Transforming Learning Environments: Unraveling the Impact of Transformational Leadership on Secondary School Climate

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Abstract

Emphasizing the requirement of a supportive environment to encourage students' academic achievement, this study delves into the significant impact of leadership styles on school climate. The research investigates the role of leadership behaviour in creating a secure, valued, respectful, and trusting school climate, expanding on the previous assumption. According to the study, leadership styles, collaboration, staff development, feedback, and incentives are critical components of an ideal learning environment, which draws on research on successful school leadership. The study's overarching goals are to make sense of secondary school principals' varying leadership styles and how those styles impact school climate. The study uses a survey methodology to describe its subjects, which included 1,190 teachers and 556 school administrators. The primary method for collecting data is a carefully designed questionnaire that includes 15 questions about leadership styles and 15 questions about the school's environment. The Cronbach alpha test is used to determine the questionnaire's reliability. Statistical methods, including percentages, means, differences, t-tests, and analysis of variance (ANOVA) in SPSS version 21, provide fascinating insights when applied to the gathered data. Leadership styles and school climate are firmly related, according to the study. Unlike transactional leadership's negative impact, transformational leadership positively impacts the school environment. Regardless, the data shows that most secondary school principals prefer transactional leadership. Moreover, while there may be particular upsides to a hands-off approach to leadership, the educational environment could suffer as a result. The research ends by recommending that school principals participate in transformational leadership seminars. It argues that one must adopt a transformational personality to avoid a crisis in education. According to the research, there must be a change in leadership preferences towards types that improve the school atmosphere and students' educational experiences overall.

Keywords: Transformational leadership, School climate, Secondary level.

Introduction

People often say education is the most crucial part of a successful life. For a nation to grow and become more independent and competitive globally, its intellectual capacity must be nurtured and enhanced. There is an ongoing need to modify and update educational systems in light of globalization. This is because education needs to remain relevant by reflecting societal values, norms, and foundations while keeping pace with scientific advancements. In administrative or leadership-controlled schools, this procedure is carried out.

Moreover, numerous forms of leadership exist. Every manager has a distinct leadership style developed over time in response to their interactions with subordinates, the demands of their organizations, and the difficulties they encounter. A leader's capacity to influence subordinates to manage the organization's operations (Maqbool et al., 2023).

Alternative leadership styles include authoritarian, partial, cooperative, participative, and sustainable models. Recent scholarly investigations have uncovered about fifty unique approaches to leadership. Leadership philosophies that receive the most attention include transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire approaches. Leaders with a transformational leadership style guide their followers to see things in a new light, change their viewpoint on what is essential, and adapt to new opportunities and threats in their environment and within themselves (Ucar & Dalgic, 2021; Farahani & Lafva, 2016).

A leader practicing transactional leadership would utilize incentives and punishments to get their followers to do what they want.

Rewards and penalties are one way that transactional leaders keep their people motivated in the short term. Leaders who exercise delegated or laissez-faire leadership step aside and allow followers to make decisions (Okilwa & Barnett, 2017). Findings indicate that group members typically show the least productivity when leaders use this strategy. Strategically employing innovative methods of management is high on the list of priorities. Management expertise is required, as is the ability to identify and implement novel and optimal solutions and coordinate efforts to improve teachers' competence in class monitoring (Naz & Rashid, 2021; Dhindsa, 2016).

When a boss adopts a laissez-faire attitude, they let their employees do what they want. With a laissez-faire attitude, leaders are free to do as they choose. In 2012, Batti published: Laissez-faire leaders try to keep their hands off their followers as much as possible and instead rely on them to do most tasks (Newstrom & Keith, 2002). As part of its laissez-faire philosophy, managers step back and let things develop naturally. The leaders' purpose in keeping their followers in the dark is to help them find their footprints. According to Tzianakopoulou and Manesis (2018), he gives his subordinates ideas and resources and gets involved only when necessary. This management approach could be better for jobs where the subordinates are highly skilled. In this company, workers have much leeway to decide how to get their jobs done. The above suggests that different leadership styles influence different institutional settings. When applied to diverse contexts, different styles provide different outcomes. Good leaders choose and implement plans based on the situation, the availability of resources, and the talents of the

employees. Choosing a leadership style that complements the organization's culture is crucial. Interactions, target setting for individual development or improvement, and system upkeep and modification are all components of the learning environment. One aspect of relationships is the feeling of belonging kids get from their teachers and classmates. Goal orientation, or personal growth, encompasses the staff's collective pursuit of self-improvement and professional development. System change and maintenance include organizing rules to be clear and enforcing them strictly by the teacher (Anderson & Sun, 2017).

A positive school atmosphere is one in which all children are safe, valued, respected, and wanted; one in which they can work together and trust one another; and one in which teachers play a crucial role in fostering this climate. (Matias & Sousa, 2017; Almansour, 2016) State thus. Empower pupils to make positive behavioral changes; teachers must model the desired conduct. Teachers can model self-control in their interactions with students, which will, in turn, encourage students to develop similar habits. They need to be determined to succeed, get along well with colleagues, and offer their bosses the utmost respect so they may demonstrate their appreciation for their policies and leadership. For students to succeed academically, it is crucial to foster an encouraging atmosphere. Agency heads will need to put their hearts into this endeavor. Many researchers have proposed different approaches that could be used to accomplish this. The most crucial pieces of advice include leadership conduct, teamwork, employee growth, feedback, and incentives.

Statement of the Problem

Every principal uses a different approach when it comes to getting things done in the classroom. How various leadership styles affect school climate sheds light on the fact that different situations call for different approaches. Different leaders attain their goals by adopting different styles of leadership. Several studies have shown ways to create a welcoming classroom environment for students of various ages and skill levels (Abdullah & Alkhrabsheh, 2019; Akhter et al., 2015; Mosime, 2000). Efforts were made in this study to examine various leadership styles of Punjabi school principals and their effects on the school atmosphere at the secondary level.

Research Objectives

Research objectives of this study were;

- To find out the different leadership styles of school heads at secondary level
- To analyses the role of different leadership styles on school climate

Research Questions

1. Which different leadership styles are adopted of school heads at secondary level?
2. What is the role of different leadership styles on school climate?

Significance of the Study

This research is significant because it examines the effectiveness of various leadership styles among secondary school principals. Heads of schools can get direction on how to evaluate their leadership style and the impact that various approaches are likely to have on school spirit. The findings of this study have crucial implications for school administration, who should use them to make

unconventional and effective judgments and take steps to boost educators' skills in overseeing student learning. This study has highlighted potential future research directions. In light of this, the study provides valuable direction for academics to follow when deciding what topics to examine in the future.

Research Methodology

The nature of the study was descriptive. Surveying was utilized to finish this investigation. Collecting information regarding the leadership styles of school administrators was the primary objective of this study. Therefore, the primary respondents were the principals and teachers of their respective schools. The study's sample included one thousand one hundred ninety teachers and 556 school administrators. Following an exhaustive examination of the relevant literature, a questionnaire was constructed. The teachers and the school head were given the same questionnaire. There were fifteen items about the leadership styles of school administrators and fifteen things about the school's atmosphere. The Cronbach alpha method was utilized to determine the reliability of the questionnaires. Regarding the questionnaire given to teachers and school administrators, the values of dependability were 0.82 and 0.80, respectively. Statistics such as percentage, mean score, mean difference, t-test, and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were utilized to analyze the collected data. For data analysis, SPSS version 21 was utilized.

Data Analysis

Following table states the demographic information about the of sample of the study.

Table 1

Demographic information of participant

Variable	Sample	Head of school (%)	Teachers (%)
Gender	Male	57	69
	Female	43	31
Area of School	Urban	61	51
	Rural	39	43
Age	25-35	11	18
	36-45	33	29
	46-55	38	38
	Above	18	15
Qualification	B.A/B.Sc./M.A	74	87
	M.Phil./ Ph.D.	26	13
Professional qualification	B.Ed.	55	44
	M.Ed.	45	56

Table 1 describes the demographic information of the participant, gender, area of school, age of the participant, qualification and professional qualification was used. In which 57/ and 43/ were heads male and female and 69/ and 31 teachers were male and female. 61/ and 39/ heads were from urban and rural areas and 51/ and 43/ teachers from urban and rural areas.

Table 2

Mean difference among leadership styles

Leadership style	Respondents	Mean score	SD	Results of t – test		
				Mean difference	T– score	Sig. at 0.05 level
Transformational	Head Teacher	23.45	3.9	2.35	10.29	0.00
	Teachers	21.55	4.01			
Transactional	Head Teacher	19.17	4.34	0.020	0.159	0.832
	Teachers	18.09	3.45			
Laissez fair	Head Teacher	22.57	3.15	1.05	5.168	0.00
	Teachers	18.34	3.71			

Although there is a positive difference in the data between the heads' and teachers' mean scores (heads' score 23.45, teachers' score 21.55), the results of the t-test (mean difference 2.35, t-score 10.29, and P value 0.000) indicate a significant mean difference between the groups' mean scores. This suggests that the school head has a transformational style. The results show that the leaders' preferred type of leadership, transformational leadership, is ineffective. The mean scores of both groups differ slightly in the transactional test (heads' score: 19.17 and teachers' score: 18.09). However, the t-test results (mean difference, 0.020, t-value 0.159, P value 0.832) indicate no significant mean difference between the two groups' scores. Teachers and principals agree that principals use a transformative leadership approach. The t-test results show no significant mean difference between the groups, with a mean difference of 1.05 and a t-score of 5.168, with a p-value of 0.000. The heads' score was 22.57, and the teachers' score was 18.34, indicating a slight difference between the groups. The fact that school administrators and faculty members are at odds over implementing a laissez-faire leadership style indicates this.

Table 3

Impact style of transformational on school climate

S. No.	Statement	Option	N		Mean of school climate	ANOVA Results	
			Frequency	%		F	Sig.
1	Talks with the staff and then set goals.	Yes	95	83	82	13.578	0.000
		No	13	11	81		
		Neutral	7	6	79		
2	Empowers the staff.	Yes	86	75	83	13.174	0.000
		No	21	20	80		
		Neutral	6	5	76		

3	Involves the staff in decision making.	Yes	110	97	81	18.063	0.000
		No	2	1	77		
		Neutral	3	2	70		
4	Invites teachers to connect in addressing administrative problems.	Yes	102	89	82	13.940	0.000
		No	9	8	81		
		Neutral	4	3	72		
5	Encourages teachers to use their teaching method and techniques	Yes	105	91	82	8.241	0.000
		No	6	4	80		
		Neutral	4	5	84		

Talk with the staff and then set goals for the school climate. It explains that the mean school climate score was second in rank when applying this rule (81). In the case of no, the mean score was last in rank (80). Regarding the heads' style of being neutral about applying this rule in school, a school climate score was on top in rank (84). ANOVA results (f 7.347, p 0.000) indicate significant mean difference between groups. This means talking with the staff and then setting goals is a negative tactic to improve the school climate.

Empower the staff on the school climate. It explains that the mean school climate score was top in rank when applying this rule (83). In the case of no, the mean score was second in rank (80). In the case of the heads' style being neutral about applying this rule in school, the school climate score was last in rank (76). ANOVA results (f 13.174, p 0.000) indicate significant mean difference between groups. This means empowering the staff is a positive tact to improve the school climate.

Involve the staff in decision-making on the school climate. It explains that the mean school climate score was top in rank when applying this rule (81). In the case of no, the mean score was second in rank (77). In the case of the heads' style being neutral about applying this rule in school, a score of school climate was last in rank (70). ANOVA results (f 18.063, p 0.000) indicate significant mean difference between groups. This means involving the staff in decision-making is a positive tact to improve the school climate. Encourage teachers to use their teaching methods and techniques" on the school climate. It explains that the mean school climate score was second in rank when applying this rule (82). In the case of no, the mean score was last in rank (80).

Regarding the heads' style of being neutral about applying this rule in school, a school climate score was on top in rank (84). ANOVA results (f 8.241, p 0.000) indicate significant mean difference between groups. This means encouraging teachers to use their teaching methods and techniques is a negative tactic to improve the school climate. "Invite teachers to connect in addressing administrative problems" on the school climate. It explains that the mean school climate score was top in rank when applying this rule (82). In the case of no, the mean score was second in rank (81). In the case of the heads' style being neutral about applying this rule in school, a school climate score was last in rank (72). ANOVA results (f 13.940, p 0.000) indicate significant mean difference between groups. Inviting teachers to connect to address administrative problems is a positive tactic to improve the school climate. "Encourage teachers to use their teaching methods and techniques" on the school climate. It explains that the mean

school climate score was second in rank when applying this rule (82). In the case of no, the mean score was last in rank (80). In the case of the heads' style being neutral about applying this rule in school, a score of school climate was on top in rank (84). ANOVA results (f 8.241, p 0.000) indicate a significant mean difference between groups. This means encouraging teachers to use their teaching methods and techniques is a negative tactic to improve the school climate.

Table 4

Impact style of transactional on school climate

S. No.	Statements	Option	N		Mean score of school climate	ANOVA Results	
			Frequency	%		F	Sig.
1	Settles conflicts under stress.	Yes	42	37	81	9.976	0.000
		No	47	41	83		
		Neutral	26	6	78		
2	Imposes his ideas on the teachers.	Yes	49	43	81	3.369	0.012
		No	55	47	83		
		Neutral	11	10	84		
3	Teachers are threatened with punishment to achieve the educational objectives.	Yes	46	40	80	9.968	0.000
		No	65	57	82		
		Neutral	4	3	80		
4	Acts without consulting the teachers.	Yes	48	42	80	16.619	0.000
		No	63	55	82		
		Neutral	4	4	72		
5	Deadline and task are important	Yes	94	82	82	8.377	0.000
		No	14	12	80		
		Neutral	7	6	77		

Settle conflict under stress" on the school climate. It explains that mean score of school climate was on second in rank in case of applying this rule (81). In case of no the mean score was on top in rank (83). In case of heads' style to be neutral about the application of this rule in school, score of school climate was on last in rank (78). ANOVA results (f 9.976, p 0.000) indicate significant mean difference between groups. This means settling conflict under stress is a negative tact to improve school climate.

"Impose his ideas on teachers" on the school climate. It explains that mean score of school climate was on last in rank in case of applying this rule (81). In case of no the mean score was second in rank (83). In case of heads' style to be neutral about the application of this rule in school, score of school climate was on top in rank (84). ANOVA results (f 3.369, p 0.012) indicate significant mean difference between groups. This means imposing his ideas on teachers is negative tact to improve school climate. "Teachers must be threatening with

punishment to achieve educational objectives" on the school climate. It explains that mean score of school climate was on second in rank in case of applying this rule (80). In case of no the mean score was on top in rank (82). In case of heads' style to be neutral about the application of this rule in school, score of school climate was on last in rank (80). ANOVA results (f 9.968, p 0.000) indicate significant mean difference between groups. This means teachers must be threatening with punishment to achieve educational objectives is a negative tact to improve school climate.

"Act without consulting the teachers" on the school climate. It explains that mean score of school climate was on second in rank in case of applying this rule (80). In case of no the mean score was on second in rank (82). In case of heads' style to be neutral about the application of this rule in school, score of school climate was on last in rank (72). ANOVA results (f 16.619, p 0.000) indicate significant mean difference between groups. This means acting without consulting the teachers is a negative tact to improve school climate.

"Give importance of dead line and tasks" on the school climate. It explains that mean score of school climate was on top in rank in case of applying this rule (82). In case of no the mean score was on second in rank (8o). In case of heads' style to be neutral about the application of this rule in school, score of school climate was on last in rank (77). ANOVA results (f 8.377, p 0.000) indicate significant mean difference between groups. This means giving importance of deadline and tasks is a positive tact to improve school climate.

Table 5

Impact style of lasses-fair on school climate

S. No.	Statements	Option	N Frequency	%	Mean score of school climate	ANOVA Results F	Sig.
1	Workers have the right to determine their own objectives.	Yes	95	83	82		
		No	13	11	81	13.578	0.000
		Neutral	7	6	79		
2	Gives freedom to teachers to take decision.	Yes	61	53	83		
		No	42	36	81	6.716	0.000
		Neutral	12	10	80		
3	Allows teachers to create and determine their own objectives.	Yes	91	79	82		
		No	16	14	81	18.450	0.000
		Neutral	8	7	76		
4	leaves decisions to be made by teachers without involvement	Yes	97	84	81		
		No	15	13	83	2.827	0.028
		Neutral	3	3	85		
5	Each individual is responsible for defining his/her own job	Yes	91	79	82		
		No	16	14	81	18.450	0.000
		Neutral	8	7	76		

"Allow teachers to create and determine their own objectives" on the school climate. It explains that mean score of school climate was on top in rank in case of applying this rule (82). In case of no the mean score was on second in rank (81). In case of heads' style to be neutral about the application of this rule in school, score of school climate was on last in rank (76). ANOVA results (f 18.450, p 0.000) indicate significant mean difference between groups. This means allowing teachers to create and determine their own objectives is a positive tact to improve school climate. "Give freedom to teachers to take decision" on the school climate. It explains that mean score of school climate was on top in rank (82) in case of applying this rule. In case of "no" the mean score was on second in rank (81). In case of heads' style to be neutral about the application of this rule in school, score of school climate was on last in rank (79). ANOVA results (f 13.578, p 0.000) indicate significant mean difference between groups at 0.05 level of significance. This means giving freedom to teachers to take decision is a positive tact to improve school climate.

"Allow teachers to create and determine their own objectives" on the school climate. It explains that mean score of school climate was on top in rank in case of applying this rule (82). In case of no the mean score was on second in rank (81). In case of heads' style to be neutral about the application of this rule in school, score of school climate was on last in rank (76). ANOVA results (f 18.450, p 0.000) indicate significant mean difference between groups. This means allowing teachers to create and determine their own objectives is a positive tact to improve school climate. "Leave decisions to be made by teachers without involvement" on the school climate. It explains that mean score of school climate was on top in rank in case of applying this rule (83). In case of no the mean score was on second in rank (81). In case of heads' style to be neutral about the application of this rule in school, score of school climate was on last in rank (80). ANOVA results (f 6.716, p 0.000) indicate significant mean difference between groups. This means leaving decisions to be made by teachers without involvement is a positive tact to improve school climate. "Each individual is responsible for defining his/her own job" on the school climate. It explains that mean score of school climate was on last in rank in case of applying this rule (81). In case of no the mean score was on second in rank (83). In case of heads' style to be neutral about the application of this rule in school, score of school climate was on top in rank (85). ANOVA results (f 2.827, p 0.028) indicate significant mean difference between groups. This means each individual is responsible for defining his/her own job is a negative tact to improve school climate.

Conclusion

A conclusion that can be drawn from the research findings is that there is a connection between the various leadership styles and the school's atmosphere. The style of leadership known as transformational has a positive impact on the climate of the school, whereas the style known as transactional hurts the climate of the school. However, the heads of schools at the secondary level prefer the transactional leadership style. Laissez-faire is another style of leadership that could be better but could have adverse effects on the school's climate. In contrast to transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles, the findings of this study indicate that transformational leadership is superior. An educational crisis can be avoided by employing a suitably selective leadership style.

Recommendations

The transformational leadership style is superior to the transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles in the school climate. Therefore, it is necessary to hold seminars to educate the heads about the significance of adopting a transformative personality.

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