

Instructional Leadership and Teachers' Job Performance at Secondary School Level in Pakistan: An Empirical Study

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between instructional leadership and teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Lahore, Pakistan. The objectives were to assess the levels of instructional leadership and teachers' job performance, determine the relationship between these variables, and examine the predictive effect of instructional leadership on teachers' job performance. A quantitative, descriptive-correlational research design was employed. The target population comprised 2,924 Secondary School Teachers (SSTs) working in public secondary schools in Lahore. A sample of 292 male and female SSTs was selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using two adapted instruments: the Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire (Sultana & Naureen, 2022) and the Instructional Leadership Questionnaire (Akram, 2017). Both instruments employed a five-point Likert scale. Content validity was established through expert judgment, while reliability analysis yielded Cronbach's alpha coefficients of .949 for the Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire and .903 for the Instructional Leadership Questionnaire, indicating high internal consistency. Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), Version 22, employing descriptive statistics, Pearson's product-moment correlation, and simple linear regression. The findings indicated that both instructional leadership and teachers' job performance were at high levels. Furthermore, a statistically significant, moderately positive relationship was found between instructional leadership and teachers' job performance. Regression analysis also revealed that instructional leadership significantly predicted teachers' job performance. These findings highlight the importance of instructional leadership in supporting teachers' professional performance. Accordingly, school principals should strengthen their instructional leadership competencies through professional development, with particular emphasis on practices that support teaching effectiveness and improve teachers' performance.

Keywords: Instructional leadership, teachers' job performance, secondary school teachers

INTRODUCTION

Education plays a vital role in social progress, economic growth, and national development. The quality of education depends largely on effective classroom instruction and educational leadership. Teachers are expected to implement changing curricula, adopt effective pedagogical approaches, address diverse student needs, and integrate technology into teaching. School principals therefore have an important role in providing instructional guidance and professional support to enhance teachers' job performance.

Instructional leadership emphasizes the improvement of teaching and learning rather than merely managing administrative responsibilities. Hallinger and Murphy (1985) conceptualized instructional leadership around defining the school mission, managing the instructional programme, and promoting

a positive school learning climate. Instructional leaders establish academic goals, supervise classroom instruction, monitor curriculum implementation, provide constructive feedback, and facilitate teachers' professional development. Subsequent research has highlighted the importance of instructional leadership in improving teaching practices and student outcomes (Blase & Blase, 2000; Robinson et al., 2008). Teachers' job performance encompasses lesson planning, instructional delivery, classroom management, assessment, student feedback, professional responsibility, and collaboration with colleagues. Effective instructional leadership can support these activities by providing teachers with guidance, resources, constructive feedback, and opportunities for professional learning. Research suggests that leadership support contributes to teachers' professional commitment and instructional effectiveness (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Nguni et al., 2006).

In Pakistan, secondary school teachers face challenges associated with examination-oriented instruction, large classrooms, limited resources, and inadequate professional development opportunities. Principals may prioritize administrative responsibilities over instructional supervision, limiting opportunities to improve classroom practices. Previous studies have reported positive associations between instructional leadership and teachers' job performance in Pakistani schools, including the findings of Sultana and Naureen (2022), who reported a moderate positive correlation between the two variables in public secondary schools in District Quetta.

Despite the importance of instructional leadership, further context-specific evidence is needed to understand its relationship with teachers' job performance in public secondary schools in Lahore, Punjab. Therefore, this study examined the levels of instructional leadership and teachers' job performance, investigated the relationship between these variables, and determined the extent to which instructional leadership predicts teachers' job performance. The findings may inform school leadership development and strategies for improving teaching effectiveness in Pakistan.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Instructional Leadership and Teachers' Job Performance

Instructional leadership emphasizes the principal's role in improving teaching and learning through academic goal setting, curriculum coordination, instructional supervision, monitoring student progress, and teacher professional development. Hallinger and Murphy (1985) conceptualized instructional leadership through three major functions: defining the school mission, managing the instructional programme, and promoting a positive school learning climate. Blase and Blase (2000) further emphasized classroom observation, constructive feedback, reflective dialogue, and professional support as important practices for improving teachers' instructional performance. Similarly, Robinson et al. (2008) found that leadership practices directly focused on teaching, curriculum, and teacher learning were strongly associated with student achievement.

The present study examines instructional leadership through five dimensions adapted from Akram's (2017) instrument: provision of instructional resources, principal visibility and instructional presence, support for teacher professional development, monitoring student progress and protecting instructional time, and coordination of curriculum and academic goals. These practices provide teachers with the resources, guidance, professional learning opportunities, and academic direction required for effective teaching. Marzano et al. (2005) highlighted the importance of leadership practices in supporting school effectiveness and student achievement, while Hallinger (2005) emphasized the principal's role in establishing academic priorities and coordinating instructional activities.

Teachers' job performance is a multidimensional construct involving instructional competence, classroom management, professional responsibility, and collaboration. Effective performance requires teachers to plan lessons, deliver instruction, maintain an orderly learning environment, engage students, assess learning, and uphold professional standards. Darling-Hammond (2000) emphasized

the importance of teacher quality in educational outcomes, while Stronge (2007) identified classroom management, lesson planning, instructional delivery, and student engagement as important aspects of effective teaching. In the present study, teachers' job performance is measured through four dimensions adapted from Sultana and Naureen (2022): classroom management, instructional delivery and lesson planning, student engagement and instructional innovation, and professional conduct and collaboration.

Empirical Evidence on Instructional Leadership and Teacher Performance

International research generally supports an association between instructional leadership and positive teacher-related outcomes. Blase and Blase (2000) highlighted the value of classroom observation, reflective discussions, and constructive feedback in improving instructional practices. Leithwood and Jantzi (2006) emphasized the contribution of leadership support and professional development to teachers' professional commitment and school improvement. Eyal and Roth (2011) linked leadership practices that support teachers' professional needs with intrinsic motivation, while Nguni et al. (2006) demonstrated the importance of leadership in teachers' job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and professional behaviour.

Evidence from Pakistan also indicates that instructional leadership is relevant to teachers' performance. The reviewed literature identifies classroom supervision, curriculum coordination, professional development, and instructional feedback as important leadership practices. Rizvi (2015) highlighted the tendency of school leadership to prioritize administrative responsibilities over instructional support. Sultana and Naureen (2022), in a study of public secondary schools in District Quetta, reported a moderate positive relationship between instructional leadership and teachers' job performance ($r = .507, p < .001$). Their findings also indicated that instructional leadership significantly predicted teachers' job performance. Other studies reviewed in the source, including those by Ali (2017), Zafar Khan (2012), and Shakir and Naz (2023), similarly emphasize the importance of instructional supervision, professional development, and curriculum coordination in school effectiveness and teacher performance.

Theoretical Framework

This study is guided by House's (1971) Path–Goal Theory, which proposes that leaders facilitate employees' performance by clarifying goals, providing support, and removing barriers to goal achievement. In schools, principals can apply these principles by providing instructional resources, communicating academic expectations, supporting teachers' professional development, coordinating curriculum delivery, and protecting instructional time. These leadership practices may strengthen teachers' capacity and motivation to perform their professional responsibilities effectively.

Research Gap

Although previous international and Pakistani studies have examined instructional leadership and teacher-related outcomes, the reviewed literature identifies a need for further context-specific evidence concerning public secondary schools in Lahore, Punjab. Existing Pakistani studies have examined related relationships in settings such as Quetta and Karachi, but the present study focuses specifically on secondary school teachers in Lahore. It examines the relationship between instructional leadership and teachers' job performance using the five-dimensional instructional leadership measure adapted from Akram (2017) and the four-dimensional job performance measure adapted from Sultana and Naureen (2022). By applying these measures in the Lahore context, the study seeks to contribute local evidence on the association between principals' instructional leadership practices and teachers' professional performance.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Approach

This study employed a quantitative approach using a descriptive-correlational research design to examine the relationship between instructional leadership and teachers' job performance without manipulating the variables. This design was appropriate for assessing teachers' perceptions of principals' instructional leadership, determining teachers' job performance levels, and examining the predictive relationship between the two variables (Cohen et al., 2018; Fraenkel et al., 2019). Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson's correlation, and simple linear regression. The study was guided by a post-positivist perspective, which emphasizes the systematic measurement and objective analysis of quantitative data while acknowledging that findings represent approximations of reality (Creswell, 2014).

Population

The study population comprised 2,924 Secondary School Teachers (SSTs) working in public secondary schools in District Lahore, Punjab. These teachers instruct students in Grades 9 and 10 and work under the supervision of school principals. Teachers from primary, higher secondary, private, and semi-government institutions were excluded.

Sample

Purposive sampling was used to select 20 public secondary schools in District Lahore. The sample included all available and willing Secondary School Teachers (SSTs) teaching Grades 9 and 10 in schools that met the selection criteria and granted permission for data collection. This technique ensured that participants had relevant experience of principals' instructional leadership practices and their own job performance.

Research Instrument

Data were collected using two adapted, structured questionnaires: the Instructional Leadership Questionnaire and the Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire. Both instruments were modified slightly to suit the context of government secondary schools in Lahore and used a five-point Likert scale.

Instructional Leadership Questionnaire

The Instructional Leadership Questionnaire was adapted from Akram (2017) and comprised 27 items measuring principals' instructional leadership practices across five dimensions: instructional resources, visibility and instructional presence, teacher professional development, monitoring student progress and protecting instructional time, and curriculum coordination and academic goals. Responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire

The Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire was adapted from Sultana (2022) and consisted of 14 items assessing teachers' self-reported job performance in classroom management, instructional delivery and lesson planning, student engagement and instructional innovation, and professional conduct and collaboration. Responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Minor wording adjustments were made to ensure contextual relevance to public secondary schools in Lahore.

Reliability of Research Instrument

The reliability of both instruments was assessed using Cronbach's alpha based on pilot study data. The Instructional Leadership Questionnaire yielded an alpha coefficient of 0.949, while the Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire yielded 0.903, indicating excellent internal consistency. Cronbach's alpha values above 0.70 are generally considered acceptable for research purposes (Cohen et al., 2018).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1: What is the level of instructional leadership at the secondary school level?

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Instructional Leadership (IL) Item wise Analysis

Instructional Leadership (IL) Items	SDA	DA	N	A	SA	Mean	SD
1. Principal encourage teachers to use instructional materials freely.	2.7	4.8	5.5	54.5	32.5	1.91	.902
2. Principal organize and deliver the instructional materials to teachers.	2.4	9.6	7.2	33.2	47.6	1.86	1.064
3. Principal recommend resources in areas in which teachers need.	1.0	13.4	7.2	32.2	46.2	1.91	1.075
4. Principal guide teachers in using instructional resources.	3.1	8.2	8.9	35.3	44.5	1.90	1.065
5. Principal take feedback on the availability of the instructional resources.	1.0	8.9	8.2	42.5	39.4	1.90	.958
6. Principal visit classes regularly to observe teaching and learning.	3.1	8.2	10.3	34.2	44.2	1.92	1.071
7. Principal physically available for instructional issues.	2.1	7.5	6.8	36.3	47.3	1.81	.997
8. Principal conduct meetings to discuss instructional matters.	.7	6.2	8.9	37.3	46.9	1.76	.902
9. Principal discuss with teachers the matters related to the instruction.	.3	8.6	7.9	38.4	44.9	1.81	.932
10. Principal visibly present in school for teachers and students.	1.7	5.5	7.5	39.4	45.9	1.78	.928
11. Principal available for teachers' professional development.	.3	5.8	8.6	37.0	48.3	1.73	.873
12. Principal plan faculty meetings for professional development.	1.4	5.8	8.6	35.3	49.0	1.75	.935
13. Principal arrange teachers' meetings to help them grow professionally.	.7	7.2	8.6	40.1	43.5	1.82	.916
14. Principal develop follow up plans for assessing professional development.	1.4	7.5	7.5	40.1	43.5	1.83	.954
15. Principal encourages teacher to take steps to instructional issues.	.3	6.2	6.8	39.0	47.6	1.73	.886
16. Principal encourage teachers to improve their classroom practices.	.7	4.5	6.8	29.1	58.9	1.59	.855
17. Principal plan professional development opportunities according to needs.	1.4	5.8	7.9	34.6	50.3	1.73	.933
18. Principal ensure that all students are present in the class during class time.	.7	4.1	7.2	36.0	52.1	1.65	.837

19. Principal encourage all teachers to come to class well-prepared and in time.	.3	4.5	5.8	36.3	53.1	1.63	.813
20. Principal solve issue related to discipline to maximize instructional time.	1.0	4.8	7.9	36.6	49.7	1.71	.882
21. Principal meet teachers individually to discuss student progress issues.	.7	7.2	5.8	35.6	50.7	1.72	.915
22. Principal discuss student's results with teachers for curricular strengths.	.7	5.8	7.5	39.4	46.6	1.75	.880
23. Principal review students work when evaluating classroom instruction.	.3	5.8	6.5	36.3	51.0	1.68	.860
24. Principal reinforce the teachers in staff meeting/ memos/newsletters.	2.4	5.5	7.9	29.1	55.1	1.71	.992
25. Principal ensure that teachers teach the required curriculum.	.3	4.8	6.8	31.8	56.2	1.61	.840
26. Principal encourage teachers' lesson plan for making curriculum effective.	.3	5.1	7.9	35.3	51.4	1.68	.853
27. Principal encourage teachers to engage their students in activities.	1.0	4.8	4.8	33.2	56.2	1.61	.864

N = 292.

Above table shows, the mean scores for IL items were, varying between 1.59 and 1.92. Given that a five-point Likert scale was utilized where lower scores imply higher levels of agreement (that is, where 1 is Strongly Agree and 5 is Strongly Disagree), these results could be taken as evidence that teachers tended to agree with the statement that their principals practiced different types of behaviors that could be attributed to IL.

Specifically, the item "Principal visit classes regularly to observe teaching and learning" received the highest mean (M=1.92, SD=1.071). Despite being relatively high, this result implies a bit larger variation in teachers' attitudes to this type of behavior than to others, although in general, there seemed to be an agreement with the corresponding statement. The items that obtained the lowest means were 'Principal encourage teachers to improve their classroom practices' (M=1.59, SD=.855).

Research Question 2: What is the level of teachers' job performance at the secondary school level?

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Teacher Job Performance (TJP) Items

Teacher Job Performance (TJP) Items	SDA	DA	N	A	SA	Mean	SD
1. I make clear rules and regulations in classroom that is aiming respect and responsibility.	1.0	4.8	6.2	43.5	44.5	1.74	.853
2. I keep my class in order by being on time.	.7	5.1	8.9	36.0	49.3	1.72	.879
3. I utilize best teaching practices which are consistent with educational objectives.	.3	3.4	11.0	35.3	50.0	1.69	.826
4. I remain organized, keeps lesson plans and administrative paperwork in order.	.7	4.8	9.9	40.8	43.8	1.78	.863
5. I establish encouraging learning environment through different instructional techniques.	1.7	4.8	9.2	37.3	46.9	1.77	.926
6. I find different ways to develop curiosity in students.	1.0	6.2	8.2	32.9	51.7	1.72	.929
7. I explore new ideas from students through asking open-ended questions.	1.7	3.8	9.2	34.2	51.0	1.71	.909

8. I usually incorporate varied instructional techniques to meet diverse learning needs.	1.0	5.1	7.9	36.0	50.0	1.71	.893
9. I establish self-reflection in classroom that is aiming to see what worked.	1.0	4.8	7.5	28.4	58.2	1.62	.894
10. I communicate with principal regularly to solve teaching related issues.	.7	4.8	9.6	34.9	50.0	1.71	.877
11. Teachers help each other to achieve educational target.	1.7	4.1	6.5	33.6	54.1	1.66	.900
12. I help students to solve their learning related issues.	1.0	2.7	7.2	30.8	58.2	1.58	.824
13. Teaching is pleasure for teacher as a profession.	.7	3.1	10.3	39.4	46.6	1.72	.823
14. Annually prizes are distributed among well performed Teachers.	4.5	4.5	12.0	24.0	55.1	1.79	1.10 0

N = 292.

Above table shows TJP items produced low mean scores ranging between 1.58 and 1.79, meaning that the teachers perceived themselves as having a high level of job performance in all the measured aspects. The item 'I help students to solve their learning related issues' received the lowest mean score (M=1.58; SD=.824), implying that most of the teachers strongly agreed with their ability to provide students with relevant support. Likewise, 'I establish self-reflection in classroom that is aiming to see what worked' (M=1.62, SD=.894) reflected the same aspect in terms of self-reflective skills.

Regarding the item 'Annually prizes are distributed among well performed teachers', the highest mean score was obtained (M=1.79, SD=1.100). However, its comparatively high standard deviation may be an indicator of variability in teachers' perception concerning annual prize distribution. It may suggest that there are inconsistencies in the process of motivating teachers through awarding prizes annually. As observed, the obtained means and standard deviations were rather low for TJP items.

Correlation Analysis

Research Question 3: What is the impact of instructional leadership on teachers' job performance at secondary school level?

Table 3: Pearson Correlation between Instructional Leadership (IL) and Teacher Job Performance (TJP)

Factors	IL	TJP	N	Sig.
Instructional Leadership (IL)	1	.523**	292	.000
Teacher Job Performance (TJP)	.523**	1	292	.000

N = 292. ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Above table shows, the findings revealed a significant positive relationship between instructional leadership and teachers' job performance at secondary school level. The results indicate that effective instructional leadership practices positively influence teachers' professional effectiveness and classroom performance. There is a statistically significant positive and moderate correlation between instructional leadership (IL) and teacher job performance (TJP), $r(290) = .523$, $p < .01$. This implies that as the extent of principals' instructional leadership rises, so does their extent of teacher job performance. The correlation value of .523 shows the existence of a moderately strong positive impact between the two variables, which is both statistically and practically significant.

This finding is in line with previous research, which generally shows that when principals are involved in instructional leadership, such as controlling the curriculum, providing resources, offering professional development services, and tracking instructional time, their teachers perform better. The statistical significance at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) means that this impact is not by coincidence, thus strengthening support for alternative hypothesis.

DISCUSSION

This study examined the level of instructional leadership (IL), teachers' job performance (TJP), and the impact of IL on TJP at secondary level (N=292), confirming the principal's central role in teacher effectiveness.

Level of Instructional Leadership

Results for RQ1 showed a high perceived level of IL. Mean scores for all 27 items ranged from 1.59 to 1.92 on a 5-point scale (1=Strongly Agree). The strongest endorsement was "Principal encourage teachers to improve their classroom practices" (M=1.59, SD=.855), indicating proactive motivational support. The highest mean was "Principal visit classes regularly to observe teaching and learning" (M=1.92, SD=1.071), suggesting greater variability in direct supervision. This aligns with Hallinger and Murphy (1985) and Karadağ et al. (2020), who found principals prefer indirect over direct instructional supervision.

Level of Teachers' Job Performance

For RQ2, teachers reported high job performance (M=1.58 to 1.79). Highest agreement was for "I help students to solve their learning related issues" (M=1.58, SD=.824) and self-reflection (M=1.62), reflecting a student-centered orientation. The highest mean was for "Annually prizes are distributed among well performed teachers" (M=1.79, SD=1.100). The large SD indicates inconsistent extrinsic reward systems across schools, consistent with Herzberg's theory.

RQ3 revealed a significant moderate positive correlation between IL and TJP, $r(290)=.523$, $p<.01$. Approximately 27% variance in TJP is explained by IL, which is practically significant. This corroborates Bellibas & Liu (2017) and Liu & Hallinger (2018): resource provision, curriculum coordination, and professional development enhance teacher efficacy.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Theoretically, the study reinforces Hallinger's model for school effectiveness in developing contexts. Practically, education directorates should (1) institutionalize formative, supportive classroom observations, and (2) standardize transparent teacher recognition policies. Limited by cross-sectional, self-reported data from one region, future research should use mixed-methods and student achievement data. In conclusion, instructional leadership is a significant driver of teacher performance; investing in principals' instructional capacity directly improves teaching quality.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the present study (N=292), where instructional leadership was high but variable in classroom observation (M=1.92), teachers' job performance was high but recognition was inconsistent (M=1.79, SD=1.100), and a significant positive correlation was found between IL and TJP ($r=.523$, $p<.01$), the following recommendations are made:

1. Institutionalize Formative Classroom Observation: Classroom visits should be transformed from an evaluative inspection to a formative, supportive coaching model. Principals should

develop a fixed weekly observation schedule with constructive feedback to reduce the variability observed in item "Principal visit classes regularly.

2. Standardize Teacher Recognition System: The high SD in "Annually prizes are distributed among well performed teachers" indicates inconsistency. A transparent, criteria-based annual reward policy at district level should be implemented to enhance extrinsic motivation.
3. Capacity Building for Instructional Leaders: Mandatory in-service training on Hallinger's three dimensions of instructional leadership (Defining mission, Managing instructional program, Promoting learning climate) should be arranged for all secondary school heads.
4. Teachers should sustain their reported strengths in student-centered practices and self-reflection ($M=1.58$, $M=1.62$), which were rated highest in job performance.
5. As this study was limited to self-reported data and cross-sectional design, future research should employ mixed-methods, include principals' perspectives, student achievement data, and expand to other provinces to increase generalizability.

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