changes in their basic character, changes in their behaviors and change in their attitudes".*

(Participant 03)

> *"The development of students basically includes social development, moral development and cognitive development."*

(Participant 04)

Basically students' development occurs in three domains (cognitive, psycho-motor and affective). The school head promote holistic students growth through character development, social responsibility, emotional development, attitude development, and community development. By fostering values, encouraging community contributions, supporting emotional well-being, and inspiring positive attitudes, students become confident, active, and compassionate individuals. Students holistic development encourages students to thinks critically and promoting moral consciousness.

### *4.2.3 Supportive Educational Leadership*

Supportive educational leadership involves creating positive and inclusive learning environment, where teachers, students, staff, feel valued and empowered to succeed. Supportive educational leadership plays a vital role in fostering moral consciousness in elementary school students. Principals and teachers who model and teach values such as empathy, kindness, responsibility and create a positive school culture that promotes social-emotional learning and character development. They also provide opportunities for students to engage in community service, peer mentoring, and reflective practices, helping them develop a sense of purpose and social responsibility. Through fair and consistent discipline, supportive leaders teach students about accountability, self-regulation, and conflict resolution. By prioritizing relationships, empathy, and moral guidance, supportive educational leaders empower elementary school students to become thoughtful, compassionate, and responsible individuals who make a positive impact in their communities. This holistic approach encourages students to think critically, make informed decisions, and act with integrity, promoting moral consciousness and a commitment to creating a better world.

> *"A leader being in a democratic role mixing with children, above elementary level identifying children's problems sharing their feedback with them. I think for a leader it is very important at elementary level."*

> (Participant 01)

> *"When you walk the democratic way people walk with you. Children walk with you and teacher also walks with you. Heart and mind go hand in hand. This improves the performance of your school and educational performance of the children".*

> (Participant 02)

> *"The leader has democratic role. We should work together with children, their problems should be solved, and things should be shared with students. This is very important for leader at elementary level. A leader is a role model for his students".*

> (Participant 03)

Participant emphasized the importance of leader adopting a democratic role especially at the elementary level. By democratic way a school head foster moral consciousness among students. They model and teach values like empathy, kindness, and self-awareness, helping students develop a sense of purpose, social responsibility, and self-regulation skills. By prioritizing relationships, empathy, and moral guidance, leaders enable students to become thoughtful, compassionate, and responsible individuals who positively impact their communities.

### *4.2.4 Leadership that Foster Positive Culture*

Leadership that fosters a positive culture is essential in promoting moral consciousness in elementary school students. Principals and teachers who prioritize a culture of kindness, empathy, and respect create an environment where students feel valued, supported and encouraged to grow. By modeling and teaching positive values, leaders instill a sense of responsibility, self-awareness, and social responsibility in their students. They also recognize and reward positive behavior, provide opportunities for student reflection, self-assessment, engage families and communities in promoting a shared moral compass. Through intentional leadership, elementary schools can become vibrant learning communities where students develop essential life skills, build strong relationships, and cultivate a strong moral foundation that guides them throughout their lives. By leading with purpose, passion, and integrity, educational leaders can shape a brighter future, one student at a time.

Different participants share their views about how leadership fostering positive culture.

*"A leader is role model for his students. A leader who lies himself can never tell children to tell the truth. If he himself gets angry, he can never tell children to be gentle. If he himself is a supporter of punishment, he can never tell his staff to be gentle with students".*

<div align="right">(Participant 01)</div>

*"We have told the teachers to make a statement at the end of each lecture called a good talk with the children. In addition to this, we have kept some things in the assembly, for example, the translation of the few verses of the Holy Quran and hadith. These things develop moral consciousness in children."*

<div align="right">(Participant 02)</div>

*"A leader is a role model for his students. A leader cannot tell his children to tell the truth if he himself lies. If he himself gets angry he can never tell his staff to use a gentle tone with the children".*

<div align="right">(Participant 05)</div>

Participants emphasized a leader is a role model for students and their behavior sets an example. Effective leadership in elementary schools fosters a positive culture, promoting moral consciousness, responsibility and social awareness in students. A leader serves as a role model for students. They cannot preach honesty while being dishonest themselves. A leader who gets angry cannot promote gentleness. One who supports punishment cannot encourage kindness. A leader's actions speak louder than words. To develop moral consciousness in children, we must practice what we preach, model honesty and integrity, demonstrate gentle communication, and encourage kindness and empathy.

### 4.2.5 Leadership Strengths and Abilities

Effective leadership plays a vital role in promoting moral consciousness within schools and communities. Leaders with exceptional strength and abilities, such as vision, empathy, and integrity, inspire and empower others to adopt ethical principles and values. They foster a culture of transparency, accountability, open communication, encouraging individuals to speak up and address moral dilemmas. By modeling moral behavior themselves, leaders demonstrate the importance of honesty, fairness, and compassion, creating a ripple effect that resonates throughout the organization. Moreover, they prioritize character development, providing opportunities for growth and development, and recognizing and rewarding ethical behavior. Through their leadership, they cultivate a sense of shared responsibility, motivating individuals to work together towards a common goal of creating a more just and equitable society. By combining leadership strength with moral consciousness, leaders can transform individuals, organizations, and communities, leaving a lasting legacy of positive impact.

Different participants share their views about leadership strength and abilities.

*"A Leader should have the same qualities Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) had in him. So the life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is the best example for us in every field of life".*

<div align="right">(Participant 01)</div>

*"The leader should need to make him responsible and exemplary".*

<div align="right">(Participant 02)</div>

*"The qualities are that if you speak the truth, now the way you behave the children will follow the Same".*

<div align="right">(Participant 03)</div>

<div align="right">134</div>

Participants emphasized that a leader should embody the qualities of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) considering his life as an exemplary model. A leader must model the behavior they expect from students. Leader should speak the truth influencing children to do the same. Leader behavior is limited by children emphasizing the importance of positive role modeling. Consistent role-modeling develops moral consciousness in children.

### 4.2.6 Teachers' Growth and Development

Teacher growth and development are crucial for promoting moral consciousness in educational settings. As educators enhance their own moral awareness and ethical decision-making skills, they become more effective role models and facilitators of moral learning. Professional development opportunities, such as workshops, mentor ship programs, and reflective practices, enable teachers to explore their own values and biases, and develop strategies for cultivating empathy, critical thinking, and social responsibility in their students. By deepening their understanding of moral development theories and practices, teachers can intentionally integrate moral consciousness into their curriculum and pedagogy, creating a supportive learning environment that encourages students to explore complex ethical issues and develop their own moral compass. As teachers grow and develop, they become more confident in addressing sensitive topics, navigating difficult conversations, fostering a sense of community and social responsibility, ultimately shaping morally conscious and compassionate individuals.

Different participant share their views about teacher growth and development.

> *"Teacher definitely need training. The knowledge of the subject requires training to deliver the knowledge of the subject, further it need assessment".*

(Participant 01)

> *"Teacher growth and development occurs through training, through workshops and through session".*

(Participant 02)

> *"Teachers training is conducted to groom the teacher, these are workshops".*

(Participant 03)

> *"Following practices for teachers' growth and development are necessary such as teacher training in every month and content based training".*

(Participant 04)

A short summary is that effective leadership is key to promoting moral consciousness in schools and communities. Leaders must model moral behavior, foster empathy and integrity, and encourage open communication. By doing so, they create a culture of honesty, awareness, and compassion, inspiring individuals to develop their moral compass and work towards a more just and equitable society. Through consistent role-modeling and collective action, leaders can shape morally conscious and compassionate individuals, leaving a lasting positive impact.

### 4.2.7 Financial Constraints Hindering Effective Leadership

The lack of finance can significantly hinder the ennoblement of leadership through technology integration, thereby limiting the development of moral consciousness in individuals and organizations. Insufficient funding can restrict access to technological tools, training, and resources, making it challenging for leaders to effectively integrate technology into their decision-making processes and promote ethical practices. Moreover, financial constraints can lead to a focus on short-term gains rather than long-term investments in moral development, perpetuating a culture of profit over principles. Without adequate financial support, leaders may struggle to prioritize moral consciousness, leading to a lack of accountability, transparency, and ethical consideration in their actions. This, in turn, can have far-reaching

consequences, including erosion of trust, diminished credibility, and a neglect of social responsibility, ultimately undermining the moral fabric of the organization.

> *"If I have no money I use technology in every class to properly plan the lecture and teach the student through videos".*

> (Participant 01)

> *"Resources have a big role if you don't have resources you don't have any arrangement for training then the system will not be running".*

> (Participant 02)

Participant 3 share his view is that

> *"Yes financial constraints limited budget can restrict leadership development training resources".*

> (Participant 04)

Participant 4 highlighted that

> *"Technology constraints outdated or limited technology, infrastructure, insufficient digital tools and platforms".*

> (Participant 05)

Participants highlight the importance of resources including financial and technological, in enabling effective leadership development and technology integration in teaching. Limited funding can hinder leadership's ability to integrate technology and promote moral consciousness, leading to restricted access to resources, focus on short-term gains over long-term moral development, lack of accountability and transparency and erosion of trust and social responsibility. Adequate financial support is crucial for leaders to prioritize moral consciousness and foster a culture of ethics and integrity.

### 4.2.8 Reform Education System by Addressing Unawareness of Community

Reforming the education system requires addressing the unawareness of the community to promote moral consciousness. This can be achieved by engaging parents, local leaders, and community members in the educational process, raising awareness about the importance of moral values and ethical decision-making. By fostering a collaborative environment, educators can tap into community resources, expertise, and perspectives, enriching the learning experience and promoting a shared sense of responsibility for character development. Community-based initiatives, such as mentor ship programs, service-learning projects, and cultural events, can help bridge the gap between academic learning and real-world applications, encouraging students to apply moral principles in practical ways. Moreover, by addressing community unawareness, educators can empower parents and community members to model moral behavior, creating a ripple effect that reinforces moral consciousness in students and promotes a culture of empathy, respect, and social responsibility. Through this collective effort, the education system can be transformed to prioritize moral consciousness, equipping future generations with the values and virtues necessary to thrive in an increasingly complex world.

> *"The unawareness of the community and the unawareness of parents is the biggest challenge for a leader. If our examination system will change, many things will change by changing assessment system".*

> (Participant 02)

> *"The biggest issue of today's age is technology. Now a days children are more attached to mobile. A child learns more things from society because he has more interaction with society".*

*"The biggest challenge is that it involves parents and the community. Whenever we want to bring about any change in education, parents and community becomes obstacle".*

(Participant 04)

*"The big challenge involves unawareness of community and unawareness of parents."*

(Participant 05)

In short, reforming education requires community engagement to promote moral consciousness. By collaborating with parents, leaders, and community members, educators can foster a culture of empathy, respect, and social responsibility, transforming the education system to prioritize moral consciousness and equip future generations with essential values and skills.

### 4.2.9 Promoting Ethics

Alleviating moral consciousness necessitates a multifaceted approach that encompasses education, self-reflection, and intentional decision-making. By integrating ethical principles into our personal and professional lives, we can cultivate a culture of moral awareness and responsibility. This involves actively seeking knowledge and understanding of diverse perspectives, engaging in open and honest dialogue, and encouraging others to do the same. Moreover, recognizing and challenging our own biases and assumptions is crucial for growth and development. By promoting ethics related to moral consciousness, we can empower individuals and organizations to make informed, values-driven choices that prioritize the well-being of people and the planet, ultimately fostering a more just and compassionate world.

*"As the head of an organization, we must focus on ethics. The essence of education is how morally strong and how many moral values are present in us. By the age of sixth or seven years, the child learns things after that child are developing the same things".*

(Participant 01)

*"To promote moral development the most influential factors for leadership is school culture. A supportive school culture is required for the development of moral values and ethics".*

(Participant 02)

Participants emphasize the importance of ethics and moral values in education and leadership development. Participant agrees that children learn moral values and develop their character by the age of six to seven years. Moral consciousness is elevated through education, self-reflection, and intentional decision-making, leading to a more just and compassionate world. A supportive school culture is crucial for developing moral values and ethics in children, and is the most influential factor in shaping leadership and promoting ethical behavior.

### 4.2.10 School Development

School development that prioritizes moral consciousness fosters a supportive and inclusive learning environment, where students can grow academically, socially, and ethically. By integrating moral education into the curriculum, schools can cultivate empathy, self-awareness, and responsible decision-making skills in students. This can be achieved through character development programs, service-learning initiatives, and restorative practices that encourage active listening, respect, and accountability. Moreover, schools can model moral consciousness by promoting transparency, fairness, and kindness among faculty and staff, creating a positive school culture that reinforces values like compassion, honesty, and integrity. By doing so, schools can shape students into informed, engaged, and empathetic citizens who will make a positive impact in their communities and the world at large. Government policies, examination system and curriculum also influence the school development and also impact on moral development.

Different participant share their views about school development.

> *"The suggestion that we have to more about the policies of our government, especially considering the situation of the syllabus which we see shortcoming should we develop accordingly, so that along with knowledge should be create."*

> (Participant 01)

> *"The first thing is that there should be policies. And government gives those policies. Then comes leadership and its role. How he met the children, the parents, the teachers and what are the real goals in which the moral development of the children should be and take them accordingly".*

> (Participant 02)

> *"There is only one strategy in the school environment that you should be involved with the children involve the staff as well. It is this strategy that helps to improve moral values in children".*

> (Participant 03)

> *"Here are some opportunities and initiatives that could enhance the implementation of leadership practices. Training and mentoring programs for leader to develop essential skills".*

> (Participant 04)

In shortly, integrating moral education into school curriculum and culture cultivates empathetic, responsible, and informed students, preparing them to make a positive impact in their communities and the world. Moral education in schools shapes empathetic and responsible citizens.

## 5. DISCUSSION

Regarding the finding, participants identified several key elements that play a vital role in enhancing moral consciousness. Effective school management plays a vital role in promoting moral consciousness among students and staff. School management leads to improved students outcomes and positive school environment. Effective curriculum planning and implementation leads to improved student outcomes. Effective management creates a supportive and inclusive environment that fosters moral consciousness among students. The finding is supported by the Sudadio (2023) which stated that, school administration may establish a learning atmosphere, manage resources effectively, encourage parental engagement, and design successful learning practices. Education management's primary job is to achieve educational goals in an effective and efficient manner. Through the planning, organizing, implementing, regulating, and evaluation functions.

Research findings also depict that, student development play a significant role in shaping moral values. Basically students' development occurs in three domains (cognitive, psycho-motor and affective). The school head promote holistic students growth through character development, social responsibility, emotional development, attitude development, and community development. By fostering values, encouraging community contributions, supporting emotional well-being, and inspiring positive attitudes, students become confident, active, and compassionate individuals. Students' holistic development encourages students to think critically and promoting moral consciousness. The finding align with work of Syaoidh (2017) that, based on the perspective of moral cognitive learning, the researcher believes that moral cognitive learning becomes very important to be implemented, especially in basic education. This is so that learners actually internalize moral values and make those values part of themselves. It takes skills to enable learners to use these moral values in their daily activities. Learners should be able to see the behavioral effects, their choices, and be able to develop the skills of making environmentally conscious moral decisions.

According to the research finding effective leadership strategies fostering moral consciousness among students. Participant emphasized the importance of leader adopting a democratic role especially at the elementary level. By democratic way a school head foster moral consciousness among students. They model and teach values like empathy, kindness, and self-awareness, helping students develop a sense of purpose, social responsibility, and self-regulation skills. By prioritizing relationships, empathy, and moral guidance, leaders enable students to become thoughtful, compassionate, and responsible individuals who positively impact their communities. Similarly, Parsons and Beuchamp (2012) ideas supported that leadership strategies have a significant effect on student learning. Principals' influence is often indirect, works through others, and happens best by developing teachers' efficacy in curriculum and instruction, engaging and motivating staff, fostering a shared purpose, creating conditions for effective teaching and learning, fostering program coherence, encouraging organizational learning, and through feedback, direction, and communication.

The findings also indicate that leadership practices foster a positive school culture which influences the development of students. Participants emphasized a leader is a role model for students and their behavior sets an example. Effective leadership in elementary schools fosters a positive culture, promoting moral consciousness, responsibility and social awareness in students. A leader serves as a role model for students. They cannot preach honesty while being dishonest themselves. A leader who gets angry cannot promote gentleness. One who supports punishment cannot encourage kindness. A leader's actions speak louder than words. To develop moral consciousness in children, we must practice what we preach, model honesty and integrity, demonstrate gentle communication, and encourage kindness and empathy. The stated finding is supported by the idea that , significant leadership practices include communicating a clear vision and priorities, focusing time and attention on what matters most, enabling teachers to develop pedagogical and content skills and capacity, providing instructional guidance, empowering others to make significant decisions, addressing supportive structures and resources, developing school improvement plans, providing instructional guidance and coherence, engaging the larger school and district community, acting ethically, and engaging in continuous learning and growth (Parsons & Beuchamp 2012).

In these finding participants emphasized that leader's abilities play a very important role in enhancing moral consciousness among students. A leader should embody the qualities of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) considering his life as an exemplary model. A leader must model the behavior they expect from students. Leader should speak the truth influencing children to do the same. Leader behavior is limited by children emphasizing the importance of positive role modeling. Consistent role-modeling develops moral consciousness in children. This finding is explained by Pont, Nusche, and Moorman, (2008) that the teachers should be effectively trained and should possess the knowledge about how to meet the needs of the students, hence, important goal of the educational leaders is to support, evaluate and contribute in the development of teacher quality.

A summary is that effective leadership is a key to promoting moral consciousness in schools and communities. Leaders must model moral behavior, foster empathy and integrity, and encourage open communication. By doing so, they create a culture of honesty, awareness, and compassion, inspiring individuals to develop their moral compass and work towards a more just and equitable society. Through consistent role-modeling and collective action, leaders can shape morally conscious and compassionate individuals, leaving a lasting positive impact. Significantly with the growing teacher accountability movement; teachers have an even greater responsibility for the academic development of all students. However, teachers are not receiving adequate training to work effectively with culturally and linguistically diverse learners. Education programs prepare teachers to address the academic needs of students, but often do not adequately prepare them to meet the cultural and linguistic needs of students who differ from their own (Segura, 2016).

Lack of finance is a major factor which effects the implementation of effective leadership practices .Participants highlight the importance of resources including financial and technological, in enabling effective leadership development and technology integration in teaching. Limited funding can

hinder leadership's ability to integrate technology and promote moral consciousness, leading to restricted access to resources, focus on short-term gains over long-term moral development, lack of accountability and transparency and erosion of trust and social responsibility. Adequate financial support is crucial for leaders to prioritize moral consciousness and foster a culture of ethics and integrity. This finding is supported by the work of Anthony.A, (2024) which stated that, budgeting and forecasting in leadership enables organizations to proactively manage finances, monitor progress, and make strategic decisions that contribute to its success. By goal setting, allocating resources, risk management, communication and long term planning a company can ensure the likelihood of successful leadership.

This finding regarding another factor that, unawareness of community and parents is a big challenge in our education system. Reforming education requires community engagement to promote moral consciousness. By collaborating with parents, leaders, and community members, educators can foster a culture of empathy, respect, and social responsibility, transforming the education system to prioritize moral consciousness and equip future generations with essential values and skills. Moreover Kushman and Barnhardit, (2001) argued that community engagement and parent involvement hold promise as ways to improve and revitalize education at a time when the public's confidence in public schools is dwindling. Community engagement can be characterized as a quiet revolution occurring in large and small communities across the country that works towards inclusiveness, stronger consensus around educational goals, and real change in educational practice and outcomes. Community engagement does not necessarily lead to quick results. Instead it represents a long-term investment in building ownership, capacity, and "social capital" for deeper changes in educational policy and practice.

This finding shows that moral ethics greatly influence the leadership and also play important role in enhancing moral consciousness. Participants emphasize the importance of ethics and moral values in education and leadership development. Participants agree that children learn moral values and develop their character by the age of six to seven years. Moral consciousness is elevated through education, self-reflection, and intentional decision-making, leading to a more just and compassionate world. A supportive school culture is crucial for developing moral values and ethics in children, and is the most influential factor in shaping leadership and promoting ethical behavior. This finding is supported by the work of Spangenberg and Theron in (2004) which stated that , Since leadership of ethics is a crucial force in creating an ethical organization, it was decided to first develop an ethical leadership inventory, to be followed by the development of an ethics audit for organizations at a later stage. Greater self-awareness and increased understanding of ethics in organizational dynamics will provide a positive climate for major individual and team learning initiatives.

This finding regarding that school development greatly influenced the moral development of students. In shortly, integrating moral education into school curriculum and culture cultivates empathetic, responsible, and informed students, preparing them to make a positive impact in their communities and the world.Moral education in schools shapes empathetic and responsible citizens. This finding is further supported by Ylimaki and Brunderman , (2021) who stated that,  school development is historically, culturally and politically situated. Contemporary policies have created new tensions between centralized expectations (e.g., curriculum, assessment, evaluation, evidence-based programs and governance) and decentralized trends that illuminate the importance of school culture, diversity, values/norms of individuals and groups.

## 6. CONCLUSION

**Q No.1: What specific affective leadership practices contribute to the enhancement of moral consciousness among elementary schools students in Pallandri Azad Kashmir?**

According to school leader's perception about effective leadership practices, effective leadership practices are beneficial for enhancing moral consciousness among students.  It is very important to implement effective leadership practices in elementary school that foster moral consciousness among students. School leaders also predict that moral consciousness enhanced by effective leadership practices such as

good school management, students' holistic development, positive environment, teacher growth and development and promoting ethics.

Some factors such as leader abilities, unawareness of community and lack of resources greatly affect the implementation of effective leadership practices in elementary schools. Participants also suggest that implementation of effective leadership practices enhanced by school development and foster the moral consciousness among elementary school students.

A key theme that emerged from participants' responses is the importance of good school management in fostering moral consciousness among elementary school students. Effective school management is crucial for promoting moral consciousness among students and staff. By prioritizing strong leadership, a well-implemented curriculum, and good governance, schools can create a positive and inclusive environment that fosters moral growth and development. This, in turn, leads to improved student outcomes and a supportive school community. By recognizing the importance of moral consciousness in education, we can empower students to become compassionate, responsible, and active citizens who make a positive impact in the world.

Students' holistic development is a effective leadership practice that enhance moral consciousness among students. Student development is a multifaceted process that extends beyond academic achievement. By fostering holistic growth through character development, social responsibility, emotional development, attitude development, and community development, schools can cultivate compassionate, confident, and critically thinking individuals. This comprehensive approach to education not only prepares students for success but also empowers them to become active contributors to society, promoting moral consciousness and positive change in the world.

The adoption of democratic leadership in elementary education is a powerful catalyst for fostering moral consciousness, social responsibility, and values-based learning. By embracing this approach, schools can empower students to become compassionate, thoughtful, and active contributors to society, equipped with the skills and values necessary to create a more just and harmonious world. The power of leadership lies not only in words, but in actions. By embodying the values of honesty, integrity, and compassion, leaders can inspire and shape the next generation of responsible, socially aware, and conscious individuals. As role models, leaders have a profound impact on the development of their students, and it is their responsibility to cultivate a positive and influential environment that fosters growth, empathy, and kindness. By doing so, they can create a ripple effect of good that extends far beyond the classroom, and into the wider world.

In conclusion, effective leadership is the cornerstone of promoting moral consciousness in schools and communities. By modeling moral behavior, fostering open communication, and inspiring compassion, leaders can shape the moral compass of individuals and create a more just and equitable society. As leaders strive to create a positive and lasting impact, they must remember that their influence extends far beyond their immediate sphere, shaping the minds and hearts of future generations.

**Q No.2: What are the factors that influence the implementation of leadership practices aimed at promoting moral development with in elementary schools in Pallandri Azad Kashmir?**

Participants highlighted the some factors that influence the implementation of effective leadership practices which fosters moral consciousness in elementary school students. Ultimately, the power of leadership lies in its ability to transform individuals, communities, and society as a whole. By embracing the principles of moral consciousness, leaders can create a ripple effect of kindness, empathy, and compassion that resonates throughout the world. As we strive to build a brighter future, let us remember the profound impact of leadership and the boundless potential of the human spirit. The availability of resources is a critical factor in enabling leaders to develop and integrate technology, promote moral consciousness, and create a culture of ethics and integrity. Ensuring adequate financial support and access

to resources is essential for leaders to prioritize long-term moral development and social responsibility over short-term gains.

**a) What are the suggestions of the school leaders regarding the successful implementation of moral consciousness raising leadership practices in elementary school level?**

In conclusion, the transformation of the education system through community engagement and collaboration is a beacon of hope for a brighter future. By instilling moral consciousness and essential values in future generations, we can create a society that values empathy, respect, and social responsibility. Together, we can shape a world where individuals thrive, communities flourish, and humanity reaches its full potential.

The results of the study also highlight the importance of support and attitudes in fostering leadership practices. It is essential to provide ongoing professional development opportunities, workshops to ensure that leaders have the skills they need to effectively implement leadership practices which foster moral consciousness in elementary school students.

### 6.1 Limitations

1. A significant limitation encountered was the scarcity of existing research specifically conducted at the elementary level within the Pallandri region concerning the topic under investigation. This absence of localized, age-appropriate studies made it challenging to establish a comprehensive contextual framework and draw direct comparisons with prior findings.

2. Data collection efforts were somewhat impeded by the non-cooperation of a subset of school heads. This limited engagement presented difficulties in accessing certain institutions and participants, potentially affecting the overall breadth and representativeness of the collected data.

3. While this study aimed to explore moral development, a more in-depth investigation into all potential contextual factors influencing it was beyond the scope of the current research. Future studies could benefit from a broader and more granular examination of these multifaceted influences.

4. Some participants provided responses that were not directly aligned with the research questions, posing analytical challenges. This required careful interpretation and, in some instances, led to the exclusion of certain data points that did not contribute meaningfully to the study's objectives.

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