



Impact of Principal Leadership Styles on Teacher Job Performance: An Empirical Investigation

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This study is intended to investigate the relationship and effect of principal leadership styles on teacher job performance at public secondary schools in Faisalabad city, Punjab, Pakistan. Given a correlational design purpose, data were assembled by drawing a sample of 102 principals and 512 teachers through self-administered questionnaires. The first instrument titled “Questionnaire for Principal Leadership Style” (QPLS) comprises three subscales, all reflecting a high degree of internal consistency, namely, autocratic leadership ($\alpha = 0.832$), democratic leadership ($\alpha = 0.759$), and laissez-faire leadership ($\alpha = 0.852$). The second tool, Questionnaire for Teacher Job Performance (QTJP), also indicates good reliability ($\alpha = 0.813$). Regarding the verification of the research questions and hypotheses, percentages, multiple regression, and Pearson’s correlation coefficient were subsequently performed at the significance level of $p < 0.05$. As the findings attest, 59.3% of the variation in teacher job performance was statistically explained as the result of shared involvement of principal autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles. The results also revealed that the autocratic leadership constituted the largely exercised style, significantly exerting a strong and positive impact on teacher job performance, while the impact of laissez-faire leadership style was either problematic or unhelpful. Ultimately, the findings suggest that the principals under study should leverage a wise integration of leadership styles according to specific circumstances of their respective schools.

Keywords: principal leadership, school administration, leadership styles, teachers job performance, work motivation

INTRODUCTION

The school conditions and role of leadership are widely listed as essential mediations to foster advancement, modernization, changes, and innovations in capacity building and teaching and learning practices (Hallinger and Heck, 1996; Schleicher, 2015; Lee et al., 2019; Lunenburg and Ornstein, 2021). School leadership is inextricably linked to the everyday school operation as the key education driver of change and success or even a source of failure (Kafka, 2009; Day and Sammons, 2016). Efficient leadership that consistently aligns school missions and visions with actions is the cornerstone to build effective schools (Gurr et al., 2006; Werang and Lena, 2014). Thus, given the achievement of national educational goals and improved organizational performance, it is imperative to nurture schools with effective leadership.

Principals and teachers constitute the primary sources of effective leadership in educational institutions that lead to improve student academic achievement (Day and Sammons, 2016; Fackler and Malmberg, 2016; Parveen et al., 2021). However, it is remarkably observed through prior studies that the principals' direct/indirect influence on student success is amid considerable controversy of positive and negative (Tan, 2014; Hallinger and Ko, 2015; Wu et al., 2020a,b). The salient credit then goes to teachers for the students' personal and intellectual development in educational institutes (DuFour and Marzano, 2011). Equally significant, teachers' leadership and their instructions matter most to student academic achievement (Sebastian and Allensworth, 2019). Thus, obviously, the school administration must be held accountable for facilitating and improving modern knowledge management and classroom instructions that likely optimize educational achievement and enhance teacher job performance (Antony et al., 2012; Al-Safran et al., 2014; Keddie, 2015; Parveen et al., 2022).

As a preferred topic for global researchers, employee job performance has always been empirically proved to be related to leaders' behaviors and their leadership styles (Bryman, 2011; Morrison, 2011; Haque et al., 2015; Younas et al., 2022). Specifically, considerable research reveals that principal leadership styles and teacher job performance are considerably tangled to each other (refer to Adeyemi, 2010; Imhangbe et al., 2018; Saleem et al., 2020). An extensive review of rigorous studies discloses that teacher performance certainly exerts a constructive and optimistic effect on student success under the shared vision and cooperation of leadership (Awamleh and Gardner, 1999; Hallinger and Heck, 2011; Gumus et al., 2013). Accordingly, principals greatly affect the instructional and non-instructional functioning of teachers, which in turn directly contributes to student attainment (Cheng, 1994; Leithwood et al., 2010). In most instances, setting directions, counseling services, mentoring, coaching, and developing faculty provided by school leadership are frequently listed at the top of interventions for boosting up teacher job performance and assisting teachers in addressing institutional challenges (Schleicher, 2015; Welch and Hodge, 2018; Saleem et al., 2020). Obviously, effective leaders build up their teachers for upcoming challenges and vision (Tomlinson, 2004; Phuc et al., 2021). Thus, Tobin (2014) posited that school principals are currently trying to bring quality in teacher competencies by facilitating them to a greater extent under their supervision. These two intertwined variables probably strengthen the value of educational development in the world.

Still, an unfavorable leadership style adopted by a leader may hinder teachers from achieving shared favorable objectives (Bickmore and Dowell, 2018). Numerous teachers voluntarily leave the profession due to the adverse behaviors of school heads (Jones and Watson, 2017; Bickmore and Dowell, 2018). Some are failing to offer excellent performance or educate students due to principal leadership vulnerability (Oplatka and Arar, 2018). Accordingly, the performance and results of schools are also coming down due to the shortage and unavailability of strong leadership and qualified teachers. Theoretically, a teacher's role in the educational system is clearly stated in Pakistan's National Education Plans and Policies (Punjab Government, 2012; Demir and Qureshi, 2019; Rizvi and Khamis, 2020). Unluckily, the

social acceptability and image of teachers in Pakistan are getting worse these days, and teacher expertise is falling gradually due to several underlying causes (Aslam, 2013a,b; Özü et al., 2017). For instance, conflict-affected local contexts and the involvement of politics in teacher transfers and appointments also constitute the most often cited reasons for the decline in local teachers' efficiency and professionalism (Ali, 2011; Chaudary and Imran, 2012; Nadeem et al., 2013; Halai and Durrani, 2018). Furthermore, Pakistani teachers do not enjoy much intellectual freedom, authority, independence, and satisfaction as compared to other professions (Ghazi and Maringe, 2011; Malik et al., 2011; De Talancé, 2017; Ali, 2018). Interestingly, the mainstream media is constantly distressing the local teachers in terms of their performance. As a result, teacher shortage, gradually decreasing teacher status, and declining level of satisfaction and enthusiasm from teaching occupation consistently urge local and global researchers to pay attention to these issues (Ali, 2018; Rizvi and Khamis, 2020).

Specifically, this study is intended to measure the impact of various principal leadership styles on the job performance of teachers currently serving their duties in secondary schools in the main province of Punjab, Pakistan. In fact, although extensive research has addressed the phenomenon from different perspectives and in different cultures, it remains a mystery that has not yet been satisfactorily solved. The linkage between principal leadership styles and teacher job performance is still largely unexplored in Pakistan (Quraishi and Aziz, 2018; Maqbool et al., 2019; Yasmin et al., 2019; Saleem et al., 2020). Especially, public secondary school teachers in numerous Pakistani cities, i.e., Faisalabad, Punjab, are in dire need of substantial improvement with regards to their working conditions and job performance. Thus, with respect to education in Pakistan, more exposition is imperative to ascertain how and what style of leadership positively or negatively affects teacher job performance in public secondary schools of Faisalabad city.

The study findings have both theoretical and managerial contributions. First, the study helps build upon the educational and organizational literature regarding leadership and employee job performance. In addition, the study findings are expected to be considerably useful for principals, teachers, educational planners, and policymakers alike. This study contributes not only to improve school administration but also to prevent the teachers to quit their jobs, which constitutes a challenge for Punjab Educational Bureau nowadays. Accordingly, this contribution will probably improve the current situation of public secondary school teachers with attempts to effectuate principal leadership and enhance classroom instructions in a structured yet supportive school environment. Additionally, the study helps inform the Educational Bureau of Faisalabad city about the significance of the principals' leadership styles and job performance of their respective teachers. Ultimately, the study may facilitate sustainable collaborative efforts between schools and the local authority that may help decrease turnover and quittance of jobs of secondary school teachers in Faisalabad city. The study would, therefore, make a greater contribution to the ongoing efforts to improve their suffered current situation.

Research Objectives

The main objectives of this study are multifold as follows:

1. To investigate the highly adopted principal leadership styles in public secondary schools of Faisalabad city;
2. To verify the impact of these leadership styles on Faisalabad public secondary school teacher job performance;
3. To address the substantial correlation between principal leadership styles and Faisalabad public secondary school teacher job performance; and
4. To investigate which style of leadership is the most suitable to facilitate Faisalabad public secondary school teachers.

Research Questions

The following questions are formulated according to the objectives:

1. Which leadership style is persistently used by the principals in public secondary schools of Faisalabad city?
2. To what extent do the principal leadership styles (i.e., autocratic leadership, democratic leadership, and laissez-faire leadership) impact Faisalabad public secondary school teacher job performance?
3. How does the principal autocratic leadership style correlate with Faisalabad public secondary school teacher job performance?
4. How does the principal democratic leadership style correlate with Faisalabad public secondary school teacher job performance?
5. How does the principal laissez-faire leadership style correlate with Faisalabad public secondary school teacher job performance?

Research Hypotheses

Based on prior studies and extant literature review, the following null hypotheses are made to conduct the study:

1. There is no considerable effect of principal leadership styles on Faisalabad public secondary school teacher job performance.
2. Principal autocratic leadership style does not have a substantial correlation with Faisalabad public secondary school teacher job performance.
3. Principal democratic leadership style does not have a substantial correlation with Faisalabad public secondary school teacher job performance.
4. Principal laissez-faire leadership style does not have a substantial correlation with Faisalabad public secondary school teacher job performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Leadership Styles

Leadership is admittedly defined as the power to facilitate, stimulate, and inspire followers *via* the useful and efficient provision of institutional resources to implement strategies and achieve shared objectives (Northouse, 2018). Also, leadership is conceptualized as how a leader influences a group to achieve communal goals (Jaques, 2017). Simply put, leaders express a

strong preference for close collaboration with the subordinates to extend their mutual interest rather than reliance on their authority to influence the subordinates to obey what has been dictated to them (Adair, 2007; Northouse, 2018). The ways in which leaders provide direction, influence, and motivate their subordinates are called styles of leadership. In the educational sector, the pertinence and efficacy of leadership style rest on the functioning state in which school leaders balance their style with devotees' tasks (Petersen et al., 2015; Lunenburg and Ornstein, 2021). The leadership styles adopted by the principals are diverse and derived from the foundation of locally cultural associations and the context of school settings (Hallinger, 2018; Miller, 2018; Phuc et al., 2020). Simply put, principal leadership styles are greatly influenced by various factors, i.e., leader personalities, socioeconomic environment, and school culture; thus, styles and practices of leadership vary according to cultural and geographical differences (Busher, 2006; Hoy and Miskel, 2008; Chen et al., 2017; Solomon and Steyn, 2017).

Through previous empirical research, three basic leadership styles mostly adopted by principals in developing countries are as follows: (i) autocratic leadership style; (ii) democratic or participative leadership style; and (iii) laissez-faire or free-rein leadership style (Oplatka*, 2004; Okoji, 2016; Saleem et al., 2020). Mumford (2006) argued that most leaders preferably deploy participative and directive styles and endorses the encouragement of democratic leadership style as an alternative to laissez-faire and autocratic leadership styles. The literature review highlights the use or blend of various leadership styles in certain situations, i.e., democratic, autocratic, task-oriented, collegial, or transformational, that enable school leadership to instigate school improvement and reform (Heck and Hallinger, 2010; Kiboss and Jemiryott, 2014; Sebastian and Allensworth, 2019; Hosseingholizadeh et al., 2021). Additionally, a conceptual model of school leadership was recently developed typically reliant on three leadership styles, namely, instructional, transformational, and moral, to improve school effectiveness and teacher job performance (Phuc et al., 2020). Moreover, leadership, although being administrators or pedagogical leaders, demands the integration and proficient use of numerous approaches, such as behavioral approach, trait approach, and skills approach, and appropriate leadership styles across different situations or occasions (Schleicher, 2015; Northouse, 2018; Lunenburg and Ornstein, 2021). Thus, successful school leaders are those who adopt an appropriate leadership style or a mixture of various styles to lead teachers toward the attainment of school goals (Schleicher, 2015; Stevenson et al., 2016).

Principal Leadership Styles and Teacher Job Performance

The effective performance, work motivation, and contentment level of employees constitute factors of great importance for all institutions, especially educational organizations (Ertas, 2015; Chen et al., 2017; Demircioglu, 2021). Previous studies further confirm that the capacity to complete the job tenure and survive a position is due to not only performance or

the economic need for employment but also the leadership practices of superiors (Sun and Wang, 2017; Bickmore and Dowell, 2018; Lee et al., 2019; Baig et al., 2021). Ultimately, the leadership role is of great significance in decision-making to inspire subordinates and reach a consensus about how and what their desires to be fulfilled for the achievement of employees' needs and desired objectives (Kafka, 2009). Given teacher morale and performance improvement, certain leadership practices have empirically proved themselves valuable such as effective communication with teachers, well-established principal and teacher relationships, and attention to teacher professionalism (Lambersky, 2016; Terosky, 2016). Thus, extant literature suggests that it requires tremendous efforts by both the school administration and teachers to enhance teacher job performance (Imhangbe et al., 2018; Saleem et al., 2020). The ethical behavior of organizational leaders plays an important role in promoting work behavior, innovative ideas, and job satisfaction among workers (Hsiung, 2012; Haque and Yamoah, 2021).

Adeyemi (2010) investigated principal leadership styles (i.e., democratic, autocratic, and laissez-faire leadership) in relation to teacher job performance in senior secondary schools in Ondo State, Nigeria. Using the stratified random sampling technique, the study sample comprised 240 principals and 1,800 teachers. Frequency counts, percentages, Pearson's correlation matrix, and *t*-test were performed to establish the relationship among study variables. Regarding the study findings, the democratic leadership style constituted the dominant leadership style exercised by the principals under study. Specifically, higher levels of teacher job performance are closely associated with the principals' use of democratic and autocratic leadership styles in certain situations ($p < 0.05$). Accordingly, no significant relationship was found between laissez-faire leadership and teacher job performance. The authors recommended that a mixture of autocratic and democratic leadership styles should be encouraged in their school administration to promote better teacher job performance, whereas principal laissez-faire leadership style should be discouraged as it failed to induce better teacher job performance.

The purpose of Werang and Lena's (2014) cross-sectional empirical research was to examine the relationship between principal leadership, school organizational climate, and teacher job performance at public senior high schools in Merauke Regency, Indonesia. The valid sample of 118 senior teachers was determined by Krejcie and Morgan's formula. Survey questionnaires were used to establish the relationship among various study variables. Their study findings revealed that principal leadership was positively significantly correlated with teacher job performance ($r = 0.395$, $p < 0.001$). Additionally, a positive significant relationship was found between school organizational climate and teacher job performance ($r = 0.242$, $p < 0.001$). Specifically, they stated that the favored leadership style was also the presence of autocratic leadership in the studied schools. Similarly, a study by Arar and Oplatka (2015) described a literature review of the previous studies to find the practiced leadership styles of Arab educational leaders, and they provided

the results that there is a lack of democratic spirits in the Arab world.

Additionally, Okoji's (2016) correlation study examined the relationship between secondary school principal leadership styles (i.e., democratic, autocratic, and laissez-faire leadership) and teacher job performance in selected rural community schools in Ondo State, Nigeria. The study population comprised 50 principals and 250 teachers via a simple random sampling method. Two questionnaires were employed, namely, Principals' Leadership Assessment Inventory and Teachers' Job Performance Assessment Scale for the principals and teachers, respectively. The results revealed that statistically significant relationships existed between democratic ($r = 0.118$) and autocratic ($r = -0.314$) leadership styles and teacher job performance ($p < 0.05$). The study findings also suggested that a blend of principal autocratic and democratic leadership styles would considerably improve job performance and productivity among Nigerian teachers.

Imhangbe et al. (2018) also examined the impact of principal leadership styles (i.e., democratic, autocratic, and laissez-faire leadership) on teacher job performance in public senior secondary schools in Edo, Nigeria. Their correlational design study described a survey of 69 principals and 397 senior teachers using two separately adapted questionnaires. Regression results disclosed that a blend of democratic, autocratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles statistically explained 68.3% of the variance in teacher job performance. Accordingly, democratic and laissez-faire leadership positively significantly impacted teacher job performance ($p < 0.05$) with the most prominent strength of democratic leadership style ($r = 0.801$), whereas no significant relationship existed between autocratic leadership style and teacher job performance ($p > 0.05$). They also recommended the practice of principal democratic leadership style to effectuate teacher job performance in the area of study.

Given the emphasis of administrative influences on teacher job performance of private secondary schools in the Middle East, Saleem et al. (2020) recent study verified the effects of four principal leadership styles (i.e., directive, supportive, participative, and achievement-oriented leadership styles) on teacher job performance. These leadership styles are conceptualized in the path-goal theory. A sample of 253 middle management staff (i.e., vice principals, section heads, and coordinators) in Lahore, Pakistan, was recruited for empirical correlation data analysis using the structural equation modeling. The findings revealed that the principal directive leadership style exerted the most significant effect on five key indicators (i.e., teaching planning, classroom organization, monitoring and evaluation, classroom atmosphere and discipline, and teacher leadership) of teacher job performance ($p < 0.05$), followed by the supportive and achievement-oriented leadership styles. Specifically, the effect of principal participative leadership on teacher job indicators was relatively negative and/or minimal. They also asserted that teachers preferred supportive leadership styles that communicate the school values to key stakeholders. Additionally, they highlighted the establishment of an improved learning environment that is

supportive of the ethnic, cultural, and social diversity of Middle East teachers.

STUDY MATERIALS AND METHODS

Selection of Study Design

The correlational research design was primarily conducted to understand the natural relationship between the study variables (Gall et al., 2007). The objective of the specific utilization of correlational research design for the study was to get a proper prediction of the variables in order to evaluate the correlation between principal leadership styles and teacher job performance. To realize this fine rationale, correlational statistics were performed.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was limited to only secondary schools of the public sector in Faisalabad city, Punjab province. The population consisted of 538 principals and 1,860 teachers (**Supplementary Material**). The random sampling technique was used to draw a sample from the population. Accordingly, 115 principals and 600 teachers were approached to get data, of which 614 respondents (i.e., 102 principals and 512 teachers) finally contributed to the study. For the purpose of data collection, two instruments developed by Imhangbe et al. (2018) were adopted and slightly modified to match the educational context in Pakistan. Accordingly, two separate questionnaires were utilized, namely, (1) Questionnaire for Principal Leadership Style (QPLS) for the teachers to assess their principals' leadership styles and the perceived effect on their job performance and (2) Questionnaire for Teacher Job Performance (QTJP) for the principals to rate their teachers' job performance. The blend of both questionnaires was employed to effectuate the empirical investigation of three leadership styles, namely, autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire, and teacher job performance. The QPLS consists of three parts: Part A for demographic information and Part B containing 18 items, six items for each leadership style, to reveal the generally employed leadership style by the principals. All 18 items are measured on a 3-point Likert scale of "always = 3," "sometimes = 2," and "never = 1." Part C comprised 30 items. Accordingly, the purpose of inclusion of these questions was to examine the association of autocratic leadership (Q1–10), democratic leadership (Q11–20), and laissez-faire leadership (Q21–30) with teacher job performance. These items in Part C are assessed through a 4-point Likert scale with these values of "strongly disagree = 1," "disagree = 2," "agree = 3," and "strongly agree = 4".

The second tool, QTJP, was comprised of two portions. The first portion is about participant demographics. The second portion is integrated by five subparts utilizing items from Hsiung (2012) "Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire." In their study, Imhangbe et al. (2018) specified five job functions to rate teacher job performance, including teaching lessons, lesson planning, lesson evaluation, handling student discipline, and classroom management. Regarding the context of this study, their job performance evaluation items were adjusted to align with the

K-12 Teacher Performance Assessment Report of the Education Department of Faisalabad city. Each category containing three items, thus, makes a total of 15 questions. Respondents indicated their responses using a 4-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree = 1" to "strongly agree = 4". The face and content validity of the instruments was verified by a panel of educational experts. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the reliability, or internal consistency, of the instruments. The first tool, QPLS, had the coefficient of reliability of 0.832 for the subscale of autocratic leadership, 0.759 for democratic leadership, and 0.852 for laissez-faire leadership. Cronbach's alpha for the second tool, QTJP, was 0.813. All subscales showed good internal reliability of the variables of measurement.

Given the effective instrument administration, the questionnaire guide was written in both English and Urdu. The Urdu language makes the questions clearer for the participants as most of the Punjabis are fluent in Urdu when compared to English. Thus, the questionnaire was translated and written in two languages. Obviously, the type of language used depended on the respondents' preference, aiming at maximizing effective and efficient responses. Regarding instrument administration, the approval for data collection was granted by the Education Department of Faisalabad city, Pakistan. A total of 614 respondents were recruited; accordingly, 512 copies of the first tool were circulated to the teachers, and 102 copies of the second tool were forwarded to the principals, respectively. The researcher devoted 2 months to data collection.

Technique for Data Analysis

After the collection of valid questionnaires, proper statistical tools, i.e., percentages, correlation, and regression analysis, were adopted to check the reliability and ascertain the hypotheses. After data screening, percentages were performed to assess the persistently used principal leadership styles. Additionally, multiple regression analysis was employed to ascertain the first hypothesis. In this study, the regression analysis was performed to envisage the value of the one variable on other variables, i.e., principal leadership style and teacher job performance. Additionally, *t*-test and ANOVA were calculated to verify the proposed hypotheses. Given the verification of Hypotheses 2, 3, and 4, the Pearson's correlation was employed. For the testing purpose of all hypotheses, the level of significance of alpha ($p < 0.05$) was used as the threshold value.

Ethical Consideration

Adherence to ethical guidelines in scientific research is particularly of great significance. For all the schools involved, the researcher first obtained permission from the Punjab Educational Bureau. A detailed description of the questionnaire was also provided to the principals and the teachers. Neither a principal nor a teacher was forced to participate in the study or to fill out the questionnaire. The researcher asked their opinion before distributing the questionnaire. On the data collection sites, the researcher first provided a brief introduction, then proceeded to state the research purpose, approximated the time for getting information, and explained to the respondents how the study results would be used and the availability of the

TABLE 1 | The frequency of principal leadership styles in public secondary schools of Faisalabad city.

Sr. #	Variables	Always		Sometimes		Never		Total
		Qty.	%Age	Qty.	%Age	Qty.	%Age	
Autocratic Leadership Style								
1	School principal allocates the tasks without teacher will.	319	62.30	144	28.13	49	9.57	512
2	School principal decides solely not including teacher consult.	298	58.20	149	29.10	65	12.70	512
3	Performance standards and expectations are set solely for teachers to accomplish.	291	56.84	137	26.76	84	16.41	512
Democratic Leadership Style								
4	School principal accepts the suggestion of teachers about the policies and plans.	183	35.74	212	41.41	117	22.85	512
5	School principal shares plans regarding school activities with teachers prior to implementation.	149	29.10	221	43.16	142	27.73	512
6	School principal provides sociable relationships between staff members.	176	34.38	192	37.50	144	28.13	512
Laissez-faire or free-rein Style								
7	School principal does take a little concern in daily activities as well as proceedings.	161	31.45	164	32.03	187	36.52	512
8	School principal gives a little direction to teachers in classroom.	157	30.66	181	35.35	174	33.98	512
9	School principal seldom assists teachers to deal with work problems.	169	33.01	167	32.62	176	34.38	512

research summary when the research would be finalized. The researcher ensured the respondents about the confidentiality of their responses.

RESULTS

RQ1: Which leadership style is persistently used by public secondary school principals in Faisalabad city?

Table 1 describes the frequent practice of principal leadership styles. Given the practice of principal autocratic leadership style, 319 (62.30%) participants disclosed that their principals allocated the tasks without teacher will and assigned them duties against their will. Notably, 298 (58.20%) respondents confirmed that the decisions of school activities were solely made by the principals themselves without teacher consultancy. Similarly, 291 teachers (56.84%) validated that performance standards and expectations were set solely for teacher accomplishment; thus, they had to fulfill the standards of their principals according to their own set of expectations.

Given the results of principal democratic leadership style, obviously, only 183 (35.74%) participants substantiated that their principals always accepted teachers' recommendations and feedback about school policies and plans, whereas 149 (29.10%) confirmed that mutual discussion was made before setting the cocurricular activities. Similarly, 176 (34.38%) teachers revealed that their principals nurtured a friendly working relationship for all staff members.

Regarding the principal's laissez-faire leadership style, 161 participants (31.45%) confirmed that their principals did not have much interest in day-to-day activities and events. Also, 157 teachers reported that their principals did not supervise classroom performances, whereas 169 respondents (33.01%)

remarked that the principals occasionally provided necessary assistance to the teachers to handle work problems and difficulties. The figures and facts in Table 1 undoubtedly and clearly demonstrated that the autocratic leadership style was persistently practiced by public secondary school principals in Faisalabad city.

Hypothesis 1: There is no considerable effect of principal leadership styles on Faisalabad public secondary school teacher job performance.

It is depicted in Table 2 that the regression coefficient (β) of principal autocratic leadership style is 0.682, demonstrating that this leadership style had a strong positive relationship with teacher job performance, and its effect on teachers was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). Additionally, the regression coefficient (β) of principal democratic leadership style is 0.053, also indicating enough positive relationship existed between this style and teacher job performance, and its effect is statistically substantial ($p < 0.05$). Still, the regression coefficient (β) of principal laissez-faire leadership style is -0.263 , stating that a negative relationship through laissez-faire style statistically significantly affected teacher job performance ($p < 0.05$).

The regression coefficients of 0.682 and 0.053 are the positive indication of the effect of autocratic and democratic leadership styles. Inversely, the regression coefficient of -0.263 is the negative indication of the impact of laissez-faire leadership. Thus, this study provides empirical evidence that principal leadership styles meaningfully and significantly affect teacher job performance, both positive and negative, in public secondary schools of Faisalabad city.

According to the results of Table 2, the coefficient of correlation ($r = 0.682$) shows that all three leadership styles are moderately and positively associated with teacher job performance. It is also presented that R^2 of 0.593

TABLE 2 | Effect of principal leadership styles on teacher job performance in public secondary schools of Faisalabad city.

<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> square	Adjusted <i>R</i> Square	<i>F</i> _(2,918)	Sig.	Remark (Overall model)
0.682	0.593	0.590	266.493	0.000	Significant

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients			
	B	Std. error	Beta	T	p-value	Comments
(Constant)	0.917	0.159		5.570	0.000	
Principal autocratic style	0.682	0.012	0.533	19.892*	0.000	Significant
Principal democratic style	0.053	0.011	0.059	2.107*	0.023	Significant
Principal laissez-faire style	-0.263	0.009	-0.019	-8.090*	0.000	Significant

Teacher job performance = constant + β₁autocratic leadership style + β₂democratic leadership style + β₃laissez-faire leadership style; Teacher job performance = 0.917 + 0.682 autocratic leadership style + 0.053 democratic leadership style -0.263 laissez-faire leadership style.
 *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

TABLE 3 | Autocratic leadership style correlation with teacher job performance in public secondary schools of Faisalabad city.

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	Pearson R-coefficient	p-value	Comment
Principal autocratic style	512	2.57	0.29	0.690*	0.000	Null hypothesis Rejected (p < 0.05)
Teacher job performance		2.71	0.27			

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

and adjusted-*R*² of 0.590 indicate that principal leadership styles mutually and jointly determine or explain 59.3% of the dissimilarity in teacher job performance. Also, the value *F*_(2,918) of 266.493 deduces that all three leadership styles considerably, simultaneously, and communally determine teacher job performance in Faisalabad city.

Hypothesis 2: Principal autocratic leadership style does not have a substantial correlation with Faisalabad public secondary school teacher job performance.

Table 3 reveals that the principal autocratic style has a mean score (*X*) of 2.57 with a standard deviation (*SD*) value of 0.29 from 512 respondents. Also, teacher job performance has a mean score (*X*) of 2.71 (*SD* = 0.27, *N* = 512). Furthermore, the score of Pearson’s correlation coefficient is 0.690 (*p* < 0.005), indicating that the principal autocratic leadership and teacher job performance have a positive relationship, or the correlation is statistically significant in public secondary schools in Faisalabad city. Similarly, it is implied that the second null hypothesis, i.e., *principal autocratic leadership style does not have a substantial correlation with Faisalabad public secondary school teacher job performance*, is completely rejected, whereas the *p*-value and positive Pearson’s correlation coefficient are statistically significant. Ultimately, therein lies a strong and positive correlation between the principal autocratic leadership style and teacher job performance in Faisalabad city.

Hypothesis 3: Principal democratic leadership style does not have a substantial correlation with Faisalabad public secondary school teacher job performance.

Similarly, the results in Table 4 illustrate that the mean scores (*X*) for principal democratic leadership style and teacher

job performance are 2.31 (*SD* = 0.30) and 3.45 (*SD* = 0.39) from the 512 respondents, respectively. Obviously, Pearson’s correlation coefficient value is 0.091 (*p* = 0.004), approving that this approach to principal leadership has a positive but quite weak correlation with teachers in public secondary schools in Faisalabad city.

Inevitably, it is implied that the third null hypothesis, i.e., *principal democratic leadership style does not have a substantial correlation with Faisalabad public secondary school teacher job performance*, is completely rejected. A weak positive correlation, due to a small score of 0.119 as the *r* coefficient is very close to zero, exists between both investigated variables, whereas the *p*-value and Pearson’s correlation coefficient are statistically positively significant.

Hypothesis 4: Principal laissez-fair leadership style does not have a substantial correlation with Faisalabad public secondary school teacher job performance.

Table 5 reveals that the mean score (*X*) of the laissez-faire leadership style is 2.53 (*SD* = 0.30) regarding 512 respondents, and teacher job performance has a mean score (*X*) of 3.09 (*SD* = 0.39) for the same sample. Furthermore, Pearson’s correlation coefficient value is -0.382 (*p* < 0.005), indicating that although this leadership style statistically significantly predicts teacher job performance, it has an inverse or negative correlation. Thus, the last null hypothesis, i.e., *principal laissez-fair leadership style does not have a substantial correlation with Faisalabad public secondary school teacher job performance*, is completely rejected. Simply put, although there is a significance of *p*-value, the negative value of Pearson’s correlation coefficient discloses that a statistically significant but moderate and reverse correlation

TABLE 4 | Democratic leadership style correlation with job performance of teachers in public secondary schools of Faisalabad city.

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	Pearson R-coefficient	p-value	Comment
Principal democratic style	512	2.31	0.30	0.091*	0.004	Null hypothesis Rejected ($p < 0.05$)
Teacher job performance		3.45	0.39			

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

TABLE 5 | Laissez-faire leadership style correlation with job performance of teachers in public secondary in Faisalabad city.

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	Pearson R-coefficient	p-value	Comment
Principal laissez-faire style	512	2.53	0.30	-0.382*	0.000	Null hypothesis Rejected ($p < 0.05$)
Teacher job performance		3.09	0.39			

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

is found in both variables, i.e., principal laissez-fair leadership and teacher job performance in public secondary schools in Faisalabad city.

DISCUSSION

Consequently, the study outcomes demonstrated that the preferred autocratic leadership style was frequently practiced by the majority of the principals of public secondary schools of Faisalabad city. The study outcome is very consistent with Duze's (2012) study. Accordingly, the most employed principal leadership style was the autocratic leadership in public secondary schools in Nigeria's Delta State. The same finding is also found in the study by Kozaala (2012), indicating that most of the principals adopted directive communication while giving instructions to the teachers and made key decisions solely in the Kamuli district, Uganda. Most likely, according to Duze's (2012) and Kozaala's (2012) findings, the autocratic leadership style coherently exerts a constructive and positive impact on teacher job performance. Undoubtedly, when considering the studied context of Faisalabad's schools, this leadership style may prove helpful for school administration over proper staff control, especially in the supervision of teachers showing lack of enthusiasm and avoidance of complex targets toward school success. Thus, our finding proved Mwangi's (2013) claim that, to a certain extent, the principal autocratic style would constitute a useful tool to enhance teacher job performance.

Ultimately, the study analysis discloses a substantial relationship between both variables, i.e., principal leadership styles and teacher job performance, in public secondary schools of Faisalabad city. As a result, the impact of principal leadership on teachers is generally identified as positive, negative, and alternative in the studied area. Although the autocratic leadership predominated in most investigated schools, the principals also employed democratic leadership and/or laissez-faire leadership as the right approach for a specific situation. Accordingly, their approach to leadership is sometimes likely to be a blend of these styles. Given Hypothesis 1, therein lies

an empirical result that autocratic and democratic leadership styles positively impact teacher job performance, whereas the laissez-faire leadership style exerts a negative impact on the local teachers. The study findings are consistent with Werang and Lena's (2014) study, uncovering a significant relationship between principal leadership styles and teacher job performance in senior high schools of Papua, Indonesia. Meanwhile, a study conducted by Saleem et al. (2020) to check the impact of leadership styles on teacher job performance in private schools of Pakistan disclosed the same results in the same context. Similarly, the findings confirmed Okoji's (2016) study in the context of selected rural community schools in Ondo State, Nigeria. Accordingly, Okoji (2016) also recommended that the integration of autocratic and democratic leadership styles would improve better teacher job performance.

In some school contexts and certain situations, the autocratic leadership style is empirically proved to positively correlate with teacher job performance. For instance, while this study was carried out in Pakistan, the subcontinent of Asia, the study by Imhangbe et al. (2018) conducted a similar leadership investigation in public secondary schools in Edo Central Senatorial District of Nigeria, Africa. Inversely, as per the findings of Imhangbe et al. (2018), the effect of autocratic leadership style is negative, weak, or insignificant democratic and laissez-faire leadership styles jointly positively impacted teacher job performance. Their study disclosed that democratic and laissez-faire leadership styles jointly positively impacted teacher job performance. The difference in our findings gave empirical evidence that principal leadership is an authentic research gap in this area. Moreover, given the diversity and divergence regarding principal leadership styles, their effect on teacher job performance varies according to different contexts, state of affairs, and work settings. As for the results, although these studies disclosed the unlike facts in principal leadership styles, they cast light on the effect of these determining and salient factors on teacher job performance. Apparently, the differences in leadership approach are present while considering personal preferences and needs and different geographical locations and

contexts. These results ascertain that principal leadership is always subject to contextual and cultural variation.

Additionally, as per Hypothesis 2, a statistically significant and strong relationship is found between principal autocratic leadership style and teacher job performance. Obviously, this independent variable, i.e., autocratic leadership, is largely impacting teacher job performance in the area of study. Our finding is congruent with that of Adeyemi (2010), indicating a similar linkage and effect between these two variables. Inversely, Yusuf (2012) and Imhangbe et al. (2018) disclosed in their studies that principal autocratic style negatively affected teacher job performance and student achievement. The outcomes of Hypothesis 3 show that the democratic style had a positive but weak influence on teacher job performance. The finding is coherent with the outcomes of Okoji's (2016) study that the relationship between these two variables is statistically positive but weak ($r = 0.118$, $p < 0.05$). Similarly, Kiboss and Jemiryott (2014) asserted that the democratic leadership style significantly enhanced the working conditions and teaching quality. Given Hypothesis 4, it is unveiled that that laissez-faire leadership style had a negative and inverse relationship with teacher job performance. Obviously, the finding is, however, contrary to Hsiung (2012) similar investigation on Nigerian principals and teachers in Edo Senatorial district, stating that there was a significant relationship between laissez-faire style of leadership and teacher job performance. However, Adeyemi (2010) observed that the use of laissez-faire leadership, most likely, induced lower teacher job performance compared to schools where leadership adopted autocratic leadership style.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Several recommendations were made according to the findings of this study as follows:

- 1) The autocratic leadership style should be sustained due to its frequent/preferred practice by the studied public secondary school principals and its strong and positive correlation with teacher job performance.
- 2) The practice of democratic leadership should be performed with caution due to its positive but weak impact on teacher job performance.
- 3) As schools in Pakistan are at the heart of education reform, practical training programs and policy for these principals may introduce new models of leadership or a blend of various leadership styles (i.e., autocratic leadership, democratic leadership, transformational leadership, or distributed leadership) to further assist local principals in handling and managing work settings and various administrative affairs to enhance the teacher job performance in Faisalabad city.
- 4) Leadership training modules aimed at teacher empowerment must be tailored and integrated into would-be principals' and teachers' professional development programs and plans.
- 5) The principals may consider depressing the practice of laissez-faire leadership style in public secondary schools of Faisalabad city due to its negative impact on teacher job performance.
- 6) More collaborative work between the authorities of the School Education Department and the local schools is needed to direct the adoption and usage of integrated leadership styles.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE STUDIES

This study limits its scope of context to public secondary schools of a city in a South Asia-based developing country. Therefore, there is a desperate need for more investigation and research for school leadership conceptualization in varying contexts and cultures. Particularly, the present investigation deals only with three leadership styles conceptualized in the path-goal theory. The adoption of other leadership styles could yield further insightful results in future studies.

CONCLUSION

This study attempts to demonstrate the significant impact of three leadership styles on the job performance of public secondary school teachers of Faisalabad city, Pakistan. First, the primary finding reveals the empirical evidence that the explored principal leadership styles meaningfully and significantly affect teacher job performance, both positive and negative.

Specifically, the study findings unveil that the principal autocratic leadership style was the most frequent practice of leadership as perceived by the teachers, followed by the democratic leadership style. Accordingly, both styles statistically exerted a significant impact on teacher job performance. Inevitably, the practice of these two leadership styles was found to be effective in the given context, a non-Western developing country. Conversely, the principal laissez-faire leadership style was identified as either problematic or unhelpful for all underlying constructs of teacher job performance. Hence, given the studied context of school leadership, the sole use or integration of autocratic and/or democratic leadership styles should be constructively adopted in public secondary schools to optimize the teacher job performance in the long run.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article/**Supplementary Material**, further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author/s.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

KP presented the main idea and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. PQ proofread the manuscript. KP and PQ performed data collection and analysis. TK and AS helped us to finalize the revisions and proofreading. All authors contributed to the article and approved the submitted version.

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

The Supplementary Material for this article can be found online at: <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/feduc.2022.814159/full#supplementary-material> and <https://tinyurl.com/4ecduerc>

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