

Journal of Social Sciences Research & Policy (JSSRP)**Influence of School Culture on Pedagogical Practices in Private Schools of Lahore, Punjab****Maha Azmat¹, Dr. Almas Shoaib²**

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Abstract: The concept of school culture incorporates leadership practices, shared values, and staff development systems, has emerged as key factor of pedagogical effectiveness and innovative teaching approaches in current academic landscape. Regardless of emerging prominence of this association, still the interconnection between school culture and instructional modernization and the process through which school culture effects the pedagogical practices of teachers are under researched. This paper was designed to examine the relationship between school culture and pedagogical practices of teachers. 100 school teachers were selected through convenient sampling technique from public and private schools of district Lahore. In data analysis, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was applied to identify the statistical significance of relationship between school culture and pedagogical practices of teachers. Regression analysis was run to investigate that to what extent does the school culture predicts the pedagogical practices of teachers. The results showed that study indicated that there is a moderate positive correlation between school culture and pedagogical practices of teachers. The findings of the study revealed that improvements in school culture are directly associated with the effectiveness of pedagogical practices of teachers.

Introduction

Education is an intricate and complex process that comprises the interplay between the educators, learners and the educational setting. It is the key sector that plays a vital role in the social and economic advancement of a country. In educational institutes, the student's achievement, repute of the institutions and the educational goals of the organization all depends on the teachers as they are considered as a cornerstone of an educational system.

The effectiveness of instructional process in academic institutions is deeply rooted in the cultural settings of the organization with in which teachers work. Bogler et al. (2025) stated that culture of the school is characterized as shared ethics, principles, beliefs and customs that turned out as a key element that effects the novel pedagogical approaches, teaching effectiveness and conclusively the learning targets to be achieved by the learners. Technological world and labor force are in state of constant flux

due to which, it is the need of time for schools to augment their culture and prepare the students for the dynamic environment (Fullan et al., 2018; Kools et al., 2020). In the global era, it is of great importance to understand that how school culture influences the pedagogical practices of teachers in educational transformation and reform measures due to swift technological progress, diversifying student body and great emphasis on digital-age proficiencies.

The current educational landscape focuses on shifting conventional, explicit teaching to more progressive child centered pedagogy that foster logical reasoning, coordination, productivity, and analytical skills. However, the successful implementation of such pedagogical innovations depends not only on teacher's individual capacity but on the broader organizational culture that either empowers or restrict instructional change (Özdemir et al., 2023). Instructional leaders, through collaborative leadership practices, play a key role in fostering cultures that support instructional quality, yet the particular process through which headship influences instructional activities remain inadequately comprehended.

Problem Statement

Teaching quality plays a significant role in achieving the students' learning outcomes. There is a significant difference in pedagogical practices of teachers within similar learning environments. Many researches have focused on teacher's self-efficacy, knowledge, beliefs, job satisfaction and motivation as a predictor of the instructional quality but the cultural settings of the academic institutions where teachers work is underexplored. Although, the relationships between school culture and pedagogical practices of teachers are extensively described in literature, but there is a lack of research on how well the school culture predicts the pedagogical practices of the teachers. Secondly, the cultural dimensions that direct the teacher's pedagogy are not recognized due to which educational policy makers and leaders must have empirical knowledge on dimensions of school culture that needs to be addressed to ensure the effectiveness of pedagogical practices.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate effect of school culture on pedagogical practices of teachers in public and private schools of district Lahore.

Research Objectives

This study aims to

1. Examine that if there is a statistically significant relationship between school culture and teachers' pedagogical practices.
2. Identify that to what extent does the school culture predicts the pedagogical practices of teachers.

Rationale of the Study

While research validates positive relationship between school culture and pedagogical practices (Muhammad et al., 2022; Wei & Chuang, 2024; Wei et al., 2022), critical gaps remain. Studies revealed that the educational settings in which teachers work and their effect on teaching practices remain underexplored (McChesney & Cross, 2023), and extrinsic factors affecting the acceptance of effective instructional strategies demand further study (Wei et al., 2022). This study addresses the gaps by examining the extent to which school culture predicts teachers' pedagogical practices using standardized measurement tools. Based on empirical findings, policy makers and school leaders will seek the pathways to promote the dimensions of school culture that will contribute to ensure pedagogical excellence McChesney & Cross, 2023; Sepúlveda & Aparicio-Molina, 2024).

Literature Review

Prevailing researches contemplate school culture as a complex phenomenon which incorporates the

shared beliefs, values, norms and customs that describe the environment of any educational organization and individual teacher actions. School culture is conceptualized with the perspective of "openness to creative solutions," highlighting the level to which schools encourage pedagogical innovation, challenging the status quo, and divergent thinking in education (Wei et al., 2022, 2024). Likewise, McChesney and Cross (2023) conceptualize school culture in terms of five interrelated aspects including proactive leadership involvement, readiness for change, relationship among staff members, Professional growth mindset, and organizational coherence. This framework laid emphasis on culture as norms and internalized values that are manifested in observable way and characterized in operational procedures. Sepúlveda and Aparicio-Molina (2024) distinguish the difference between a traditional school culture and another known as Professional Learning Community (PLCs) and six aspects of collaborative culture that inform instructional approaches. Tsipas et al. (2023) stated collaborative culture as a paradigm of organizational behavior and the impact of collegial relationship and common work routine on the domain of teaching. Cásková and Chudý (2021) found that school cultures characterized by mutual trust, encouragement, and collegiality create a favorable environment in schools and support the development of professionals, whereas culture of non-interference have the potential of hindering communication and knowledge exchange. Adom et al. (2021) used the theory of creative pedagogy as developed by Lin to model the teaching measures that encourage the development of flexible and independent thoughts, problem-solving, and collaboration skills. Active involvement of school leaders and their supportive behavior is another important dimension of culture. McChesney and Cross (2023) discovered stewardship to be among five cultural factors that influenced the way teachers implemented new professional learning. particularly, it was found that educators who were facilitated in their professional growth by active involvement of school leaders, who were provided with resources and opportunities to experience, were more likely to adopt new pedagogical strategies in their teaching. On the other hand, in case the leaders were not actively involved or lack clarity regarding educational goals the teachers felt restricted in their change capability. According to Şenol and Lesinger (2018), the culture of the school is dependent on the style of instructional leadership, and, in its turn, it promotes the quality of teaching, which implies that leadership is a distal factor in predicting pedagogy due to the impact it has on school culture and practices. Learning communities and collaborative professional culture is a third significant dimension. Sepúlveda and Aparicio-Molina (2024) identified out six dimensions of collaborative school culture, which are shared vision, collective responsibility, reflective dialogue, inter-professional observation, collaborative inquiry, and focus on learning. Schools evolving Professional Learning Communities demonstrated the use of instructional approaches aligned with norms of collaboration as compared to traditional cultures where more isolated instructional approaches are used. McChesney and Cross (2023) revealed that when teachers had confidence in their community of colleagues, teachers could take a risk with new pedagogical practices, but when they were in competitive or hierarchical relationships, they could not take a risk. These results indicate that collaboration does not only represent a cultural aspect but it is also a process by which culture determines pedagogy, collaborative culture help teachers to learn from each other, exchange successful practices and get assistance in developing better instruction. Supportive relationship, trust are considered as the basic cultural factors. Şenol and Lesinger (2018) highlighted that supportive school culture guarantees that educators contemplating the engaging environment, signifying that trust empowers the teachers to take risk and do experiments that are required for bringing innovation in pedagogical practices. The studies conducted by demonstrated a strong positive relationship between organizational culture and educational outcomes. While these studies focus on student outcomes rather

than pedagogical practices directly. They observed that organizational culture influences teaching quality, which in turn affects learning.

Bogler et al. (2025) stated that Instructional Leadership Theory assumes that three main processes help school leaders to influence the quality of instruction: establishment of the mission of the school, control of the instructional program, and creation of the positive school learning climate. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) described school culture as a collaborative learning environment in which teachers immerse themselves in inquiry driven learning, reflective practices, and collaborative learning to improve instructional practice (Sudiati et al., 2025). The study of González et al. (2025) demonstrated that leadership practices nurturing collective responsibility for student learning enabled teachers to implement more formative, student-centered assessment approaches aligned with instructional goals. The implication of the study by Astutik et al. (2024) revealed that school cultures that incorporates shared leadership and sensitivity to the diversity of students allow teachers to adopt more adaptive teaching methods. The significance of leadership practices that expressly endorse differentiation as an essential pedagogical requirement and not a supplementary improvement. Bellibaş et al. (2020) proved that collaboration among teachers facilitated the association between instructional leadership and instructional effectiveness suggesting that leadership stimulates instructional practice mainly by nurturing collaborative environments instead of direct control. Research by Jang et al. (2023) demonstrates that a supportive school climate, integrated with high levels of pedagogical autonomy and collaborative practices, is closely linked with a shift toward teaching that optimize the need of students.

Methodology

Research Design

This study based on casual comparative method under the umbrella of quantitative approach. This design is particularly also well-suited for educational research as it allows for the efficient collection of data to and generalization of findings to the target population (Creswell & Cresswell 2023; Cohen et al., 2017).

Population and sampling

The population of the study is comprised of private school teachers of Lahore, Punjab. Due to practical constraints related to accessibility and time limitations and voluntary participation, convenient sampling technique was employed to collect data. Data was collected from 100 teachers who were readily available and willing to participate were selected for the study from all over district Lahore.

Instrumentation

Two primary, validated survey instruments were used to collect data from the participants of the study. Research instrument was based on 5-point Likert Scale ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1).

1. School Culture Survey (Gruenert & Valentine, 1998) was used to reveal the various dimensions of school culture and understand the prevailing school culture. This instrument consists of 34 items having six subfactors including collaborative leadership, teacher collaboration, professional development, unity of purpose, collegial support and learning partnership. The Cronbach's Alpha value of the survey instrument is 0.955 which indicates the exceptionally high internal consistency and reliability of the items in a survey.
2. To measure the teachers' pedagogical practices, an adapted version of the State that you developed or adapted a Pedagogical Practices Questionnaire based on the [Danielson Framework for Teaching \(FFT\)](#). The instrument consists of 25 items divided into five sub-factors including instructional planning and preparation, teaching and learning strategies, assessment and feedback, classroom

management and learning environment, and professional growth and collaboration. Cronbach's Alpha value of the survey instrument is 0.970 which indicates the exceptionally high internal consistency and reliability of the items in a survey.

Data Collection

The data were collected from 100 school teachers by using the questionnaire given to teachers teaching in private schools of Lahore, Punjab. The questionnaire consisted of the previously validated scales of school culture and teachers' pedagogical practices. The survey was conducted online through google forms in duration of one month via google form with in time duration of one month. Consistent reminders were given to the teachers through emails and WhatsApp. The responses given by the participants were kept private and confidential.

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics indicated the frequency, mean and standard deviation results of teachers' demographics, and intentions regarding the usage of online platforms for financial autonomy. Correlation analysis was done to find the statistically significant relationship between school culture and teachers' pedagogical practices and regression analysis was done to investigate that to what extent does the school culture predicts the pedagogical practices of teachers.

Below given is the table 1 which is representing descriptive statistics of demographic characteristics of respondents including, highest qualification, teaching experience and type of school.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants (n = 100)

	Category	f	%
Highest Qualification	Bachelors	31	31
	Masters	57	57
	M.Phil./PhD	12	12
Teaching Experience	0-5 years	22	22
	6-10 years	29	29
	11-15 years	28	28
	15 years+	21	21
Level Taught	primary	68	68
	middle	19	19
	Secondary/higher	13	13
	secondary		
Type of School	High fee private	34	34
	Medium fee	66	66

Table 1 shows the study sample included 100 female school teachers. The majority of the respondents have Master's degree (57%, n = 57) than that of Bachelors (31%, n = 31) and M.Phil. (12%, n=12). In Teaching Experience, the highest percentage was occupied by teachers having 6-10 years of experience (29%, n = 29), then by 11-15 years (28%, n = 28) 0-5 years (22%, n = 22), and by 15+ years of experience (21%, n =21). Majority of the respondents belong to private schools having medium fee structure (66%, n=66) then high fee private schools (34%, n=34).

Table 2. Mean and standard deviation results of school culture and teachers' pedagogical practices

Variables	n	M	SD
School culture	100	3.49	0.44
Teachers' Pedagogical Practices	100	4.03	0.63

Table 2 shows the descriptive analysis for school culture and teachers' pedagogical practices. Results indicate moderately positive school culture ($M = 3.49$, $SD = 0.44$) which indicates the presence of shared values and supportive norms but not deeply rooted. The results of teachers' pedagogical practices indicate a high level of effective pedagogical approaches ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 0.63$) suggesting that teachers are generally involved in high leverage teaching practices probably determined by individual self-efficacy and instructional proficiency even when the school culture is not moderately supportive.

Table 3 and 4 represents the results of statistical analysis related to the stated hypothesis

H₀₁ School culture does not significantly predict the teachers' pedagogical practices

To test the null hypothesis that school culture does not predict the pedagogical practices of teachers, regression analysis was conducted. The results are presented in Table 4

Table 3. Regression analysis predicting teachers' commitment towards curriculum change from school culture

Predictor variable	β	t	p	R	R^2
(Constant)		4.480	<.001	.404 ^a	.163
School Culture	.404	4.376	<.001		

The null hypothesis is rejected as the results of a simple linear regression analysis revealed that school culture is a positive predictor. ($R^2 = .163$, $F (1, 98) = 19.147$, $p < .001$). It was found that school culture was a significant positive predictor of teachers' commitment ($\beta = .404$, $t = 4.376$, $p < .001$), explaining 16.3% of the variance in the outcome variable. The findings of this study revealed that school culture plays a significant role in implementation of effective instructional approaches. The moderate positive predictor value indicates that as school culture becomes more collaborative and supportive, teachers' the effectiveness of instructional approaches of teachers will increase proportionally.

Limitations of the study

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. This is a small-scale study. The sample of 100 female teachers of private schools is less due to which the results cannot be generalized on a large population. The responses obtained from the teachers have only captured teachers' insights at a single point in time due to which cause and effect reasoning became limited regarding the influence of school culture on teachers' pedagogical practices. Additionally, the restricted use of quantitative methods inhibited a deeper understanding of contextual and experiential factors related to pedagogical practices of teachers. For the future researches, it is recommended to conduct the study on a large sample for increasing the generalizability and integrate qualitative research approach to strengthen the reliability and usefulness of the findings.

Discussion

The results of this research indicate that the school culture and the pedagogical practices of the teachers have a statistically significant and positive relation with each other. These findings are consistent with and build upon the recent empirical studies that found that supportive, collaborative, and innovation-oriented school cultures were linked to improved teaching practices (McChesney and Cross, 2023; Wei and Chuang, 2024; Wei et al., 2022). The positive correlation indicates that those schools with openness to innovative solutions, with a system of professional communities, well-developed leadership engagement, and trust-based relationships encourage the creation of the

environment in which teachers are more likely to use effective pedagogical strategies that fit the Danielson Framework of Teaching. The regression analysis also shows that school culture, which was assessed using the Valentine and Grunert School Culture Survey can be considered as a key factor predicting pedagogical practices, which implies that the difference in school culture can be used to explain the significant difference in the quality of teaching. This predictive association presents the relevance of organizational environment in determining individual teacher practices (Wei et al., 2022). The results imply that school culture is not a backstage factor but a working one in terms of determining the quality of instruction, and the implications to how educational leaders think and develop organizational settings. The observed positive relationship in this study contributes to the increasing number of studies which suggest that school culture is a changeable organizational domain that can be strategically formulated to navigate pedagogical effectiveness in different learning environments.

Conclusion

The study presents empirical evidence of a strong positive correlation between school culture and pedagogical practice of teachers, which fills the major gaps in the research on the predictive reliability of organizational culture of the quality of teaching. By means of the validated tools, the Valentine and Grunert School Culture Survey, and a questionnaire guided by Danielson Framework of Teaching, the study proves that school culture is a useful predictor of teaching methods, and correlation and regression analysis show that supportive, collaborative, and innovation-oriented cultures are positively connected with more effective teaching behaviors. The implications of these findings are significant theoretical implications in how the organizational context influences individual professional practices and practical implications in the case of educational leaders who want to use evidence-based strategies to enhance the quality of instructions. The findings indicate that effort and investments in the development of positive school cultures, the ones defined by openness to innovative solutions, professional learning communities that operate collaboratively, distributed leadership, and relationships based on trust, can be used to bring tangible changes in the teaching practices. School leaders, policymakers, and other providers of professional development must realize that school culture is a strategic tool of instructional enhancement and not a passive background of the teaching process. Subsequent studies need to use longitudinal study designs which can be used to identify the causal processes and also look at the possible moderating influences like the experience of teachers and the school environment and look at the exact ways in which cultural dimensions manipulate various teaching strategies. The research has an impact on the field because it presents the methodologically sound evidence based on the standardized tools and underscores the necessity of the future research that may inform the evidence-based interventions targeted to improve the both the school culture and the quality of teaching.

Practical Implications

The interactions between the school culture and pedagogical practices of teachers in this study have provided practical advice to educational professionals who want to improve the quality of instruction. The systematic creation of organizational cultures that are open to innovation, organized professional learning communities, distributed leadership practices, and relationships of trust, which are the dimensions of organizational cultures, should be prioritized by the school leaders because their relationships are empirically associated with better teaching practices. Strategies that can be implemented in practice are to have teachers participate in regular collaborative planning time, to develop structures of peer observation and feedback, to create psychological safety that facilitates the experimentation with new methods of instruction and to make sure the school policies and decisions

about resource allocation are consistent with the proclaimed values of teaching excellence (McChesney and Cross, 2023; Sepulveda and Aparicio-Molina, 2024). Professional development opportunities must not be confined to individual teacher, but instead, be used to enhance the culture and practices in schools since although well-structured training programs can fail in the implementation process unless the organizational culture supports the change initiative (McChesney and Cross, 2023). The district administrators and policy makers ought to consider investing in leadership development programs that enable principals and instruction leaders acquire knowledge and skills necessary to diagnose, monitor, and proactively influence school culture as a component of a validated assessment tool like the Valentine and Grunert School Culture Survey. Pre-service teachers should be taught through teacher preparation programs how organizational culture can impact professional practice and how they can learn to perceive and deal with various school cultures. Lastly, the school improvement and accountability systems must include school culture measures with the traditional metrics of outcome acknowledging that the sustainable improvement in the quality of teaching may only be achieved by paying attention to the organizational conditions that support or limit successful pedagogy.

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