

Teacher Empowerment as a Driver of Job Satisfaction: A Study of Private College Teachers in Lahore



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Abstract: *This study investigates the role of teacher empowerment as a key driver of job satisfaction among private college teachers in Lahore, focusing on how principal leadership behaviors influence this dynamic. A sample of 400 teachers was surveyed to examine the impact of leadership styles commanding, affiliative, visionary, democratic, coaching, and pace-setting on crucial teacher leadership indicators such as job satisfaction, teacher empowerment, professional commitment, sense of meaning, and autonomy. The findings indicate a predominantly young and female teaching workforce, revealing significant correlations between different leadership styles and positive teacher outcomes. Notably, coaching, visionary, and affiliative leadership styles were found to have the most substantial positive effects on teacher empowerment and job satisfaction. The study highlights the necessity of cultivating a supportive and empowering educational environment, where teachers feel valued and engaged in their roles. Additionally, system empowerment and a sense of meaningfulness emerged as critical factors contributing to both job satisfaction and organizational commitment. These insights underline the importance of principals adopting flexible leadership approaches tailored to the unique needs of their teaching staff. This research enriches the existing literature on educational leadership by emphasizing the necessity for ongoing professional development of school leaders. By equipping them with effective leadership strategies, the study aims to enhance teacher empowerment and job satisfaction, thereby improving the overall quality of education in private colleges. Future research should further explore the long-term effects of principal leadership styles on teacher retention and student outcomes.*

Keywords: *Teacher Empowerment, Job Satisfaction, Leadership Styles, Private Colleges, Educational Leadership*

Introduction

Teacher empowerment has gained significant attention in contemporary educational research, particularly as a key factor influencing job satisfaction, professional commitment, and institutional effectiveness. In this context, empowerment refers to the processes by which teachers gain autonomy, decision-making power, and professional authority, enabling them to contribute meaningfully to their

institutions and the broader educational community (Spreitzer, 1995). It goes beyond formal authority, emphasizing a sense of self-efficacy, responsibility, and trust, which together enhance job satisfaction and professional engagement (Kass & Miller, 2020). In educational settings, teacher empowerment has been shown to directly affect the quality of teaching, innovation, and institutional performance. Empowered teachers feel more

responsible for their professional growth, which, in turn, positively influences their students' learning outcomes and the organizational climate of their institutions (Short & Greer, 2022). For educational leaders, particularly principals, fostering an environment of empowerment is critical. The leadership styles they adopt play an instrumental role in shaping the dynamics of teacher empowerment. Leadership approaches that encourage participation, collaboration, and professional autonomy tend to be more effective in promoting empowerment, thus leading to greater job satisfaction (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). The theoretical underpinning for exploring leadership styles and teacher empowerment stems from Goleman's (2002) framework of emotional intelligence-based leadership. Goleman and his colleagues identified six leadership styles: visionary, coaching, affiliative, democratic, commanding, and pacesetter. These styles can be broadly categorized into resonant and dissonant leadership. Resonant leadership, characterized by visionary, coaching, and affiliative styles, creates a positive emotional climate, fosters collaboration, and enhances teacher engagement. In contrast, dissonant leadership, seen in commanding and pacesetter styles, tends to limit teacher involvement, resulting in lower job satisfaction and diminished professional commitment (Boyatzis & McKee, 2013; Afzal, Sami & Munawar, 2024).

In the context of private colleges in Lahore, leadership practices have traditionally followed a hierarchical model, with principals often centralizing decision-making power (Memon et al., 2021). However, as the educational landscape evolves, there is a growing recognition of the need for leadership that empowers teachers, enabling them to exercise leadership within their classrooms and contribute to broader institutional goals. Studies have shown that teacher empowerment leads to increased job satisfaction, reduced turnover, and higher levels of professional commitment (Bogler & Nir, 2012). In particular, leadership styles that align with emotional intelligence principles such as vision and coaching have been

found to foster an environment where teachers feel empowered and valued (Hulpia et al., 2020; Afzal, Khalil & Saleem, 2024). Despite this understanding, there remains a gap in research examining how different leadership styles impact teacher empowerment and job satisfaction in the specific context of private colleges in Lahore. While international studies have highlighted the positive correlation between empowerment and job satisfaction, there is limited empirical evidence from Pakistan, particularly in terms of identifying which leadership styles are most effective in fostering teacher empowerment (Awan & Mehmood, 2010). This study seeks to address this gap by exploring the dominant leadership styles practiced by principals in private colleges of Lahore and analyzing their impact on teacher empowerment as a driver of job satisfaction.

Using Goleman's framework of leadership styles, this study employs a quantitative approach to measure the relationship between leadership styles and teacher empowerment. Specifically, it investigates whether resonant leadership styles (visionary, coaching, and affiliative) are more effective in fostering teacher empowerment, which in turn enhances job satisfaction. By identifying which leadership styles are most conducive to creating an empowered teaching workforce, the findings of this study can inform leadership development programs and policy initiatives aimed at improving teacher retention, satisfaction, and professional growth in private colleges across Pakistan.

Literature Review

Teacher Empowerment and Job Satisfaction

Teacher empowerment has been identified as a key factor in fostering job satisfaction, professional commitment, and enhanced performance in educational institutions (Bogler & Nir, 2012). Empowerment involves giving teachers a greater sense of autonomy, control over their work environment, and opportunities for professional growth, which, in turn, results in higher levels of job satisfaction (Short & Greer, 2022; Afzal, Zia & Khan, 2024). Studies have consistently shown that teachers who feel

empowered exhibit greater motivation, engagement, and loyalty to their institutions (Kass & Miller, 2020). According to Spreitzer's (1995) theory of psychological empowerment, there are four dimensions of empowerment: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact. When teachers experience empowerment along these dimensions, they are more likely to find their work meaningful, feel competent in their roles, and perceive that their actions have a significant impact on the institution (Spreitzer, 2020). A more recent study by Ryan and Deci (2021) aligns with these findings, showing that self-determination and autonomy in teachers are critical factors that contribute to higher job satisfaction and organizational commitment. In the context of private colleges, particularly in Pakistan, empowerment has often been overlooked due to hierarchical leadership structures (Memon et al., 2021). However, as education systems become more dynamic, there is a growing demand for leadership that empowers teachers and provides them with the resources and autonomy needed to excel (Awan & Mehmood, 2010). Recent research suggests that teacher empowerment is especially relevant in developing countries, where educational reform efforts require teachers to take on leadership roles within their classrooms to improve student outcomes and institutional effectiveness (Hulpia et al., 2020).

Leadership Styles and Teacher Empowerment

Leadership styles play a crucial role in shaping the extent to which teachers feel empowered. Goleman's (2002) framework of leadership styles grounded in emotional intelligence has been widely applied in educational research to assess how different leadership approaches affect teacher empowerment and job satisfaction (Afzal et al., 2024). The six leadership styles visionary, coaching, affiliative, democratic, commanding, and pacesetter can broadly be categorized as either resonant or dissonant, with the former being more conducive to creating an empowering environment (Boyatzis & McKee, 2013). Resonant leadership styles, such as visionary, coaching, and affiliative, have been found to positively influence teacher

empowerment by fostering trust, collaboration, and professional development (Waters & Hitt, 2023). These styles are based on principles of emotional intelligence, where leaders prioritize understanding and responding to the emotional needs of their staff. Visionary leaders, for example, provide a clear and inspiring direction, helping teachers align their personal goals with institutional objectives (Hulpia et al., 2020). Similarly, coaching leaders focus on developing teachers' strengths and professional capacities, which enhances their sense of self-efficacy and job satisfaction (Bickmore & Atkinson, 2022).

On the other hand, dissonant leadership styles, including commanding and pacesetter, are often associated with lower levels of teacher empowerment and job satisfaction. These styles emphasize control and high-performance standards at the cost of emotional engagement and professional development (Boyatzis, 2018). Teachers working under dissonant leadership often report feeling undervalued and disengaged, which can lead to higher turnover rates and lower job satisfaction (Bogler & Nir, 2012).

The Relationship between Empowerment, Leadership, and Job Satisfaction

Recent studies highlight the intricate relationship between leadership styles, teacher empowerment, and job satisfaction. A study by Leithwood and Jantzi (2021) found that leadership styles that foster teacher empowerment directly contribute to enhanced job satisfaction, reduced burnout, and increased organizational commitment. Similarly, Kass and Miller (2020) reported that schools with empowering leadership structures experience greater teacher retention and job satisfaction, as teachers feel more valued and supported in their roles.

Furthermore, research by Waters and Hitt (2023) emphasizes the importance of emotional intelligence in leadership, particularly about teacher empowerment. Leaders who are attuned to the emotional and professional needs of their teachers are more likely to foster a supportive environment where empowerment can thrive. This, in turn, leads to greater job satisfaction, as

teachers feel more connected to their work and the institution's goals (Boyatzis & McKee, 2013). In the context of private colleges in Lahore, studies have shown that leadership practices tend to vary significantly, with some institutions adopting more traditional, hierarchical structures that limit teacher empowerment (Memon et al., 2021). However, as the educational sector evolves, there is a growing recognition of the need for leadership styles that promote teacher empowerment as a pathway to improving job satisfaction and institutional effectiveness. Awan and Mehmood (2010) suggest that adopting more resonant leadership styles, such as visionary and coaching, can create an environment where teachers feel empowered to take initiative and contribute to the school's mission.

Theoretical Framework: Goleman's Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Styles

Goleman's (2002) theory of emotional intelligence-based leadership provides a useful framework for understanding how different leadership styles impact teacher empowerment

and job satisfaction. The theory posits that emotionally intelligent leaders are better equipped to manage relationships, foster collaboration, and create a positive work environment, all of which are crucial for empowering teachers (Goleman et al., 2002). Resonant leadership styles, which are grounded in emotional intelligence, align with the principles of empowerment by fostering autonomy, professional growth, and a sense of community among teachers (Boyatzis & McKee, 2013). The application of this framework in educational settings has been well-documented in recent literature, with numerous studies highlighting the positive impact of emotionally intelligent leadership on teacher job satisfaction and empowerment (Bickmore & Atkinson, 2022). By adopting leadership styles that prioritize emotional engagement and professional development, principals can create a more empowering and supportive environment for their teachers, leading to higher job satisfaction and improved organizational outcomes (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2021).

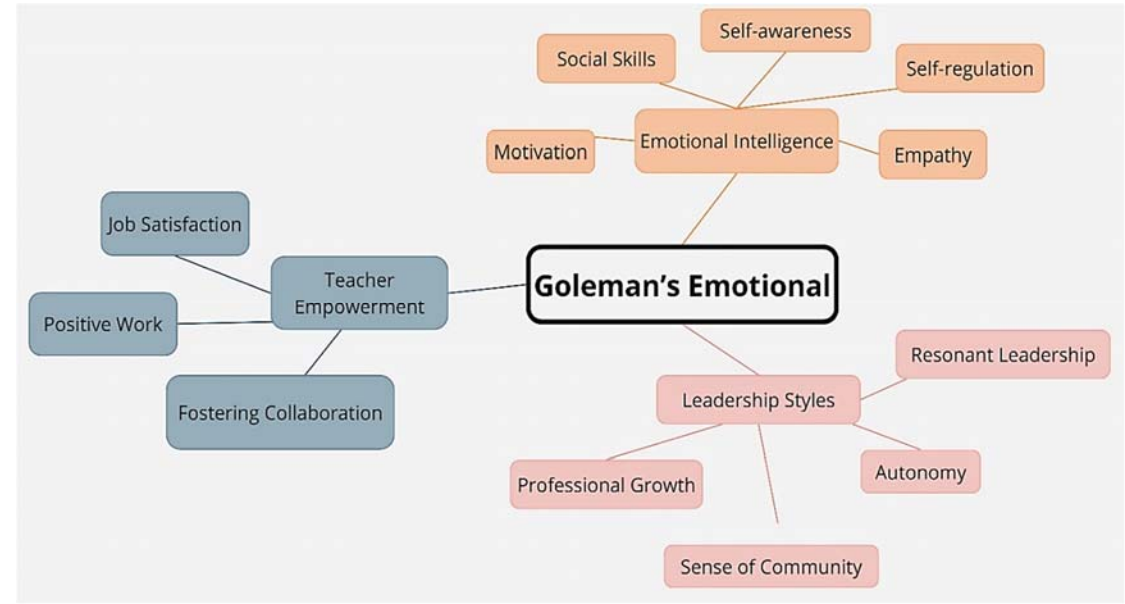


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

Methodology and Procedure

This research aimed to explore the empowerment strategies for teacher leadership in private colleges of Lahore, focusing on the influence of college principals on their staff's leadership development. This section outlines

the research design, sampling technique, research instruments, and data collection process.

The research employed a quantitative survey design, which allowed for the collection of data from a large sample of teachers in private colleges. This approach was chosen to

investigate the relationship between principals' leadership behaviors and teacher leadership practices in private colleges. The study utilized structured questionnaires for data collection.

The target population comprised teachers from private colleges in Lahore, specifically those working in A and B+ category institutions. A multi-stage sampling technique was used. Initially, four towns in Lahore were randomly selected via lottery, and colleges from these towns were then chosen purposively. The criteria for college selection included having at

Table 1: Sampling Frame

Town	Colleges	Teachers Surveyed
Gulberg Town	Concordia Colleges	105
	Superior Law Colleges	20
	Superior College of Commerce	25
Garden Town	KIPS College (Girls)	25
	KIPS College (Boys)	20
Iqbal Town	Standard College	25
	Unique College	25
Johar Town	Garrison College	50
Total	8 Colleges	400 Teachers

Research Instrument

A self-constructed questionnaire was developed to collect data on teacher leadership practices and the principals' capacity for empowering teachers through leadership. The questionnaire comprised two sections:

- **Teacher Leadership Practices:** This section focused on teachers' self-reported leadership behaviors and practices.
- **Principal Leadership Behavior:** This section measured the principal's ability to foster leadership through Goleman's Emotional Intelligence Leadership Styles.

The questionnaire contained a total of 57 items, scored on a Likert scale, to assess the leadership practices of teachers and the leadership styles of principals.

least one branch in the selected town and employing a minimum of 20 teachers, including both permanent and adjunct faculty. The sample consisted of 18 private colleges across four towns, from which a total of 400 teachers were surveyed. The participating colleges included branches of Concordia Colleges, Superior Colleges, KIPS Colleges, Unique Colleges, Garrison Colleges, Quaid-e-Azam Law College, CIMS College, and CFE College. Each college provided approximately 20 to 25 completed questionnaires.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data was collected through a structured questionnaire distributed to teachers in the selected colleges. Appointments for data collection were arranged with the college management to ensure the convenience of participants. Teachers were given ample time to complete the questionnaire without any pressure or interference from the researcher. Data was collected over several weeks, during which the researcher remained on-site at the colleges to address any queries and ensure smooth data collection. The collected data was analyzed using SPSS software to determine the relationship between principals' leadership behavior and teachers' leadership practices. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the data, while correlation and regression analyses were conducted to explore the relationship between the variables.

The research followed ethical guidelines, ensuring confidentiality and voluntary

participation. Participants were fully informed about the purpose of the study, and their anonymity was maintained throughout the research process.

Table 1: Age Distribution of Respondents

<i>Age Group</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
20-40	345	86.3
41-60	55	13.8
Total	400	100.0

The majority (86.3%) of teachers fell within the age range of 20 to 40 years, indicating a relatively young teaching workforce in Lahore's private colleges as shown in the diagram below.

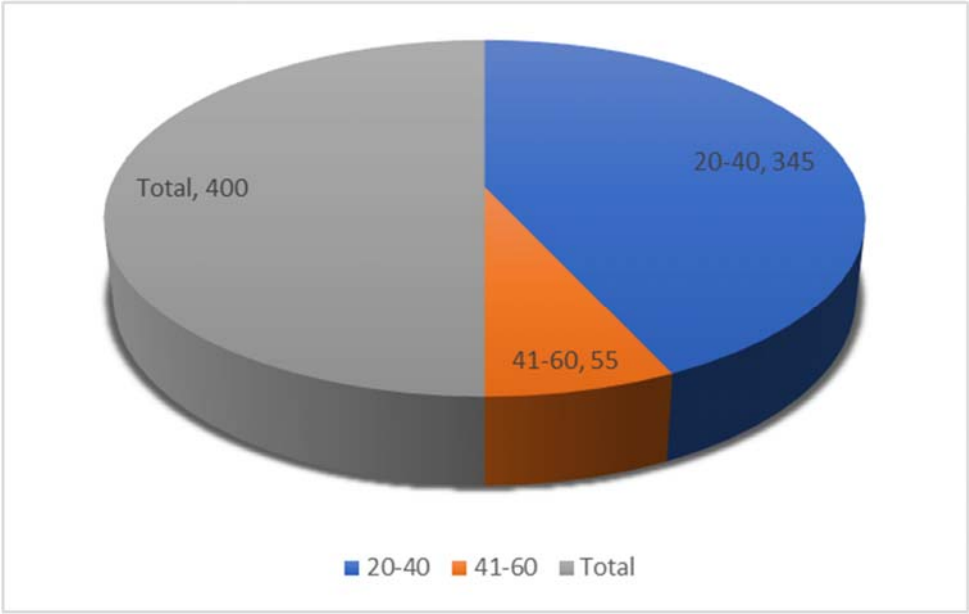


Figure 2: Age Distribution of Respondents

Table 3: Teaching Experience of Respondents

<i>Experience (Years)</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
1-10	340	85.0
11-20	49	12.3
21-30	8	2.0
31-40	3	0.8
Total	400	100.0

A significant majority (85.0%) of the respondents had between 1 to 10 years of teaching experience, suggesting a workforce with relatively limited professional experience.

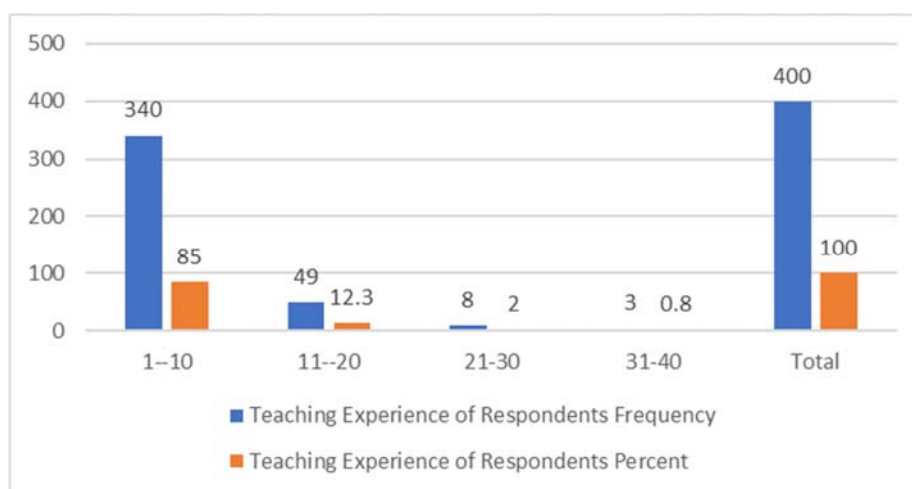


Figure 3: Teaching Experience of Respondents

Table 4: Gender Distribution of Respondents

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Male	174	43.5
Female	226	56.5
Total	400	100.0

The gender distribution indicated a higher proportion of female teachers (56.5%), reflecting a trend towards female predominance in the teaching profession within private colleges.

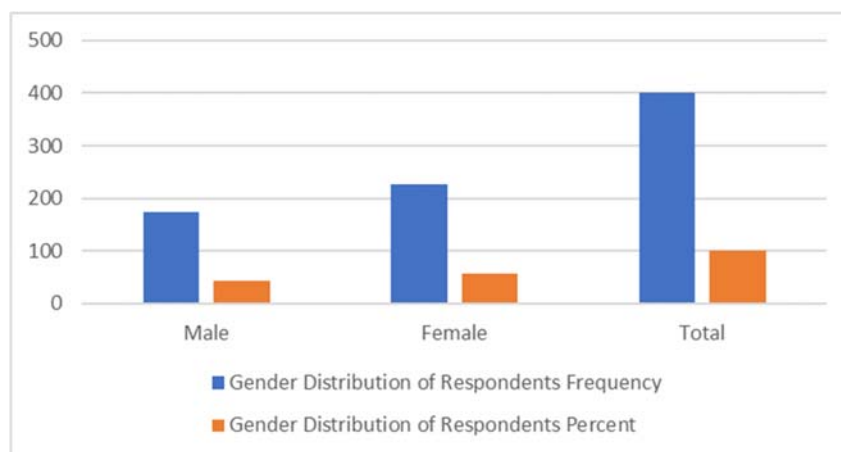


Figure 4: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Table 5: Qualification of Respondents

<i>Qualification</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Bachelors	32	8.0
Masters	178	44.5

<i>Qualification</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
MBA	33	8.3
M.Phil	100	25.0
PhD	57	14.3
Total	400	100.0

The majority of respondents held a Master's degree (44.5%), indicating a well-educated faculty.

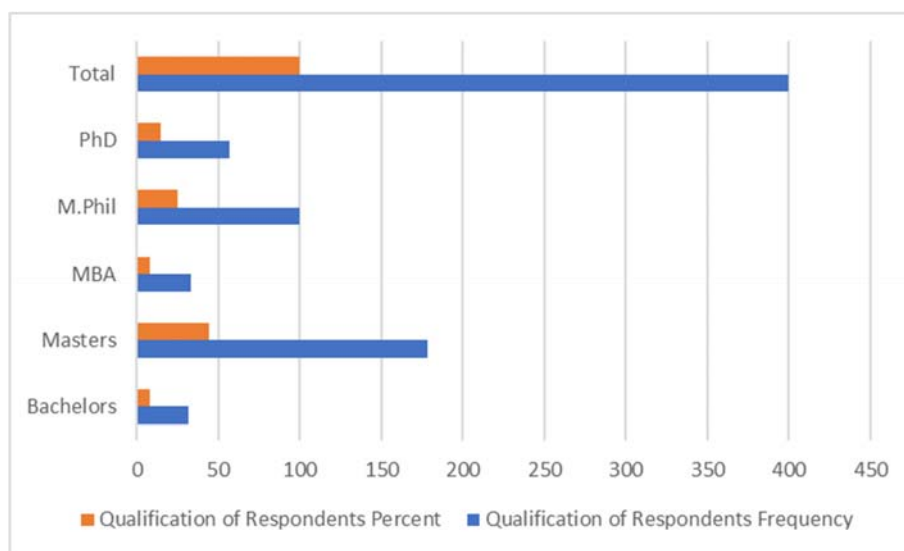


Figure 5: Qualification of Respondents

Correlation Analysis

To assess the relationships between principal leadership styles and teacher leadership indicators, Pearson's correlation coefficient was calculated. Teacher leadership indicators in this study were defined as follows:

- **Job Satisfaction:** The extent to which teachers feel content with their work and environment.
- **Teacher Empowerment:** The degree to which teachers feel they have control and influence over their teaching practices and decisions.
- **Professional Commitment:** The level

of dedication and loyalty teachers have toward their profession and institution.

- **Teacher Sense of Meaning:** The significance teachers attribute to their roles and responsibilities within the educational environment.
- **Autonomy:** The freedom teachers experience in making decisions about their teaching methods and classroom management.

The following table presents the correlations between different principal leadership styles and these teacher leadership indicators

Table 6: Correlation between Leadership Styles and Teacher Leadership Indicators

<i>Leadership Styles</i>	<i>Job Satisfaction</i>	<i>Teacher Empowerment</i>	<i>Professional Commitment</i>	<i>Teacher's Sense of Meaning</i>	<i>Autonomy</i>
Commanding	0.412**	0.345**	0.380**	0.363**	0.345**
Affiliative	0.482**	0.418**	0.515**	0.494**	0.454**
Visionary	0.505**	0.429**	0.497**	0.404**	0.398**
Democratic	0.401**	0.455**	0.405**	0.470**	0.398**
Coaching	0.457**	0.528**	0.505**	0.511**	0.499**
Pace-setting	0.398**	0.399**	0.431**	0.399**	0.398**

All leadership styles exhibited significant positive correlations with teacher leadership indicators, with the coaching leadership style demonstrating the strongest relationship with job satisfaction ($r = 0.457$) and teacher empowerment ($r = 0.528$).

Regression Analysis

Stepwise regression analysis was employed to identify significant predictors of job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Table 7: Stepwise Regression Results for Job Satisfaction

<i>Model</i>	<i>Predictors</i>	<i>R²</i>	<i>Significance</i>
1	Meaning	0.66	$p < 0.000$
2	Meaning, TCOMP	0.72	$p < 0.000$
3	Meaning, TCOMP, SysEmp	0.76	$p < 0.000$

The results indicated that system empowerment served as a key factor influencing job satisfaction, with 76% of its variance explained

by the model that included teacher competence and sense of meaningfulness.

Table 8: Stepwise Regression Results for Organizational Commitment

<i>Model</i>	<i>Predictors</i>	<i>R²</i>	<i>Significance</i>
1	SysEmp	0.69	$p < 0.000$
2	SysEmp, Meaning	0.83	$p < 0.000$
3	SysEmp, Meaning, Autonomy	0.84	$p < 0.000$
4	SysEmp, Meaning, Autonomy, TCOMP	0.86	$p < 0.000$

Organizational commitment was found to be highly influenced by system empowerment and teacher sense of meaningfulness, indicating these as crucial elements for enhancing teacher engagement and commitment.

Findings

The findings of this study provide compelling evidence that principal leadership behaviors significantly impact teacher empowerment and job satisfaction within private colleges in

Lahore. A considerable number of respondents indicated that coaching, visionary, and affiliative leadership styles positively influenced essential teacher leadership indicators, such as job satisfaction, empowerment, and professional commitment. The data demonstrated that principals adopting a coaching style created a supportive atmosphere that enhanced overall teacher morale and satisfaction. The analysis revealed that all principal leadership styles were positively correlated with teacher leadership indicators. Specifically, the visionary leadership style was closely associated with teachers' sense of meaning and professional commitment. This suggests that when principals communicate a clear vision for their institutions, teachers are more likely to feel a sense of purpose, thereby enhancing their motivation and engagement.

Stepwise regression analyses clarified that system empowerment was a key factor influencing job satisfaction, with the regression model explaining 76% of the variance when combined with the teachers' sense of meaningfulness and competence. Similarly, organizational commitment was significantly impacted by system empowerment and teachers' sense of meaningfulness, with the final regression model accounting for 86% of the variance. These findings emphasize the importance of establishing systems that empower teachers and provide them with meaningful roles in their work.

Demographic analysis further contextualized the findings, revealing a predominantly young and well-educated teaching workforce. The significant representation of female teachers indicates a potential gender dynamic influencing the relationship between leadership styles and teacher engagement.

Discussion

The findings of this study illuminate the crucial role that principal leadership behaviors play in shaping teacher empowerment and job satisfaction in private colleges in Lahore. The significant correlations identified between various leadership styles and teacher leadership indicators align with existing literature emphasizing the impact of leadership on

educational outcomes (Harris & Jones, 2021; Leithwood et al., 2020). The predominant association of coaching, visionary, and affiliative leadership styles with enhanced job satisfaction and empowerment underscores the necessity for adopting flexible and adaptive leadership approaches in educational settings. The strong correlation between coaching leadership and teacher empowerment ($r = 0.528$) resonates with the idea that effective leaders provide support, guidance, and opportunities for professional development. As emphasized by Hargreaves and Fullan (2019), leadership that fosters collaboration and trust significantly enhances teachers' sense of agency and autonomy. This finding reinforces the argument that principals must prioritize building trusting relationships with teachers to cultivate a conducive environment for professional growth.

Moreover, the influential role of visionary leadership on teachers' sense of meaning and professional commitment emphasizes the importance of a clear and inspiring institutional vision. According to Fink and Brundrett (2019), a compelling vision can serve as a motivational force that encourages educators to align their professional goals with the institution's broader objectives, fostering a committed and engaged workforce capable of driving positive educational change. The regression analysis also highlighted that system empowerment is a critical predictor of both job satisfaction and organizational commitment. This finding aligns with the work of O'Leary and Hegarty (2021), who argue that empowerment systems enable teachers to actively participate in decision-making processes, enhancing their engagement and investment in their roles. By fostering a sense of agency, principals can significantly impact teacher retention and overall institutional effectiveness.

Additionally, the demographic profile of the respondents, characterized by a relatively young and highly educated teaching workforce, reflects the evolving landscape of education in Lahore. The predominance of younger teachers may suggest a greater openness to innovative leadership practices and collaborative approaches (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). As

the educational environment continues to evolve, principals must remain attuned to the unique needs and preferences of their teaching staff, tailoring their leadership approaches accordingly.

The higher representation of female teachers aligns with trends observed in various educational settings, where women constitute a significant portion of the teaching workforce. Research by Wanzare and Ward (2021) emphasizes that gender dynamics can influence leadership perceptions and practices, suggesting the need for leadership styles that are inclusive and supportive of diverse teacher experiences. This study contributes to the growing body of evidence supporting the assertion that effective principal leadership is a cornerstone of successful educational institutions. The findings advocate for the continuous professional development of school leaders, emphasizing the importance of fostering collaborative, empowering, and visionary leadership practices. Future research should consider longitudinal studies to explore the long-term effects of principal leadership styles on teacher retention and student outcomes, further enriching the discourse on educational leadership.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study underscores the significant relationship between principal leadership behaviors and teacher empowerment as drivers of job satisfaction within private colleges in Lahore. The findings highlight the importance of principals adopting coaching, visionary, and affiliative leadership styles to foster an empowering environment for teachers. When teachers feel empowered and derive meaning from their roles, they demonstrate higher levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment, which positively impacts the educational atmosphere. The implications of these findings are critical for educational leaders seeking to enhance teacher engagement and professional growth. Principals need to create supportive and empowering environments that prioritize teacher involvement and development. The results advocate for ongoing professional development and training for principals to equip them with the

necessary skills to implement effective leadership practices that meet the diverse needs of their teaching staff (Afzal, Kamran & Naseem, 2023).

Future research should explore the longitudinal effects of different leadership styles on teacher retention and student outcomes. Such inquiries could contribute to a deeper understanding of the dynamics of educational leadership, ultimately improving the quality of teaching and learning in the educational landscape.

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