EXPLORING TEACHERS' LEADERSHIP THROUGH PHENOMENOLOGICAL INQUIRY: INSIGHTS FROM STUDENTS IN CLASSROOM SETTINGS

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Abstract

The study employed a hermeneutic phenomenology research design to investigate the experiences and significance of postgraduate students regarding teachers' in-class leadership practices and their impact on learning. The researcher's personal student background motivated the exploration in this specific domain. Participants were selected from the entire postgraduate student population in Lahore, with ten individuals chosen based on established relationships, expressiveness about their experiences, willingness to share, and ability to articulate their thoughts logically. A comprehensive interview protocol, validated through a mock interview, was employed to delve into the lived experiences of postgraduate students. Interviews were conducted through Team meetings. Throughout the interviews, the researcher applied bracketing, focusing on participants' experiences. Ten subsequent interviews were conducted. Each participant shared anecdotes from their university experiences, describing interactions with their teachers. While most participants recounted positive experiences, some also shared negative encounters, citing instances where teachers seemed disloyal to their duties within the institute. It was found that Cooperative learning was a prevalent approach among teachers, with 60% adopting a democratic leadership style. However, a few participants noted that some teachers lacked a specific leadership style and teaching based on their mood swings. Certain teachers were acknowledged for their significant impact on students' performance. Those who were beloved by students typically followed a democratic leadership style, fostering a friendly environment that encouraged students to freely ask questions. However, instances of favoritism negatively affected student performance, with 30% to 40% of faculty members reportedly engaging in such practices. Participants collectively

concluded that 60% to 70% of teachers exhibited strong leadership qualities in their classes. The most prevalent leadership practice identified was that of being a resource provider.

Key Words: Phenomenological Inquiry, Leadership Practices, Students' perspective

Introduction

The concept of teacher leadership encompasses a range of activities undertaken by educators that not only involve instructing students but also extend their influence beyond the confines of their classrooms to impact their schools and other settings. One crucial aspect of teacher leadership is the responsibility to inspire and train others with the aim of enhancing overall school performance.

In the current study by York-Barr and Duke (2004), teacher leadership is characterized as teachers actively participating in school development and the teaching-learning process. This definition prompts teachers to broaden their sphere of influence beyond the classroom, taking on leadership roles that have a school-wide impact, as noted by Harris and Muijs (2004), Angelle and Dehart (2011), Harris (2005), and Alava, Halttunen, and Risku (2012).

Teacher leadership has been defined in various ways. Goodwin (2013) notes the challenge of researching teacher leadership due to the concept's frequent misinterpretation. The term is described as emerging yet captivating, with different perspectives depending on the respondent, be it the union president, team leader, teacher advocate, principal, superintendent, or professor. Kitz Miner and Moller (2009), after years of studying professional practices, depict teacher leaders as guides both inside and outside the classroom, identifying and engaging with a group of learners and leaders, encouraging improved learning, and acknowledging their responsibility for achieving results.

Henderson and Barron (2001) outline six common roles of teacher leaders, including being master teachers, curriculum specialists, guardians, mentors, student advocates, and researchers. These roles align with most academic researchers' definitions of teacher leadership.

According to Kitz Minor and Moller (2001), schools where teacher leadership is cultivated tend to witness improved student performance. Berth (2001) asserts that teacher leadership enables students to engage in and understand democratic leadership within educational institutions, leading to better decision-making regarding their school experiences. Furthermore, Berth (2001) underscores the idea that students learn effectively only when their teachers are engaged in continuous learning themselves.

Bechum & Dentheth (2004) posit that teachers may positively influence student feedback and performance through the promotion of leadership, willingness to take risks, and assuming additional responsibilities. The research on impactful leadership by Boss and Reggio (2006) validates that the initiatives taken by teacher leaders result in elevated student achievement. On the other side, Letwood and Gentzi (1999) discovered in their research that teacher leadership did not impact student engagement. Similarly, York Bar and Duke (2004) found limited evidence supporting the idea that teacher leadership contributes to increased student success. Nevertheless, they emphasized that teacher leaders prove effective by fostering trust-based relationships and prioritizing the teaching and learning process. According to York Bar and Duke (2004), teacher leaders play a crucial role in inspiring individual growth and fostering collaborative efforts to

enhance teaching within their schools. This influence can have a substantial impact on success by establishing positive teacher-student relationships, as well as fostering positive interactions among students, implementing effective class routines, and setting clear expectations.

This study was designed to explore the teachers' in class leadership practices and its influence on students' learning at post graduate level.

Methodology

The research design employed in this study was hermeneutic phenomenology, aiming to delve into the experiences and meanings that postgraduate students associate with teachers' in-class leadership practices and their impact on learning. The researcher's personal experience as a former student motivated her interest in exploring this specific area.

Before initiating the study, the researcher adopted a phenomenological mindset, encompassing intentionality, orientation, and phenomenological reduction. Intentionality reflects her beliefs regarding the connection between human beings and experiences, orientation emphasizes the significance of her own life experiences, and phenomenological reduction signifies her approach to understanding in-class leadership practices and their influence on student learning as they truly are and could be.

To achieve bracketing in phenomenological reduction and arrive at the essence of the experience, the researcher acknowledged that personal preconceptions and biases cannot be entirely set aside. She adopted Chan's (2013) strategies for bracketing, employing the following methods:

a. The researcher maintained a journal to record beliefs, judgments, and observations, reinforcing awareness throughout the research process. Field notes were taken during conversational interviews, maintaining a bare format to preserve the conversational tone. After each interview, notes were added.

b. The researcher, recognizing her orientation as a former postgraduate student, consciously remained open-minded in the research process to relate to the experiences of other postgraduate students.

c. Sub-questions were avoided to prevent steering the research toward preexisting literature. References to leader qualities and trending educational contexts were excluded from data collection and analysis.

d. Dialogues with participants, initiated with general questions about teachers' in-class leadership practices and the existential dimensions of teachers' leadership, were informed by discussions with the supervisor and senior colleagues in the field.

e. Unscripted interviews were conducted with postgraduate students using prompts and probes to explore their experiences of in-class leadership practices.

f. Leading questions were avoided, and nuanced or subjective language was probed for further clarification to prevent the researcher's assumptions from hindering deeper inquiry.

g. Hermeneutic analysis allowed for the researcher's interpretations. Still, to gather diverse perspectives, analytic interviews were conducted with participants who reviewed their narratives and those of others before the final analysis.

h. Reflective exercises were completed to aid in the analysis.

i.   The researcher shared the findings with participants to gather their feedback on the interpretations and analysis, ensuring a collaborative approach to the research process.

Population and Sample

Participants were chosen from the entire population of postgraduate students in Lahore. Ten individuals were selected based on the researcher's pre-established relationships with them. The criteria for participant selection were set under the assumption that postgraduate students undergo the impact of teachers' leadership practices in the classroom on their learning. The researcher also considered their expressiveness about this experience, willingness to share, and ability to articulate their experiences logically when establishing the criteria for inclusion in the study.

Following interviews with 10 participants, the researcher accumulated a wealth of experiences, and saturation was attained. In qualitative research, the concept of saturation, rooted in grounded theory, suggests that data collection should cease "when gathering fresh data, no longer sparks new insights or reveals new properties" (Creswell, 2014, p. 189).

Data Collection- Interview Protocol

A comprehensive interview protocol was developed to explore the lived experiences of postgraduate students, and its validity was confirmed through a mock interview. Participants were presented with a consent letter to elucidate the study's purpose, and their consent was duly obtained and documented. Online team meetings were utilized for conducting interviews due to the ease of recording and transcribing.

Throughout the interview process, the researcher consistently applied bracketing, focusing specifically on the participants' experiences. The interview guide included prompts for initiating and maintaining the conversation, obtaining consent, ensuring confidentiality, discussing leadership practices, their impact on learning, and delving into specific events. The aim of these conversations was to gather detailed descriptions of lived experiences, with the challenge being to center the discussion on the experience rather than the participants' thoughts about it. The Conversation Guide proved instrumental in keeping the focus on the experiential and existential aspects such as spatiality, corporeality, temporality, and rationality.

To prepare for the interviews, the researcher maintained a journal of past experiences and conducted a practice interview with a postgraduate student. The mock interview served as a test for the entire procedure, and its recording was documented for method validation and refinement.

The online team meeting for the mock interview was automatically transcribed, and the researcher edited the transcript by removing prompts and questions, eliminating pauses and pitches, completing sentences, and ensuring a smooth structural flow. The edited transcript was sent to the interviewee for confirmation. Subsequently, ten interviews were conducted following the pattern established during the mock interview.

Data Analysis

The data analysis process encompassed four steps: naive reading, structural analysis, comprehensive understanding, and critical reflection. Naive reading involved gaining an overall sense of the data and identifying initial themes or patterns. Structural analysis delved into a detailed

examination of the data, identifying sub-themes or variations. Comprehensive understanding entailed synthesizing the themes and sub-themes to form a coherent and holistic interpretation of the phenomena. Critical reflection involved evaluating the interpretation in relation to the research question, the existing literature, and the study's implications.

Phenomenological Writing

After completing heuristic interviews, the researcher engaged in a series of reflective writing exercises independently. This process aimed to further refine the narratives of lived experiences, creating anecdotes for potential inclusion in the hermeneutic narrative. Subsequent to the interviews, the researcher documented her reflections in a journal. This journal writing involved exercises that encouraged deeper contemplation on the nature of the experiences, employing heuristic, experiential, thematic, insight connections, vocative, and interpretive approaches. The journal, along with the literature review, served as a resource for writing. As time passed, the researcher's understanding evolved, prompting interpretive exercises. The intention was to circulate each draft in increasingly complex layers and directions.

Although the researcher initially listed 10 students, only 6 were ready and provided their consents. Pseudonyms, namely A, B, C, D, E, & F, were assigned to the interviewees for the purpose of analysis. The life stories presented below are organized in the order in which the interviews were conducted.

The interview (A)

A shared her perspective on leadership practices, emphasizing that leadership serves as a guiding dimension to achieve goals and complete tasks. According to her, the nature of leadership styles depends on the job requirements, with organizations necessitating different types of leaders, such as democratic or autocratic. In the education sector, A highlighted that teachers often adopt a democratic leadership style and occasionally take on team leadership roles based on the needs and demands of the situation.

An elaborated on her experience, noting that her teachers prefer teamwork as they believe it enhances learning through cooperation. According to her, teamwork provides an opportunity to achieve goals efficiently, bringing together diverse ideas and thoughts. A emphasized the benefits of group work, stating that it enhances critical thinking and allows for a deeper focus on specific topics. She shared an example of a class activity where students were assigned topics, conducted research, and presented their findings, creating a memorable learning experience.

A also mentioned that her teachers primarily use a democratic leadership style, being lenient but occasionally becoming strict in response to students' behavior. She expressed concerns about favoritism in some cases. A highlighted the practice of changing seating arrangements to alter the class environment and engage students. She shared a positive experience of an inclusive classroom activity where gadgets were created for disabled students, promoting the concept of "Education for all."

Furthermore, A discussed her psychology class experience, where the teacher encouraged independent learning by asking students to find answers in the library. She emphasized the lasting

impact of this approach on students' minds. However, she also acknowledged negative experiences with some teachers, describing instances of rudeness, insensitivity, and a lack of facilitation.

A expressed her belief that university-level teachers should be friendly with students, but she observed that not all teachers maintained this approach. She noted that some teachers were moody and indifferent to students' understanding. A categorized teachers into two groups, stating that 70% were good and motivated, while 30% were not suitable for the job.

Regarding teaching methods, A highlighted the use of multimedia, projectors, and email distribution of presentation files. She commended teachers who were good facilitators and resource providers. A concluded by emphasizing that leadership practices significantly influence student learning, advocating for a balanced and cooperative relationship between teachers and students. She noted that most of her teachers were cooperative and responsible, although a few lacked loyalty to their profession.

The interview (B)

B began her discussion by sharing her personal experiences, praising her teachers as great leaders. According to her, when teachers enter the class, they provide students with time to settle, maintaining a calm and friendly demeanor. This approach, she noted, relaxes students, refreshing and energizing them, creating an optimal environment for learning. Describing the initiation of classes, B mentioned how teachers would close the door, inquire if students were ready to learn, and create a calm and enjoyable atmosphere conducive to effective learning.

In terms of teaching methods, B mentioned that most of her teachers did not heavily rely on technology, occasionally using charts or multimedia. They provided students with relevant books, highlighted essential points, and even created notebooks that were available in the canteen for students to use freely. B praised their helpfulness, mentioning their open-door policy, willingness to answer questions, and even sharing personal contact information for prompt responses.

On the flip side, B acknowledged that some teachers engaged in sarcastic and confrontational behavior. However, she emphasized that the majority of teachers were excellent leaders, explaining each topic comprehensively with beautiful examples to enhance student understanding.

B highlighted that, although some teachers did not perform tasks in the class, they possessed extensive knowledge and command of the subjects they taught. These teachers, she noted, aimed to prepare students for practical life, encouraging them to think beyond academic limits and apply their knowledge in real-world scenarios.

According to B, leadership is an inherent quality for teachers, a gift from God. She expressed the belief that every teacher naturally possesses leadership qualities and serves as a motivational speaker for students. B shared a personal incident where her teacher asked her to write a word on the board in front of the entire class, creating a moment of embarrassment for her.

B acknowledged that some teachers use positive reinforcement, appreciating and rewarding students, and effectively influencing behavior. However, she also recognized that certain teachers, with a strict demeanor, had a powerful impact on students' minds. Despite such variations, B concluded that most teachers are exemplary leaders, dedicated to their profession, and contribute to shaping new leaders through their positive attitudes.

Interview (C)

At the beginning of the interview, C initially appeared a bit confused, but as time progressed, she regained composure and provided a highly energetic interview. According to C, leadership practices extend beyond what a teacher thinks or does in the class, emphasizing the importance of a teacher's behavior in the classroom, which is more significant than their thoughts and planning.

C believes that a teacher's behavior in specific circumstances or environments is indicative of their leadership style. C spoke eloquently about her teachers, describing them as having a strong vision, being delegates, and displaying honesty in their actions. She commended her teachers, expressing admiration for their effective task execution and engagement with students. C highlighted the timely use of formative and summative assessments by her teachers.

She discussed her preference for classes where students are actively engaged in learning through various technologies, such as audio-visual aids, remote learning, and distance learning. C emphasized the effectiveness of visual learning, sharing her positive experiences of engaging activities in class that enhanced practical understanding. C recounted a memorable experience in an assistive technology class where her teacher used examples and different technologies to help students comprehend the subject. The class included a trip to a special children's school, where students learned about assistive technologies for disabled children. This practical activity left a lasting impact on C, considering it the most interesting class and activity of her life.

Mostly, teachers in C's experience utilized multimedia technology, especially in computer classes. C praised her computer teacher for teaching MS Word and PowerPoint with demos and practical lessons, contributing to students' proficiency in assignments and presentations.

C expressed her admiration for her teachers as good leaders who take into consideration the interests of mature students, and in instances where the backbenches are overlooked, they promote group work to involve all students. She appreciates the honesty and hard work of her teachers, emphasizing their dedication to students' understanding. While acknowledging that every teacher's leadership style may differ, C emphasized that the ultimate goal should be the betterment of students. She personally favors the democratic leadership style, appreciating the active participation and idea-sharing between students and teachers in the class.

C shared positive reviews about a teacher named Miss Sumera, who encourages students to ask questions anytime. While acknowledging that this may not always yield solutions, C stressed that such an attitude provides support and relaxation to students.

Discussing the attributes of a good teacher, C emphasized the importance of courage, patience, politeness, and honesty. She praised her research teacher for facilitating her learning by providing a book when her notes were lost, expressing deep respect for her as a legendary teacher.

C concluded by stating that every teacher is good in their own way, but she particularly appreciates those who are friendly with their students. She believes that 40% of teachers are excellent leaders out of 100.

Interview (D)

From D's viewpoint, a leader functions as a role model, much like a candle casting light on the lives of others. She recounted her encounters with two distinct leadership styles: democratic and autocratic. In democratic leadership, teachers were perceived as overbearing, primarily focused on delivering lectures and completing the syllabus, resulting in student disinterest and passivity. D advocated for autocratic leadership, underscoring the importance of teachers actively listening to students, addressing their inquiries, and providing assistance. According to D, autocratic leaders create a relaxed environment and offer proper guidance.

D underscored the significance of multimedia technology, particularly in government college settings, where she and her peers took a keen interest in multimedia classes, facilitating a deeper understanding of the subject matter. Teachers, adopting diverse leadership styles, assigned group projects that stimulated creativity, critical thinking, and idea generation among students. D shared an experience with an ICT subject teacher, highlighting the value of resourceful teaching.

She critiqued an instance where students were required to bring laptops, causing distress for those without. D emphasized the importance of teachers cultivating a positive learning environment, contrasting this with the effective utilization of a computer lab where all students could learn.

According to D, exemplary teachers are democratic and sacrificial, akin to candles burning to brighten the lives of others. She stressed that a good leader must bring their students along, nurturing them into leaders rather than mere followers. D asserted that a teacher should possess morality and a commendable personality, expressing disapproval of childish attitudes among educators. In her perspective, teachers should also impart religious and moral values, a practice she herself adheres to.

D commended Miss Sumera as an exemplary resource provider who not only assigns thesis topics but also offers related articles. While recognizing that not all teachers serve as resource providers, D expressed gratitude for their guidance. Describing an experience in a psychology class, D praised a teacher for creating activities that enabled students to grasp and apply psychological concepts effectively. She concluded that 80% of her teachers were honest and effective leaders, attributing her own leadership qualities to the influence of one particular teacher

Interview (E)

According to E, "leadership practices are about inspiring, innovating, and empowering." To inspire, a leader interacts with students as leaders themselves, not as mere followers, aiming to empower them to achieve their goals. Innovation involves fostering creativity in students through exposure to various technologies, aiming to instill a lifelong learning attitude. E emphasized that leaders create leaders, giving their best to inspire others, unlike those who merely seek followers without giving their utmost effort—a key distinction between a leader and a teacher.

E noted that her teachers refrain from spoon-feeding and adopt a facilitative role. They engage students during lectures, sharing life experiences related to the topic, providing examples, and encouraging questions for better comprehension. E believes that teachers play a pivotal role in shaping good learners, as they serve as role models for students who emulate their behavior.

She mentioned her teacher's frequent use of PowerPoint and projectors, expressing admiration for their ability to involve all students. E disfavors traditional lecture methods, asserting that student

engagement is compromised during such sessions. Teachers who actively involve students in class, especially through technology, garner more attention and participation.

E disclosed that her teacher incorporates quizzes and multimedia elements, particularly when dealing with challenging topics, to enhance student engagement. Participative lecture methods, where both students and teachers actively participate, are favored by her teachers. E appreciates her teacher's innovative approach, clear vision, effective communication skills, simplicity in delivering lectures, mastery of the subject, and dedication to students during free periods.

She pointed out instances of favoritism among some teachers, favoring students who are visibly active or show off in class. E stressed the importance of teachers being facilitators, friendly, creative, and kind, providing guidance even during free time. While acknowledging that a majority of her teachers were effective leaders, she acknowledged a few who fell short in terms of honesty and loyalty.

Interviews (F)

F emphasized that a leader, particularly in the role of a teacher, is someone who places themselves in various situations for the betterment of those they serve. Teachers aim to ensure a promising future for their students by actively guiding them toward achieving their goals and aspirations. F shared a significant experience with her science teacher, who employed audiovisual aids to enhance the classroom environment. Recognizing the challenges students face in comprehending science, the teacher incorporated videos and interactive questions to engage students and simplify the subject.

The technological approach in science studies, as highlighted by F, provides significant advantages, aiding students in understanding intricate processes and phenomena outlined in advanced syllabi. F recounted an engaging story about identifying real diamonds, illustrating how the teacher used narratives to impart knowledge. Additionally, the teacher played a vital role in fostering leadership skills among students by appointing group leaders responsible for coordinating activities, thereby nurturing confidence and leadership capabilities.

F commended her teachers for serving as excellent resource providers and facilitators, offering additional knowledge through diverse mediums such as books, stories, videos, and dictionaries. Teachers dedicated extra time to clarify challenging terminologies, ensuring students' understanding. F underscored the role of her teachers in cultivating leadership qualities by establishing various societies, focusing on character-building, cleanliness, girls' guidance, proctors, and school councils. These societies instilled discipline, confidence, and leadership skills among students, contributing to their comprehensive development as responsible individuals.

Conclusions/Discussion:

The findings are derived from the analysis of the data, representing a synthesis of the outcomes of this research. Coding was employed to identify any remarks pertaining to key terms or themes. The interview transcriptions were thoroughly scrutinized, and all mentions of elements related to leadership practices were extracted. The participants' crucial comments were meticulously examined.

Leadership practices

Participants were tasked with articulating their views on leadership practices. Based on the researcher's observations, some participants lacked clarity regarding in-class leadership practices and offered suggestions on what qualities a leader should possess. Conversely, those with a clear understanding of leadership practices provided insightful explanations with excellent examples. Leadership practices were identified as a source of motivation for students to attain their goals, fostering the development of effective leaders. Participants shared their experiences to support these perspectives.

When participants were prompted to elaborate on teachers' task execution skills and methods, the majority responded positively. Five out of six participants indicated that their teachers executed tasks through teamwork or group work, utilizing various technologies to engage students. Others mentioned that some teachers fulfilled their duties solely by delivering lectures without actively involving students. Multimedia was reported as a commonly used technology, as noted by nearly all participants, though a few mentioned that their teachers adhered to traditional lecture methods without incorporating any technology.

Each participant shared anecdotes from their university experiences, describing interactions with their teachers. While most participants recounted positive experiences, some also shared negative encounters, citing instances where teachers seemed disloyal to their duties within the institute. Cooperative learning was a prevalent approach among teachers, with 60% adopting a democratic leadership style, as reported by the participants. However, a few participants noted that some teachers lacked a specific leadership style, teaching based on their mood swings.

Teachers employing a democratic leadership style were described as student-friendly, creating a positive classroom environment through strategic seating arrangements, engaging students with questions, and fostering discussions on the topic. Conversely, those adhering to an autocratic leadership style were perceived as authoritarian, focusing primarily on students in the front rows and delivering lectures without active student engagement. This approach resulted in passive listening, with students often disinterested and engaged in side conversations during such lectures.

The role of facilitator and resource provider was widely attributed to teachers, with some forming groups for teamwork, conducting practical sessions, assigning tasks such as assignments and presentations, and guiding students in various activities.

Certain teachers were acknowledged for their significant impact on students' performance. Those who were beloved by students typically followed a democratic leadership style, fostering a friendly environment that encouraged students to freely ask questions. However, instances of favoritism negatively affected student performance, with 30% to 40% of faculty members reportedly engaging in such practices.

Participants collectively concluded that 60% to 70% of teachers exhibited strong leadership qualities in their classes. The most prevalent leadership practice identified was that of being a resource provider.

Main Leadership Practices

Resource Provider The majority of educators served as commendable resource providers, offering valuable notes, books, and other aids beneficial for students. Some teachers went beyond

and crafted notebooks available in the canteen for students to purchase as needed (Participant C). Furthermore, teachers supplied essential links and documents through USB and emails (Participant B). The approach of not spoon-feeding, but acting as facilitators, was emphasized by some participants (Participant E), and teachers were acknowledged for providing extra knowledge through various means such as books, stories, videos, and dictionaries (Participant F).

Decision Maker Certain teachers demonstrated strong decision-making skills, consistently aiming for the betterment of their students. These educators were open to altering ineffective techniques, soliciting feedback on teaching styles, and making necessary adjustments to enhance students' learning experiences. Teachers adhering to autocratic styles were noted for their adherence to set rules (Participant A). Participants acknowledged that teachers played a pivotal role in decisions concerning lesson content, teaching styles, motivation, and class resources (Participant D). The dedication of teachers to the best interests of the students and the institute was underscored (Participant E).

Facilitator Participants recognized some teachers as adept facilitators who leveraged diverse technologies to enhance learning experiences, including the use of multimedia for lectures. Authentic notes, books, and learning opportunities were provided, demonstrating a commitment to facilitating student growth (Participant D). Participants praised teachers who not only taught lessons but also provided guidance akin to a motherly figure (Participant F).

Creating New Approaches Teachers were proactive in adopting innovative technologies and ideas to advance the learning process, incorporating reality-based pedagogy and projector-based learning. Group-based learning and educational trips were particularly praised by students (Participant B, Participant D). Teachers encouraged students to create assistive technologies for disabled students, fostering creativity and skills development (Participant F).

Problem Solver Effective teachers demonstrated a problem-solving approach to address conflicts and challenges in the classroom. This ability involved acknowledging mistakes, adapting learning styles, and actively solving issues to ensure proper student understanding (Participant D). Teachers were viewed as helpful problem solvers, dedicating time to ask questions, make suggestions, and aid students in understanding challenging concepts (Participant A). Students appreciated teachers for their availability and provision of effective solutions to problems (Participant C).

Conflict Management Teachers played a crucial role in managing conflicts within the class by directly confronting issues, talking with students separately, and developing plans to resolve conflicts (Participant F). Teachers were credited for effectively resolving classroom and school-related issues, maintaining a regulated and harmonious learning environment (Participant A).

Counselor Teachers assumed a counseling role, providing guidance on subjects, offering historical context to emphasize the importance of studies, and aiding students in adjusting to their surroundings (Participant A, Participant D).

Maintain Discipline Teachers prioritized maintaining classroom discipline by altering seating arrangements and adopting strategies to create a conducive learning environment (Participant F). Initiatives such as discussing students' daily experiences and challenges during lectures were employed to foster attentiveness and maintain discipline (Participant E).

Guide for the Future Teachers were not only educators but also served as guides, providing valuable advice, suggestions, and career guidance. Students recognized teachers as role models who offered insights into pursuing a fulfilling career and becoming better educators in the future (Participant A, Participant E).

Effect of leadership practices on learning

Teachers' leadership practices play a crucial role in guiding students and molding them into effective leaders. These practices significantly impact student learning by providing various opportunities and fostering a conducive educational environment. Leadership practices empower students, granting them the freedom to explore and develop their creativity and skills. Participants emphasized that their teacher's ensured access to learning facilities, dedicated extra time for knowledge dissemination, and utilized diverse technologies to enhance students' capabilities and interests.

Teachers, often adopting a democratic leadership style, were observed to positively influence students' learning experiences and creativity, promoting collaborative group work. However, instances of favoritism by some teachers were noted, resulting in a decline of interest among the majority of students. Participants highlighted the positive impact of technology, particularly multimedia, on student engagement and interest.

While some teachers focused solely on delivering lectures without involving the entire class, others opted for unconventional methods, such as sharing personal life experiences. Participants recognized that teachers possessing command over their subjects, coupled with creativity and intelligence, were effective leaders and role models. The conclusion drawn was that a teacher's leadership effectiveness is not solely dependent on technology and projects; instead, a strong command of the subject and the ability to inspire are equally significant in fostering better learning outcomes.

The current study, which explores teacher in-class leadership practices from the perspective of students, is groundbreaking in Pakistan, as no similar study has been conducted before. The research aimed to understand how teachers conduct themselves during lectures and how students perceive their attitudes. It delved into the various leadership styles employed by teachers for postgraduate students in the classroom, shedding light on teachers' attributes during lectures and the technologies utilized to facilitate postgraduate students' learning and their impact.

This research provides insights into students' expectations regarding their teachers in the classroom setting. Recognizing the classroom as a crucial space where students acquire diverse knowledge, it became imperative to investigate teacher leadership practices within this context.

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