THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HEAD TEACHERS' LEADERSHIP AND TEACHERS' CREDENCE IN HEAD TEACHERS AT HIGHER SECONDARY LEVEL

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Abstract

Head teachers' leadership involves guiding and supporting teachers to achieve educational goals, fostering a positive and collaborative school environment. Effective leadership includes clear communication, decision-making, and providing professional development opportunities. The objective of the study was to find out the effect and relationship between head teachers' leadership and teachers' credence in head teachers at higher secondary level. The population was comprised of all higher secondary schools of Lahore district. Multistage sampling techniques was used. The sample was consist of 500 teachers and 50 head teacher. The instrument of the study was questionnaire. Descriptive and inferential statistics was used to analyze the data. Mean, standard deviation, Pearson r and regression analysis was used. The findings of the study was revealed that there was highly significant effect and relationship between head teachers' leadership and teachers' credence in head teachers at higher secondary level.
Keywords: Head teachers' leadership, teachers' credence in head teachers, higher secondary level

Introduction

The relationship between head teachers' leadership and teachers' credence in head teachers is integral to creating a positive and effective educational environment. Effective Head Teachers' Leadership fosters a strong sense of trust and confidence among teachers. When head teachers exhibit clear communication, fairness, and supportive behaviors, they build credibility and earn teachers' respect. This trust is crucial for ensuring that teachers are motivated to adhere to school policies and engage actively in school initiatives. Head teachers who model integrity, provide consistent support, and involve teachers in decision-making processes enhance their credibility (Mansor, Abdullah, & Jamaludin, 2021). Teachers who feel valued and heard are more likely to trust their head teachers and align with the school's vision and goals. Conversely, if teachers lack confidence in their head teacher's leadership, it can lead to resistance, decreased morale, and inconsistent policy adherence. In essence, effective leadership practices directly impact teachers' trust and willingness to collaborate. A positive relationship between Head Teachers' Leadership and teachers' credence is essential for fostering a cohesive school culture, improving job

satisfaction, and achieving better educational outcomes (Musa, Nazarudin, Noordin, Juati, & Juhumin, 2020).

Lussier and Hendon (2017) define leadership as an intentional attempt to persuade members of a group to carry out their responsibilities in accordance with expectations. According to Zubaidah, Haryono, and Udin, (2021), leadership is the process of persuading others to pursue the advancement or objective of the company. According to Colquitt, Lepine, Wesson, and Gellatly (2011), leadership is the process of influencing group behaviour in order to accomplish organisational objectives. One type of educational organisation is a school. The process of influencing, moving, inspiring, and guiding individuals within the educational organisation to accomplish educational objectives is known as educational leadership. School principals have a variety of roles and responsibilities as leaders in education. Principals of schools must successfully implement the primary leadership style. An important source of energy for achieving the goals of education in schools is school leadership. According to Fullan and Kirtman (2019), school leadership is the primary means of achieving organisational objectives related to education. Success in leadership is characterised by traits and physical attributes as well as self-worth, initiative, intelligence, fluency, and inventiveness. Three traits—personality, aptitude, and social skills—that show a good school principal are highlighted by Shields (2010).

Given the connections between pedagogical quality and student achievement, it is especially valuable to look at leadership behaviours linked to teacher commitment dimensions (Aliakbari & Amoli, 2016; Altun, 2017; Sun, Chen, & Zhang, 2017). This value arises from examining TSL behaviours since this is how leadership has been conceptualised and assessed in a large body of literature. Furthermore, a large body of research has shown that TSL improves severally defined aspects of teacher commitment. Through TSL, there was an increase in dedication to the organisation, students, and profession, according to the Leithwood and Sun (2012) systematic review. TSL has been found to be predictive of the combined commitment of teachers' careers, the school as a whole, and the organisation (Dumay & Galand, 2012; Ibrahim, Ismail, Mat, & Erhan, 2023; Khumalo, 2019). Other studies conducted in non-American settings have produced findings that are comparable to this one. For example, Dumay and Galand's (2012) study in Belgian elementary schools found a connection between TSL and teachers' dedication to their studies, while another study in Malaysian high schools found an increase in organisational commitment (Selamat, Nordin, & Adnan, 2013).

In urban situations, TSL behaviours have been conceptually and experimentally associated with teacher dedication. According to Finnigan's (2022) research, educators in three Chicago-area schools believed that TSL practices were crucial to their unique drive to raise student achievement. According to Firestone and Rosenblum's (1988) research, principals should model behaviours such as courteous communication, a clear commitment to shared decision-making, structured avenues for teacher involvement, and clear communication of high expectations in order to foster teacher commitment. These are consistent with the TSL behaviours described by Leithwood (1992), especially in terms of inspiring instructors. Podolny et al. (2004) described leadership as a process of "meaning-making" and as "a particular form of influence called motivating," which is characterised by "collaboration in pursuit of common goals." These definitions of leadership are more generally based on TSL behaviours (Vroom & Jago, 2007).

Teachers' credence in head teachers, or the trust and confidence teachers place in their school leaders, is a crucial element in fostering a positive and productive educational environment. This trust is not merely a matter of interpersonal relationships but is fundamental to achieving educational goals, improving school culture, and ensuring effective policy implementation. The

foundation of teachers' credence in head teachers is built on several key factors (Wahlstrom, & Louis, 2008). Effective communication is essential; head teachers must clearly articulate their vision, goals, and expectations to create alignment and understanding among teachers. When teachers are well-informed about the school's direction and feel that their concerns and feedback are valued, their trust in the leadership deepens. Transparency in decision-making processes also plays a critical role. When teachers perceive that decisions are made fairly and with their input considered, they are more likely to support and adhere to those decisions (Karacabey, Bellibaş, & Adams, 2022).

Supportive leadership is another cornerstone of teachers' credence. Head teachers who provide consistent support, whether through professional development opportunities, resources, or personal encouragement, demonstrate a commitment to teachers' growth and well-being (Bektaş, Kılınç, & Gümüş, 2022). This support helps teachers feel valued and respected, reinforcing their trust in the head teacher. Additionally, effective head teachers model the behaviors and standards they expect from their staff. By demonstrating professionalism, ethical behavior, and a strong work ethic, head teachers set a positive example that teachers are inclined to follow (Zhang, Bowers, & Mao, 2021). The impact of teachers' credence in head teachers extends beyond individual interactions; it significantly influences overall school dynamics. High levels of trust contribute to a collaborative and cohesive school culture. Teachers who trust their head teacher are more likely to engage in collaborative practices, share best practices, and work together towards common goals. This collaboration fosters a sense of community and collective responsibility, which is essential for addressing challenges and driving school improvement (Liu, Liu, Yang, Yao, & Thien, 2024).

Conversely, a lack of credence can lead to various negative outcomes. When teachers do not trust their head teacher, it can result in disengagement, resistance to policies, and a lack of cooperation. This mistrust can create an environment of uncertainty and conflict, where teachers are less likely to support school initiatives or adhere to policies. The resulting disengagement can adversely affect student outcomes and overall school effectiveness (Meyer, Richter, & Hartung-Beck, 2022). In the context of diverse educational settings, such as those found in Pakistan, the relationship between teachers' credence and head teachers' leadership becomes even more complex. Cultural norms, socio-economic factors, and regional differences can influence how trust is developed and maintained. For example, in some areas, hierarchical relationships and respect for authority might play a significant role in shaping teachers' perceptions of head teachers (Ma, & Marion, 2021). Understanding these local dynamics is crucial for developing leadership practices that are effective in varied contexts. Research into teachers' credence in head teachers reveals that it is not a static or one-dimensional construct. It is influenced by ongoing interactions, changes in leadership practices, and the broader educational environment. Studies suggest that building and maintaining trust requires continuous effort and adaptation. Head teachers must remain attuned to teachers' needs, respond to feedback, and demonstrate a genuine commitment to their staff's professional and personal growth (Choong, Ng, Aina & Tan, 2020). In summary, teachers' credence in head teachers is a critical factor in achieving a successful and harmonious school environment. It is influenced by effective communication, supportive leadership, and the demonstration of professional standards. Building and maintaining this trust is essential for fostering collaboration, enhancing school culture, and ensuring the effective implementation of policies and practices. Addressing the complexities and contextual factors affecting credence, particularly in diverse educational settings, is crucial for developing effective leadership strategies and improving educational outcomes.

Objectives

1- To find out the relationship between head teachers' leadership and teachers' credence in head teachers at higher secondary level.
2- To find out the effect of head teachers' leadership on teachers' credence in head teachers at higher secondary level.

Research gap

The relationship between head teachers' leadership and teachers' credence in head teachers at the higher secondary level is a critical area for research, yet significant gaps remain. Existing studies often focus broadly on leadership styles and their general impact on school environments, without delving deeply into how specific leadership practices influence teachers' trust and confidence in their head teachers. This lack of specificity hinders a comprehensive understanding of how different leadership behaviors—such as communication, support, and decision-making— affect teachers' perceptions and overall credence (Hendawy Al-Mahdy, Hallinger, Emam, Hammad, Alabri, & Al-Harthi, 2024). Research is needed to explore how these factors contribute to building or eroding trust among teachers in various contexts, especially within diverse educational settings. Moreover, there is limited investigation into how cultural, socio-economic, and regional differences impact this relationship. In contexts like Pakistan, where educational environments vary widely across urban and rural areas, understanding how local factors influence teachers' trust in head teachers can provide valuable insights. Addressing this gap requires studies that examine the interplay between leadership styles and teachers' credence in different cultural and socio-economic contexts. Such research could inform more effective leadership practices tailored to local needs, ultimately enhancing teacher satisfaction and school effectiveness.

Methodology

The design of the study is descriptive in nature. This study was quantitative research which helps in evaluating the relationship between head teachers' leadership and teachers' credence in head teachers in head teacher. The philosophical paradigm of quantitative research is positivism. The population was comprised of all public higher secondary level of district Lahore. The total no of higher secondary schools was 33 in which teachers are 2835 and head teachers are 33 (SIS, 2024). Sample was chosen by using a multistage sampling technique. The researcher used the cluster sampling technique to divide the entire population into five clusters based on according to tehsils. From each cluster ten schools was selected by using simple random sampling. From each school 10 teachers and one head teacher was selected by using simple random sampling technique. A sample of 500 teachers and 50 head teachers was selected. The instrument of the study was questionnaires. Head teachers' leadership questionnaire was adapts by Akram, Kiran, & İlğan, (2017) and teachers' credence questionnaire was adapts by Berkovich, (2018) for data collection. The validity of the questionnaires were found through experts' opinions and reliability through pilot testing. The Cronbach's alpha value of head teachers' leadership was 0.823 and teachers' credence Cronbach's alpha value was 0.912. Statistical package for social science (SPSS) was used for data analysis. Descriptive and inferential techniques was used. Mean, standard deviation, Pearson r and regression analysis was used.

Data analysis and interpretation
Head Teachers' leadership
Table 1
Sample description on the basis of mean and standard deviation

Items	N	Mean	S.D.
The Head Teacher develops a focused set of annual school wide goals.	500	3.85	1.102
The Head Teacher Frame the school' goals in terms of staff responsibilities for meeting them	500	3.90	1.072
The Head Teacher Discusses the school's goals with teachers at faculty meeting	500	3.93	1.079
Head Teacher ensures that the classroom priorities of teachers are consistent with goals and direction of school	500	3.88	1.089
Head Teacher monitors the classroom curriculum to see that it covers the school's curricular objectives	500	3.82	1.105
Meet individually with teachers to discuss students' progress	500	3.73	1.179
Encourage teachers to use instructional time for teaching and practicing new skills and concept	500	3.85	1.105
The Head Teacher gives our teachers frequent feedback on how they are developing	500	3.76	1.130
The Head Teacher Visit classroom to discuss school issues with teachers and students	500	3.72	1.171
The Head Teacher Compliment teachers privately for their effort or performance	500	3.79	1.147
The Head Teacher Reward special effort by teachers with opportunities for professional recognition	500	3.67	1.189
The Head Teacher Ensure the in-service activities attended by staff are consistent with school goals	500	3.79	1.121
The Head Teacher Creates professional growth opportunities for teachers	500	3.82	1.236
The Head Teacher Acknowledges teachers' exceptional performance by writing memos for their personal files	500	3.52	1.249
The Head Teacher Covers class for teachers until a late or substitute teacher arrives	500	3.72	1.199

The above table illustrates the head teachers' leadership description on the basis of mean and standard deviation. According to the responses of the respondents, The Head Teacher develops a focused set of annual school wide goals (M=3.85; SD=1.10), The Head Teacher Frame the school' goals in terms of staff responsibilities for meeting them (M=3.90; SD=1.07), The Head Teacher Discusses the school's goals with teachers at faculty meeting (M=3.93; SD=1.07), Head Teacher ensures that the classroom priorities of teachers are consistent with goals and direction of school (M=3.88; SD=1.08), Head Teacher monitors the classroom curriculum to see that it covers the school's curricular objectives (M=3.82; SD=1.10), Meet individually with teachers to discuss students' progress (M=3.73; SD=1.17), Encourage teachers to use instructional time for teaching and practicing new skills and concept (M=3.85; SD=1.10), the head Teacher gives our teachers frequent feedback on how they are developing (M=3.76; SD=1.13), The Head Teacher Visit

classroom to discuss school issues with teachers and students (M=3.72; SD=1.17), The Head Teacher Compliment teachers privately for their effort or performance (M=3.79; SD=1.14), The Head Teacher Reward special effort by teachers with opportunities for professional recognition (M=3.67; SD=1.18), The Head Teacher Ensure the in-service activities attended by staff are consistent with school goals (M=3.79; SD=1.21), The Head Teacher Creates professional growth opportunities for teachers (M=3.82; SD=1.23), The Head Teacher Acknowledges teachers' exceptional performance by writing memos for their personal files (M=3.52; SD=1.24), The Head Teacher Covers class for teachers until a late or substitute teacher arrives (M=3.72; SD=1.19). Overall, the response of the respondents reflected toward the level of agreement.

Teachers' credence
Table 2
Sample description on the basis of mean and standard deviation

	N	Mean	S.D.
Even in tough times, my Head Teacher is supportive.	500	4.26	.948
Whenever I need, my Head Teacher is there for me.	500	4.22	.921
My Head Teacher is highly skilled.	500	4.23	.888
My Head Teacher is capable at his/her job.	500	4.09	.907
My Head Teacher is good at solving problem.	500	4.19	.927
My Head Teacher often make poor decision.	500	3.71	1.239
My Head Teacher perform well even under stress.	500	4.14	.954
I have faith in the ability of my Head Teacher.	500	4.19	.923
My Head Teacher need to improve several areas	500	4.06	1.034
My Head Teacher communicate well.	500	4.24	.894
I believe that my Head Teacher has strong ethics.	500	4.26	.868
My Head Teacher is honorable person	500	4.24	.925
My Head Teacher is reliable.	500	4.27	.918
My Head Teacher behaves consistently.	500	4.23	.910
I usually know how my Head Teacher is going to react.	500	4.24	.818
In times of uncertainty, I know I can depend on my Head Teacher.	500	4.15	.933
I cannot predict what my Head Teacher is likely to do	500	4.11	1.007
My Head Teacher is good at planning.	500	4.21	.927
Valid N (listwise)	500		

The above table illustrates the teachers' credence description on the basis of mean and standard deviation. According to the responses of the respondents, even in tough times, my Head Teacher is supportive (M=4.26; SD=0.94), whenever I need, my Head Teacher is there for me (M=4.22; SD=0.92), My Head Teacher is highly skilled (M=4.23; SD=0.88), My Head Teacher is capable at his/her job (M=4.09; SD=0.90), My Head Teacher is good at solving problem (M=4.19; SD=0.92), My Head Teacher often make poor decision (M=3.71; SD=1.23), My Head Teacher perform well even under stress (M=4.14; SD=0.95), I have faith in the ability of my Head Teacher (M=4.19; SD=0.92), My Head Teacher need to improve several areas (M=4.06; SD=1.03), My Head Teacher communicate well (M=4.24; SD=0.89), I believe that my Head Teacher has strong ethics (M=4.26; SD=0.86), My Head Teacher is honorable person (M=4.24; SD=0.92), My Head Teacher is reliable (M=4.27; SD=0.91), My Head Teacher behaves consistently (M=4.23;

SD=0.91), I usually know how my Head Teacher is going to react (M=4.24; SD=0.81), In times of uncertainty, I know I can depend on my Head Teacher (M=4.15; SD=0.93), I cannot predict what my Head Teacher is likely to do (M=4.11; SD=1.00), My Head Teacher is good at planning (M=4.21; SD=0.92). Overall, the response of the respondents reflected toward the level of agreement.

Table 3
Relationship between head teachers' leadership and teacher credence

		Head Teachers' Leadership	Teachers' credence	Mean	S.D.
Head Teachers' Leadership	Pearson Correlation	1	.633[**]	3.7843	.87314
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000		
	N	302	300		
Teachers' credence	Pearson Correlation	.633[**]	1	4.1683	.61370
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000			
	N	300	300		
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).					

The correlation of the main variables used in this study are presented in Table 1 Pearson product correlation among head teachers' leadership and teachers' credence were all shown to be strong highly positive and statistically significant (r=.633, p>.000). The head teachers' leadership (M=3.78; SD=0.87) and teachers' credence (M=4.16; SD=0.61). This means that head teachers' leadership increase teachers' credence at higher secondary level.

Table 4
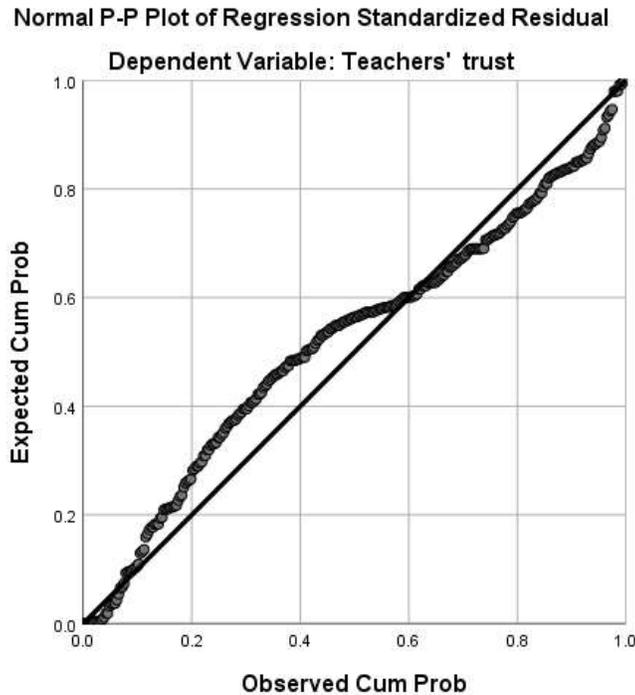*Effect of head teachers' leadership and teacher credence*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	45.068	1	45.068	198.831	.000[b]
	Residual	67.546	298	.227		
	Total	112.613	299			
a. Dependent Variable: Teachers' credence						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Head Teachers' Leadership						

Table 5

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	2.485	.123		20.279	.000
	Head Teachers' Leadership	.445	.032	.633	14.101	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Teachers' credence						

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

Dependent Variable: Teachers' trust

The above table illustrates that effect of head teachers' leadership and teachers' credence. Significant differences existed between the groups, t (500) = 14.101, p = 0.00, at alpha level 0.05 (Standardized Coefficients=0.445). Therefore, there was statistically significant effect of head teachers' leadership and teachers' credence at higher secondary level.

Discussion and conclusion

Head Teachers' Leadership plays a crucial role in shaping the educational environment and overall effectiveness of a school. Effective head teachers provide clear vision, set high expectations, and foster a positive school culture. They are pivotal in implementing policies, managing resources, and supporting staff development. Teachers' credence in head teachers is vital; it influences their motivation, job satisfaction, and commitment to the school (Jamil, & Rozina Sewani, 2024). When teachers trust and believe in their head teacher's capabilities, it fosters a collaborative environment that enhances student learning and achievement. Therefore, strong leadership by head teachers not only impacts administrative success but also significantly contributes to the overall school climate and educational outcomes.

The relationship between head teachers' leadership and teachers' credence in head teachers is pivotal in shaping the educational environment. Effective leadership fosters trust and respect, encouraging teachers to feel supported and valued. When head teachers demonstrate strong leadership qualities—such as clear communication, decisiveness, and empathy—teachers are more likely to have confidence in their leaders. This credence enhances collaboration, morale, and commitment to school goals (Mohd Tahir, Samah, Mohd Anis, & Ali, 2024). Conversely, a lack of leadership can erode trust, leading to disengagement and lower performance. Thus, the leadership style of head teachers significantly influences teachers' perception and trust, impacting the overall school climate and effectiveness.

Head teachers' leadership significantly influences teachers' credence in their leaders. Effective leadership, characterized by clear communication, supportive behavior, and consistent decision-making, fosters trust and confidence among teachers. When head teachers demonstrate

integrity, competence, and a commitment to the school's vision, teachers are more likely to feel valued and motivated (Flores, & Zacarias, 2024). This positive perception enhances teachers' willingness to collaborate, engage in professional development, and commit to school initiatives. Conversely, inconsistent or ineffective leadership can erode trust, reduce morale, and hinder overall school performance. Thus, the quality of Head Teachers' Leadership is crucial in shaping teachers' belief in their leaders and their engagement with the school community.

It was concluded that the relationship between head teachers' leadership and teachers' credence in head teachers is pivotal for a positive educational environment. Effective leadership from head teachers fosters trust, respect, and confidence among teachers. This, in turn, enhances teachers' commitment, job satisfaction, and motivation, leading to improved educational outcomes. When head teachers demonstrate strong leadership skills, clear communication, and support, teachers are more likely to align with school goals and initiatives. Conversely, a lack of leadership can result in diminished trust and lower morale, impacting the overall school climate and performance.

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