



IMPACT OF IN-SERVICE TRAINING ON DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP SKILLS AMONG EDUCATIONAL MANAGERS IN PUNJAB

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
<p>Autonomy Skills, Accountability Skills, Capacity Skills, Coaching Skills, Reflection & Feedback Skills, Directive Leadership, Professional Development</p>	<p>The current quantitative study aimed to determine the impact of Quaid-e-Azam Academy for Educational Development (QAED) in-service training on the distributed leadership skills of educational managers from Punjab province. The study sample was 463 school heads and managers across the province of Punjab through a random sampling technique from the Punjab province. Data were collected over adopted questionnaires from indicators of QAED used during in-service training sessions. Google form was designed based on a five-point Likert scale to get online data from participants. The study's findings revealed that most participants showed significant progress in result-driven about various skills & leadership capabilities about setting academic goals, monitoring instructional performance & making decisions after in-service training. Positive response also explored the impact of in-service training in developing competencies such as vision, communication, objective oversight procedures, and evidence-based action that allow one to be transformed. The development of such directive leadership is essential for school improvements. In same way, short workshops demonstrate initial capacity developments.</p>
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INTRODUCTION

The advent of distributed leadership in schooling has taken shape as a model of the professional development for educational administrators, congruent with universal surge toward decentralized school governance (Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2001; Ling, Bai, Li & Yang, 2023). Thus, an awareness has burgeoned among international institutions that collaborative decision-making is a requisite for success, attuning to the collective knowledge and expertise of stakeholders, to produce

educational merit (Harris, 2013), while coinciding with the global concepts of global citizenship and collaboration, in which modern-day education, sets the scene in students' preparing for real world (Hallinger, Wang & Hallinger, 2015). Educational managers can better navigate through various educational systems and cultural settings by adopting distributed leadership (Spillane & Healey, 2010). A crucial aspect of leadership is ability to ensure autonomy of teachers over responsibility sharing. It is culture of accountability and collective ownership, created by distributed leadership that drives greater educational results. Thus, focusing on constant professional growth within realm of distributed leadership, academic administrators initiate and foster consequential change (Harris, 2013; Leithwood, 2021).

By generating boundary-spanning, dynamic, and inclusive learning environments, the managers exhibit leadership behaviors that result in more destinations for all students across regions. Scholars (Spillane & Healey, 2010) and others have spoken about the ability of distributed leadership as a framework to improve student learning over developing collaborative decision-making, shared responsibility, and the inclusion of diverse perspectives. Leadership that is distributed within the context of education represents a collaborative and inclusive leadership approach that re-assigns the responsibilities of leadership among a broader group of stakeholders, including teachers, staff, students, parents, and community members, rather than being in a single individual (Harris, 2013; Spillane & Healey, 2010). Distributed leadership is an approach that involves multiple members of organization participating in leadership roles, by enhancing collaborative & inclusive decision-making process (Spillane & Healey, 2010). This perspective stresses benefits of group decision-making, shared goal ownership, and accessing diverse perspectives and expertise to drive school improvement. Precisely, distributed leadership is highlighted through ability to build relationships and trust among the school community, effective communication, teamwork, and empowerment (Spillane & Healey, 2010).

Training educational leaders to implement distributed leadership effectively largely depends on appropriate training programs (Harris, 2013; Leithwood, 2021). The training programs are widely recognized for emphasizing and developing competencies necessary to implement the distributed leadership, including building trust with the stakeholders, strategies for communicating across the organizational structures, collaborative processes for making decisions and techniques for resolving interpersonal conflicts (Abbas, Sarwar & Rahman, 2024). The leaders practice delegating tasks, empowering team members, and setting up conditions in which shared responsibility & ownership are valued through the workshops, seminars, and professional development programs (Spillane & Healey, 2010). The distributed leadership training also helps leaders cultivate competencies for nurturing experimentation, managing complexity, and adapting to change (Ling, Bai, Li & Yang, 2023). In-service training refers to professional development activities that educational managers undergo while they are employed. Thus, focusing upon distributed leadership training is defined as investing in the development of a cadre of school leaders who can take collective responsibility for fostering improved outcomes for students and enhanced collaboration among educators (Spillane & Diamond, 2007).

Various obstacles can gum up works of distributed leadership skills training. Mainly, hierarchical structures tend to have foot-dragging resistance to change easily. It is tough to push the control out from center in places where traditional leadership styles prove resistant to decentralization (Ling, Bai, Li & Yang, 2023). This model is opposed to the traditional hierarchical leadership structure and emphasizes collective efficacy. All the stakeholders must be on board and committed, which can be difficult as they may be used to top-down leadership routines (Harris, 2013). Comprehensive training initiatives are further challenged by finite time and resources. Just as notably, sustaining momentum and connecting the distributed leadership ideas to routine practice requires ongoing support and reinforcement (Leithwood, 2021). The research has shown that in-service training can significantly enhance various managerial skills, including communication, decision-making, and team management (Abbas, Sarwar & Rahman, 2024). Distributing leadership takes place within cultural and contextual tapestry that can impact training to adopt distributed leadership practices. Educational institutions must meet these challenges by adopting a culture of shared accountability and collective responsibility. This involves creating strategic plans that are supported by focused intrusions (Harris, 2013).

Research Objectives

1. To determine impact of in-service training on enhancing Autonomy skills & accountability and Capacity skills, among Punjab educational managers.
2. To determine the impact of in-service training on enhancing, Coaching skills and Reflection, among Punjab educational managers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

History of QAED

Throughout the country's 1947 independence process, construction of teacher training institutions was one of the top priorities for the Pakistani government. To address the serious concern about the need for such institutions, the government launched a variety of educational programs. The speech Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah gave at the 1947 Education Conference was crucial to this effort. This message served as a compass, stressing need to have teachers with professional training and acknowledging teaching as lucrative profession. The conference laid foundation for Pakistan to develop strong system of teacher preparation, professionalize teaching, and ensure that teachers get equitable salaries. Before India & Pakistan were divided, there were about 640 teacher training institutions in the Indo-Pakistan region, producing 19,392 teachers overall, according to data from 1940-1941. Six hundred & twelve of these organizations were training schools; they took in students who had only finished six or eight years of schooling & provided them with year or two of teaching that was basically basic. Before 1954, government normal schools were founded in Punjab in diverse locations, like Gujrat, Lala Musa, Shahpur Sadar, Kamalia, Muzaffargarh, Multan, Kasur, Narowal, Pasrur, Lakhar, & Mianwali.

Before 1974, Punjab Directorate of Education (PDE) shared financial and administrative oversight over Punjabi educational institutions offering PTC, CT, OT, and other courses. The West Pakistan Education and Extension Center was established in 1959 and played a major role in the planning

and implementation of in-service training. This led to the division of Western Pakistan into four provinces, with the establishment of Regional Education and Extension Centers (REECs) in each province during the years 1972–1974. The 29 Normal schools that were previously managed and administered by Punjab Education and Extension Center are now known as Government Colleges for Elementary Teachers (GCETs). The Regional Education Extension Center (REEC) in Punjab was replaced in 1993 by Directorate of Staff Development (DSD) because of significant reorganization. In addition to providing in-service training, the DSD was given the responsibility of supervising and organizing the GCET activities. A significant change occurred in the administrative and academic financing of elementary and secondary teachers with establishment of the University of Education (UE) Lahore in 2002.

The Colleges of Education and GCETs were merged into the University of Education, and all GCETs were renamed as the University Colleges of Education (UCE). After PTC and CT certifications were discontinued, UCEs offered graduate and postgraduate training alone. The University of Education took through the Department of Personnel Development and expanded its jurisdiction to include preschools. University has undertaken control of examination assessments; however, administrative challenges led to the separation of the Directorate of Staff Development from the UE, restoring it to its original status. As per the announcement made by the Punjab government's School Education Department, the Directorate of Staff Development (DSD) experienced an additional charge when Continuous Professional Development (CPD) initiative ended. At the provincial level, it is currently known as the Quaid-e-Azam Academy for Educational Development (QAED) Punjab. In keeping with a realignment of functions within educational structure, Government Colleges for Elementary Teachers (GCETs) have been renamed at district level as Quaid-e-Azam Academy for Educational Development (QAED).

Educational Leadership

Educational leadership must be given top priority in international efforts to develop and enhance schools (Kang & Augustine-Shaw, 2016a). Numerous structural problems in Punjab's education system hinder students' learning and have detrimental consequences. The secondary school heads, managers & leaders, together with other administrators, are responsible for bringing about change through implementation of innovative pedagogies, creation of conducive learning environments, and the optimization of school operations to optimize organizational efficacy. However professional growth and training for the educational leaders are neglected, depriving school administrators of prospects to gain vital leadership abilities to manage challenges linked with multipart education (Owusu, 2023).

Distributed Leadership

Distributed leadership has been located inside national & international policy treatise, continuing a radical plan. It has been indicated a solution for present-day encounters harassing education in many countries related to decentralized school governance, the apparent leadership disaster, the characteristic complications in the school administration constructions, obligation burdens, as well as matters of series forecasting. Its hypothetical building has been essentially a reproduction, to a huge range helping a political rather than educational determination. In this linking, distributed

leadership is rooted in the idea that leadership tasks and responsibilities are shared among various members of the organization. It has become yet another 'slogan or predictability', an unanimously acknowledged certainty not necessitating clarification or validation, providing legitimization for workforce reform, presenting policy in pill palatable for the profession to swallow, and provocative diminutive conflict.

The central role of the headteacher in aggressively cheering, allowing, and helping the distribute leadership at individual and whole staff levels emerged strongly (Woods et al., 2021). In dominion of school leadership, where most research on distributed leadership (DL) has been attentive, indorses that 'there is not a vigorous association between distributed leadership and two essential objectives of educational leadership: ornate school performance & encouragement leadership development. Additionally, research conducted by Ma and Marion (2021) underscores the profound impact of leadership on the overall success of a school, underscoring the importance of diverse administrative competencies in achieving positive outcomes. Resilience: A Predictor Of Teachers' Engagement At Secondary Level In Punjab was explored in a study (Muhammad et al., 2022). Similarly, a study was conducted upon the topic "impact of teachers' work-family conflict on their children's performance (Sajid et al., 2022).

Distributed Leadership Crises

The application of distributed leadership in educational institutions across Punjab has been tested by disasters and crises, which have asked the following questions about the restructuring of power among leaders and stakeholders (Harris, 2013). The fluidity of role definitions, resistance to change in a hierarchical landscape, and insufficient preparation in distributed methods continue to inhibit successful diffusion. These challenges highlight the importance of comprehensive approaches to navigating changing organizational cultures and supporting the different stakeholders in their use of distributed leadership models (Leithwood, 2021; Spillane & Healey, 2010). Furthermore, the efficacy of the distributed leadership in schools is worsened by gaps in coaching and reflection capacities. Inadequate reflection can hinder learning. Insufficient coaching prevents a new leader from developing skills and knowledge effectively. Simultaneously, ineffective mentoring leads to low professional development. Overall, it can be deduced that the distributed leadership projects failed. Several authors argue that these critical gaps in distributed leadership initiatives have to be tackled through facilitated reflective practices (Drago-Severson, 2007; Killion & Harrison, 2017). Others underscore the necessity of coaching competencies and capacities (Harris, 2013; Spillane & Diamond, 2007).

Educational Leadership Crises

When participating in distributed leadership experience for professional development, education leaders struggle with the problems of autonomy, accountability, and capacity building (Spillane & Diamond, 2007). Though distributed leadership offers autonomous decision-making, establishing clear boundaries and protocols remains hard and leads to ambiguous practices and inefficiencies (Harris, 2013). Sometimes accountability procedures are unclear resulting in confusion related to role responsibilities and implementation (Spillane & Diamond, 2007). In addition, producing the capability of involved parties to compete in dispersed leadership desires direct guidance as well as

facilities that are many times short. Hence, those critical situations need total solutions: developing independent organizations beyond liberty via view from high phenomenal responsibility settings, as well as spending in guidance raising efforts become modified to many-sized persons and facility stages (Killion & Harrison, 2017; Leithwood, 2021). Addressing these hitches is vital for distributed leadership to reach its full potential by nurturing the professional development, synergy, and the vitality of educational organizations. It calls for coordinated actions to bridge people's awareness, behaviors, and aspirations to distribute leadership tenets so that they truly form the structures of educational institutions.

Bridging up the Gap in Distributed Educational Managers on Professional Development Leadership Crises Autonomy Skills, Accountability, & Capacity Skills

To find a solution to the gap that exists when it comes to the crises in distributed leadership among the educational managers in Pakistan, you must specifically address power, responsibility, and skill level in several ways. To start, it is important to create the clear guidelines and regulations for the independence of decision-making so that all stakeholders can recognize where their jurisdiction begins and ends, and be left open to creativity and initiative (Spillane & Diamond, 2007). Next, a chance for self and peer assessment that includes a strong measuring tool, and an effective system of communication can create loyalty and cultural common for accountability and responsibility. (Killion & Harrison, 2017). Fostering collaborative cultures, as fifty years of research confirms, that value collective responsibility, learning, and results can strengthen leadership and distributed leadership practices, which are key to sustainability. Educational leaders can improve their ability to utilize distributed leadership, by promoting professional development, fostering collaboration, and finally attractive student learning, by attending to these facets inclusively. Also, systematic leadership development for aspiring and in-service school leaders, focused on building leadership capacity, and offsetting paucity of aspiring the educational leaders due to various factors, has not been given enough.

Main Root Cause Distributed Educational Managers on Professional Development Leadership Crises Autonomy skills, Accountability, & Capacity skills

Within the context of Pakistan, a key reason for the context of the crisis of educational managers regarding distributed leadership for professional development is deficiencies in skills of autonomy, mechanisms of accountability, and capacity-building efforts. Lack of clarity in boundaries and protocols often leads to lack of self-governance which leads to a lack of clarity in decision-making process and, thus, inefficiency. Ambiguous accountability mechanisms arise from situations where roles and tasks are not clearly stated, leading to transparency issues and absence of accountability (Spillane & Diamond, 2007). Limited resources and a mismatch between the needs of students and plans being realized to address those needs contribute further to challenges of educational change efforts. Capacity-building efforts are hindered by inability to select and offer research & evidence-based strategies that are steadily developed, executed, and evaluated. Oftentimes, these practices are not aligned with student needs. Though some research has advised that as many as 60-80% of plans currently being used in schools are not well alleged out nor evidenced-based, many school

districts and schools continue to invest in professional growth that is not grounded in literature on the change management.

For example, faculty and staff might be trained through a one-size-fits-all model that does little to respect and utilize the diverse set of backgrounds, experiences, and needs among those engaged in the change effort. Instead, connectivity in the 21st century is now as much about what we can do with information once we have it than remotely as much about what the information itself, we have access to. And yet, education events largely ignore this fact, continuing despite a wealth of the evidence to focus only on getting 5 “things” –generally knowledge bumped into the short-term memory from longer-term memory before the destruction of the reactor generating the knowledge even ever had the chance to generate the “doing” or “reflecting” or much of anything else. Instead, often, professional development supporting educational change is ineffective in producing long-term effects because attending a training event does not necessarily result in any desired actual application on the ground. The facilitator of the event might walk participants through what best practice should look like, but that doesn't necessarily mean that the attendee has a clue about how to connect the dots.

Also, meeting the needs of leadership capacity-building requires customized professional learning opportunities, related resources, which reflect the range of skill sets and roles within organization. Dealing with these root causes consists of extensive strategies, such as establishing clear criteria for autonomy, implementing accountability frameworks that are easily understood, and providing the needed resources & training to assist with capacity-building (Killion & Harrison, 2017; Leithwood, 2021). This way, administrators can address challenges faced by distributed leadership navigate organizations in education, and develop sense of innovation, collaboration & culture of continuous improvement. Moreover, the main underlying crisis factor of distributed education management in instructional leadership is proportionally inadequate coaching abilities and a proportional lack of importance for the reflection. In this linking, if managers are not employing effective coaching and reflection practices, difficulties in provision of mentorship and guidance to teams are encountered, causing diminished effectiveness of instructional leadership, and weakened organizational growth (Harris, 2013).

Steps and Measures of QAED Punjab to Eradicate these Main Root Causes of Distributed Leadership:

The Department of Quality Assurance and Education Development (QAED) Punjab has planned a roadmap initiative to address and eliminate the root cause of the distributed leadership crises in education managers generally in terms of autonomy skills, accountability, and capacity building. To begin with, QAED is enacting extensive instructional programs that aim to improve the self-governing abilities among instructional handlers. These instructional programs feature classes and forums fixated on frameworks of decision-making, strategies of deputation, and the cultivation of an atmosphere of the empowerment inside educational bodies. Secondly, QAED seeks to enhance accountability by creating clear frameworks for performance evaluation. This requires creating transparent channels of the communication, delineating roles and responsibilities, and instituting mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating progress. Third, initiatives that concentrate on building

capacity in educational leaders are being invested in by QAED. These initiatives address leaders at a range of skill levels and cover a wide variety of needs. QAED Punjab is tackling the root causes by introducing focused training programs that essence on upgrading coaching skills via workshops and seminars, providing approaches for successful mentorship to managers. QAED also engenders reflective culture, over purposeful activities, i.e., debrief sessions and journaling, enkindling a cycle of learning and progression.

In-service Training Programs for Head Teachers' Autonomy Skills, Accountability, and Capacity Skills

In-service training initiatives for headteachers are essential to empower their autonomy, generate accountability, and strengthen capacity within schools (Leithwood, 2021). These programs seek to equip headteachers with desirable skills to independently make well-balanced decisions while maintaining accountability and competence to lead with utmost effectiveness. By participating in training sessions that boost skills, headteachers develop the means and techniques they need for managing complex, delicate, and hard situations. Monitoring activities will permit such educators to autonomously take subsequent steps, diplomatically and competently. Evidence-based training is what is needed for headteachers to set up a process for performance appraisal for work systems, that are goal-oriented and work for how many results, with roles & charges executed. These sessions of study and assessment are designed to be able to boost transparency and measure of responsibility for school communities.

After attending capacity-building sessions, headteachers will acquire essential competencies as well as breadth of knowledge to deliver their responsibilities efficiently; which includes leadership development, team management, and the professional development planning (Killion & Harrison, 2017). Additionally, continuing education workshops intended for education managers underscore autonomy, accountability, and coaching competencies, consisting of a combination of components with an emphasis on capacity-building, professional development, and reflective practice (Harris, 2013). Those programs use instructional models that offer principals with decisional autonomy, use control, accountability systems, build leadership capacities, and promote coaching. About these diverse domains, effective in-service teacher training is seen to offer headteacher with knowledge and skills to lead effectively in way that drives improvement in their schools (Harris, 2013; Spillane & Healey, 2010).

Role of QAED in-service Training for Leadership Crises of Distributed Leadership (Autonomy Skills, Accountability, and Capacity Skills).

The QAED department is instrumental in the development of in-service training programs, which originally aimed to address the professional development and leadership crises among distributed educational managers. These programs focus on progress of autonomy skills by aiding educational managers in guiding their organizational decision-making processes, delegation strategies, and empowerment techniques, allowing them to navigate complexities confidently and effectively. In combination, these programs help to consolidate accountability and capacity-building concerns among educational managers through the improvement of their autonomy skills. As a result, QAED

in-service training programs are customized to meet the educational manager's desires in terms of the competence of autonomy skill development. In matters of accountability, QAED's programs of training are focused on the creation of the explicit systems of appraisal and accountability. In this regard, in workshops and as well as seminars, for example, QAED managers learn to define explicit purposes and tasks, set clear expectations, and establish benchmarks for managing and evaluating the diverse accountability.

In addition, QAED empowers managers and enables them to lead with confidence and competence by equipping them through its capacity-building initiatives with aptitude they need to perform their roles effectively. Its training programs range across an assortment of the subjects including leadership development, conflict resolution & efficient communication. QAED in-service training program guarantees that educational administrators acquire competence of quality improvement through developing a reflective community of practice. In training sessions, these administrators receive extensive training in quality and guidance & practical practices for quality improvement. In training sessions, these administrators must spend training sessions with explicit guidelines on reflective journals. These abilities enable the administrators to conduct the reflective practice effectively, confirm quality of meditating practice, and prepare themselves to view and evaluate the practices. QAED of in-service training can supplement the solution for education management crisis including improving autonomy, promoting an accountability culture, enriching the capacity to analyze, solve problems, equipping with refined guidance, coaching skills, and reinforcing trends of reflective practice.

Previous Studies Related to Topic

Quaid-e-Azam Academy for Educational Development (QAED) in Punjab, Pakistan, is playing a critical role in advancing the teachers' and educational managers' professional development by deploying Continuous Professional Development (CPD) & Promotion-link Training (PLT) programs. It aims to reform Pedagogical, Methodical, Content Knowledge, Leadership qualities and enhance the quality of education in general (Abbas, 2021; Abbas, Sarwar, & Rahman, 2024). The QAED CPD initiative is known to develop and enhance primary school teachers' teaching abilities, subject expertise, and skills in the imperative to qualify and quality teaching (Abbas, 2021). This finding is consistent with the research result of Melesse and Gulie (2019) done in Ethiopia, in which teacher CPD is found to contribute. Abbas et al. (2021) found that QAED's mentorship program essentially incorporates activities that help primary school teachers in teaching ability, Interactive teaching, and lesson planning, and raise motivation. Multiple studies have assessed effectiveness of QAED's PLT projects. In his mixed method analysis, targeted BS-17 to BS-18 moves school heads, Abbas et al. (2023) focused on PLT project meant to reinforce information and communication technology (ICT) actions of school heads.

Designed explicitly for teachers and educators who are trying to get a better job or have already gotten a better job, QAED's programs are supposed to bring them the knowledge or skills to go on effectively in their new responsibilities (Abbas et al., 2023; Abbas et al., 2023; Abbas et al., 2021) their PLT programs is made up of different methods from serious training, on-site course, guiding, quidding where it allows for the continuous vocational education by the leadership, the ability to

communicate and how to solve a problem. The research showed a feature increase in ICT skills as well as recorded major further earnings based on qualitative data. Overall, the empirical evidence presented in literature review supports the efficacy of QAED Punjab's promotion-linked training model in the capacity building and developing teachers' competencies and leadership qualities (Abbas et al., 2023). However, continuous funding for support systems and training is necessary to maintain a positive impact (Abbas, 2021; Abbas, Sarwar, & Rehman, 2024). In a recent study by Abbas et al., (2024), impact of in-service training was investigated on people focused & democratic leadership skills.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

It was a quantitative study in nature. The main purpose of the study was to explore the impact of in-service training on the distributive leadership skills of educational managers in public secondary schools in Punjab, Pakistan. The study employed the cross-sectional quantitative survey design to assess perspectives of 359 educational managers on in-service training programs and leadership practices in their schools. The target population comprises educational managers (principals, heads, senior teachers) registered with the Punjab School Education Department in public secondary schools. A sample of 359 participants was selected through a simple random sampling technique. The data was collected through self-administered Google forms distributed to the 359 participants through an online survey. The survey data obtained over Google Forms was analyzed. Frequency distribution was calculated appropriately for the scaled variables and demographic factors using SPSS 20 software.

RESULTS OF STUDY

Table 1 Effect of in-service training on Autonomy Skills of educational managers

Participants' Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree		1.1
Disagree	16	5.7
Undecided	48	19.5
Agree	226	84.2
Strongly Agree	55	15.8
Total	349	100.0

The above table shows the responses of 349 people who agree with having the strong distributed leadership skills and Autonomy skills. The results are very positively skewed, with the vast majority of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that they have Autonomy Skills. Specifically, 84.2% (226 respondents) agreed, and 15.8% (55 respondents) strongly agreed they have Autonomy Skills. Combined, 93.8% agreed to some extent that they have these abilities. Only 11 (4 respondents) strongly disagreed, and 5.7% (16) disagreed with having strong Autonomy Skills. 19.5% (48) were undecided if they possessed Autonomy Skills. Cumulative percentage shows the steadily growing proportion of respondents as you move up agreement scale, culminating in 100% at the strongly agreed response.

Table 2 Effect of in-service training on Accountability Skills of educational managers

Participants' Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	3	.9
Disagree	10	2.9
Undecided	17	4.9
Agree	232	66.5
Strongly Agree	87	24.9
Total	349	100.0

The above table shows the responses of 349 people who agree with having strong the distributed leadership skills and Accountability Skills. The results are very positively skewed, with the vast majority of the respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that they have Accountability Skills. Specifically, 66.5% (232 respondents) agreed, and 24.9% (87 respondents) strongly agreed they have Accountability Skills. Combined, 96.8% agreed to some extent that they have these abilities. In contrast, only .9% (3 respondents) strongly disagreed, and 2.9% (10 respondents) disagreed with having strong Accountability Skills talents. Additionally, 4.9% (17 respondents) were undecided if they possessed Accountability Skills competencies. Cumulative percentage shows the steadily growing proportion of respondents as you move up agreement scale, culminating in 100% at the strongly agreed response.

Table 3 Effect of in-service training on Capacity skills of educational managers

Participants' Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	1	.3
Disagree	7	2.0
Undecided	16	4.6
Agree	226	64.8
Strongly Agree	99	28.4
Total	349	100.0

The above table shows the responses of 349 participants who agree with having strong Capacity skills. The results are very positively skewed, with vast majority of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that have Capacity skills. Specifically, 64.8% (226) agreed, and 28.4% (99 respondents) strongly agreed they have Capacity skills. Combined, 97.8% agreed to some extent that they have these abilities. In contrast, only .3% (1 respondents) strongly disagreed, and 2.0% (07 respondents) disagreed with having the strong Capacity skills. Additionally, 4.6% (16) were undecided if they possessed Capacity skills and competencies. The cumulative percentage shows steadily growing proportion of respondents as you move up agreement scale, culminating in 100% at the strongly agreed response.

Table 4 Effect of in-service training on Coaching skills of educational managers

Participants' Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	1	.3
Disagree	6	1.7

Undecided	16	4.6
Agree	225	64.5
Strongly Agree	101	28.9
Total	349	100.0

The above table shows the responses of 349 participants who agree with having strong Coaching skills. The results are very positively skewed, with vast majority of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that have Coaching skills and abilities. 64.5% (225 respondents) agreed, and 28.9% (101 respondents) strongly agreed they have Coaching skills. Combined, 98.8% agreed to some extent that they have these abilities. In contrast, only .3% (1) strongly disagreed, and 1.7% (06) disagreed with having strong Coaching skills. Additionally, 4.6% (16 respondents) were undecided if they possessed Coaching skills and competencies. The cumulative percentage shows steadily growing proportion of respondents as you move up agreement scale, culminating in 100% at the strongly agreed response.

Table 4 Effect of in-service training on Reflection and feedback skills of educational managers

Participants' Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	2	.6
Disagree	3	.9
Undecided	8	2.3
Agree	237	67.9
Strongly Agree	99	28.4
Total	349	100.0

The above table shows the responses of 349 participants who agree with having strong Reflection and feedback skills. The results are very positively skewed, with the vast majority of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that they have Reflection and feedback skills. Specifically, 67.9% (237 respondents) agreed, and 28.4% (99 respondents) strongly agreed they have Reflection and feedback skills. Combined, 97.8% agreed to some extent that they have these abilities. In contrast, only .6% (2 respondents) strongly disagreed, and .9% (03 respondents) disagreed with having strong Reflection and feedback skills. 2.3% (8) were undecided if they possessed Reflection and feedback skills and competencies. The cumulative percentage shows steadily growing proportion of respondents as you move up agreement scale, culminating in 100% at strongly agreed response about statement.

DISCUSSION

Consistent with recent leadership research, data substantiate combined professional development targeted to the practical skill-building empowers key skills such as unwavering goals and target communication, rigorous monitoring mechanisms & evidence-driven tactics for constant perfection (Davis & Darling-Hammond, 2012). By cultivating such fundamental leadership skills, principals are enabled to drive progress, motivating collective concentration and commitment toward sound priorities (Hitt & Tucker, 2016). Confirming these findings, Kang and Augustine (2016b) noted that directive leaders who establish aggressive instructional goals, regularly observe staff's enactment

of them, and link evidentiary statements to targets, beget culture of results-oriented improvement that spikes student achievement. The school leadership models highlight that in struggling schools, turnaround is enabled by principals who adopt a flexible but reliably directive approach focused on explicit short and long-term results through an emphasis on accountable practices (Bush, 2018). The decisive, inflexible leadership displayed in assigning shared mission & goals while monitoring for growth helps to overcome inertia & resistance blocking change efforts in dysfunctional contexts (Holben et al., 2009).

Hence, the research affirms that in-service training helps equip heads with adaptive yet directed leadership capacities essential to spark action towards priorities and yield positive transformation even in challenging school environments (Grissom et al., 2021). Still, school leadership literature also highlights that while short workshop-based interventions may build initial capacities, the positive impacts will not be sustained over longer periods without consistent engagement chances to retain and utilize the upgraded skills (Taylor, Backor & Gordon, 2015). The eventual decline in enhanced leadership abilities can severely affect school progress and undo early gains. Structural barriers related to excessive workload also prevent department heads in public school systems from exercising strategic practices (Hitt & Tucker, 2016). Hence, broader organizational contexts must provide ongoing support structures to embed and optimize enhanced the competencies for lasting advances (Khan & Akhtar, 2017). QAED's immersive initiative enables continued engagement to strengthen sustainably and repeatedly apply upgraded leadership skills. But for realizing systemic improvements, parallel reforms are vital across governance, recruitment, and appraisal frameworks to enable trained heads' application of strategic, directive practices aligned to institutional needs (Holben et al., 2009).

The impact will remain limited without corresponding organizational shifts and incentives to employ enhanced expertise (Honig, 2012). Directive leadership development must occur through sustained, contextualized training models reinforced at provincial and school levels to continually nurture and optimize enhanced capacities. As underscored in contemporary literature, while the short-term impacts of standard leadership growth initiatives are well-documented, longitudinal evidence about how enhanced directive leadership skills translate into leadership practices that eventually spur measurable school-wide improvements and student achievement gains remains more limited, especially from developing country contexts. Quantitative data regarding refined practices can be supplemented qualitatively via observations and interviews to provide more nuanced monitoring and feedback toward institutional improvement needs (Torres, 2016). Such mixed-methods inquiry can yield holistic and contextualized knowledge regarding the sustaining enhanced leadership capacities through the ongoing professional development. Thus, connecting reinforced skills to leadership behaviors and school conditions can provide systemic insights to guide reform initiatives aimed at harnessing the trained leadership potential to improve Pakistan's educational landscape.

CONCLUSION

The outcomes of the research concluded that QAED in-service training significantly improves the educational managers of Punjab's distributed leadership skills. The responses of the participants of

the study support considerable achievements in essential domains (autonomy skills, accountability, capacity building, coaching, and reflection and feedback. Importantly, training gave participants the power to establish clear academic goals, control instructional performance satisfactorily, and prompt informed judgments driven by evidence. These capabilities give the basis for inculcating a culture of the accountability and shared responsibility within educational institutions, ultimately yielding improved student outcomes. The ability to lead comprises one of main accomplishments of session. Major points of leadership such as having vision, utilizing modes of actual communication, using fair assessment, evaluation, and data applications for decision making were main products of this endeavor. Such transformational leadership is crucial for those school leaders who wish to make real changes and have productive and supportive atmosphere for all those involved in educational process. The results confirmed that such in-service training was a great sign of having directive leader capabilities that we are looking for in schools desperately to reach progress, mainly in hard contexts, the provision of credential tools and competencies for school administrators that is one of most important tasks for training programs that conducted by QAED, as they may be the biggest support for the educational leaders to be able to lead transformation that everyone talks about in the complicated contexts.

Recommendation

1. Continuous professional development programs should be actualized that revolve around honing autonomy skills, implementing accountability measures, and building capacity over tailored training modules for educational managers at all levels.
2. Structured mentoring and coaching initiatives need to be initiated to support educational managers in applying acquired distributed leadership skills, creating sustainable learning within the role, and addressing challenges concurrently.
3. Inclusive performance evaluation frameworks must be created that align with distributed leadership principles to evaluate and reinforce effective implementation of the autonomy, accountability, and capacity-building strategies.
4. Educational managers should be empowered to create professional learning communities or networks, that foster collaboration, knowledge-share, and the diffusing of best practices in distributed leadership.

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