DIALOGUE SOCIAL SCIENCE REVIEW

School Principals Perspectives in 21st Century; Narrative Study with Reverence to Teachers and Students

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Abstract

The current qualitative study focused on the managerial challenges of secondary school Principals regarding teachers and students. The research questions of the study were; what challenges do Principals face when managing teachers and students in a school at secondary level in district Mardan? How do Principals deal with challenges reverence to teachers and students at secondary level in district Mardan? The research participants of the study included all of the Principals of Government High Schools (boys and girls) in District Mardan. Six respondents were specifically chosen, three from government girls' high schools and three from government boys' high schools in the Mardan district. The research questions of the study formed the basis for the development of a semi-structured interview protocol. A face-to-face interview was carried out with the respondents' permission. The study's trustworthiness was assessed based on credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability. Semi-structured interview data was examined using thematic analysis. The thematic analysis revealed that secondary school principals encountered several challenges in controlling and monitoring teachers and students at their institutions. Some of the main challenges included a lack of teachers, high student absenteeism, and poor academic performance. Several Principals, however, made outstanding attempts to resolve the difficulties. Based on the findings, it was recommended that policymakers better grasp the responsibilities and challenges that Principals confront, as well as provide suggestions on how to assist them in successfully managing teachers and students in their schools.

Keywords: Secondary School Principal, Managerial Challenges related to teachers and students, Academic performance.

Introduction

Education is a key and essential component of the development of a nation. Education allows a nation to thrive, develop, and compete on a global scale. Schools, as formal educational institutions, play an important role in raising educational standards. Schools are more than just settings for teaching and learning; they are also institutions

that help students achieve their full potential, both academically and non-academically. The secondary school Principal is a key figure in achieving the institutional aim, and leadership is one of the most important characteristics in this regard (Said et al., 2024). The success of an educational institution depends upon inextricably linked to the efficacy of its leadership skills of the Principal. The main role of the Secondary School Principal in the 21st century is associated with the school progress and quality improvement and the learning environment of the institution (Hariyani, 2021). In this context the managerial and leadership skills are critical to build up the school reputation and focused towards the achievement of the educational goals (Santika, 2017).

The Secondary School Principal has numerous competencies and serves as the individual in command, philosopher, and collaborative partner, developing school culture, enforcing laws, and directing teachers to produce more innovative learning experiences. The leadership skills of Principal for building teacher character include setting an example, disciplining students, providing instructional leadership, and increasing teacher quality. In addition, the Principal empowers the entire school community (Munir, Minaz & idris, 2024). The abilities of Principals as a school leader include developing teamwork, inspiring, and instilling a strong feeling of family. The Principal leadership capacity to motivate his subordinates to do their jobs properly is demonstrated by setting a good example, providing direction and motivating teachers. As a locomotive, the Secondary School Principal in the 21st century plays an important role in propelling the school toward high quality. A competent school Principal can foster school culture, establish discipline, serve as a work partner, and encourage cooperation among all school members in order to create a friendly environment geared toward common goals. As a result, good Principal leadership improves educational quality (Jannah et al., 2024).

According to Leithwood and Jantzi (2000), Principals as a school manager and leader face several managerial challenges while controlling and establishing a successful educational atmosphere for learning. The challenges included staff management such as insufficient teaching staff, teachers' absentees and burnout, students' misbehavior, indiscipline and absentees and the adoption of new policies. According to Tredway (2003), the most difficult challenge for school Principal is managing student academics and discipline. Akomolafe and Adesua (2016) contended that insufficient facilities can reduce academic achievement and motivation among students. The Principal faces challenges since the school's facilities are not sufficient to meet the demands which limit the ability of classroom teachers and other staff to optimize instructional activities. Another challenge to student learning achievement is teachers' lack of professional knowledge (Hillinger & Murphy, 1985). The majority of school Principals faced several challenges when carrying out their duties, increasing the risk that the objectives will not be accomplished (Saima, Idris & Minaz, 2025). Thus, some of the main challenges are inadequate physical facilities, unskilled teachers, disorderly behavior by students and staff, and frequent teacher absenteeism.

Statement of the Problem

The Secondary School Principal in the 21st century plays an important role in managing and developing a conducive learning environment in order to boost the standard of the education. During managing the school learning and leadership activities, the Principal faces a number of managerial challenges associated with teachers and students, along with additional administrative responsibilities. In spite the fact that the 21st century school Principals has many competencies (Munir, Minaz & idris, 2024) to manage the school as a leader but there are still need to explore the perceptions of secondary school Principals related to teachers and students. Furthermore, the study focused on narrative of the secondary school principals to deal with the daily base challenges of students and teachers. Therefore, this narrative study aimed to explore the twenty-first century school Principals' perspectives in regarding the challenges related to teachers and students.

Research questions
The study addressed the following research questions:
1. What challenges do Principals face when managing teachers and students in a school at secondary level in district Mardan?
2. How do Principals deal with challenges reverence to Teachers and Students at secondary level in district Mardan?

Significance of the Study
The study added to current understanding about educational leadership. It provides excellent insights into the managerial challenges relevant to teachers and students, as well as the solutions that Principals use to address them. It also gave significant information for policymakers, educational stakeholders, and professional development and training organizations to assist Principals in dealing with the situation.

Theoretical Framework
The conceptual framework of the study was based on the theory of situational leadership. It is most appropriate for the study since it enables Principals to be more adaptable in their leadership styles in order to manage the difficult situation and enhance the school environment. Situational leadership theory states that an effective leader is one who uses different styles of leadership based on the circumstances.

DIALOGUE SOCIAL SCIENCE REVIEW
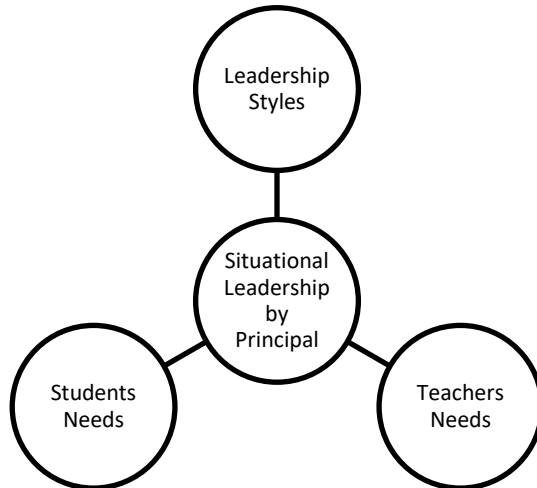
Conceptual Framework of the Study
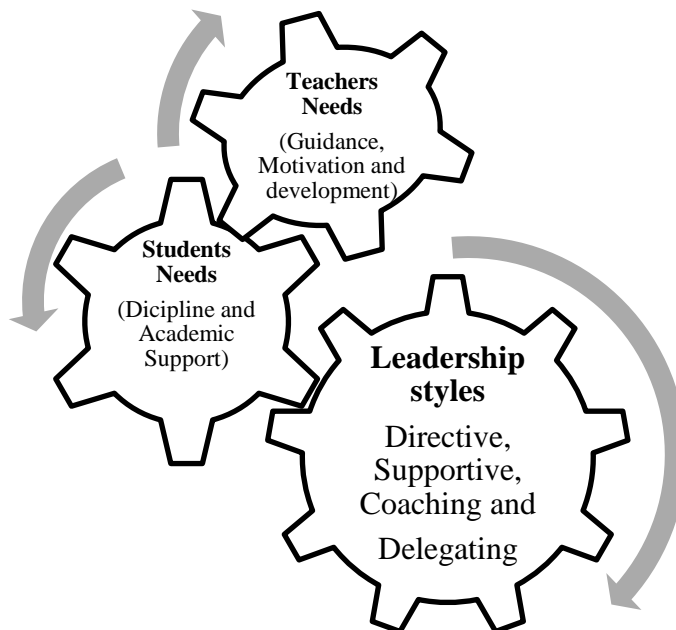
The above diagram showed the conceptual framework of the study. During the managerial and administrative workload it is observed that the school Principals faced challenges by means of students and teachers. The study focused on the 21st century School principal's perspectives regarding the challenges of students and teachers issues.

Literature Review

According to Terziu et al., (2016) the Principal is in charge of all that occurs in the school, starting with the implementation of the law, the standard of growth in the educational process, and cooperation with educators, students, and the community. Thus, the Principal is largely responsible for the success or failure of the school and

oversees all aspects of its operations. In the 21st century, Secondary School Principals and other members of the school community can help to boost the education standard (Sutisna et al., 2023). The engagement of all school members is critical in committing to increasing educational quality. The leadership role of Principal has a significant impact on the quality of instruction in a school (Noprika et al., 2020). Several researches have indicated that teacher performance is influenced by the Principal leadership skills and teacher motivation in carrying out their tasks (Gumilar & Munzir, 2018; Setiyati, 2016; Erlangga, 2015). As a result, the teacher's ability to complete assignments and perform well is closely tied to the leadership of school Principal. The Principal has an important role in managing the numerous resources in a school, but they also confront numerous challenges including insufficient teachers, teachers' absentees, lack of professional development, students' low academic performance, indiscipline and absentees. Managing student discipline poses legal and practical challenges for Principals (Lani & Pauzi, 2024).

As Jomuad et al., (2021) contend that when teachers are responsible for teaching several courses and classes, it loads them and impairs their capacity to complete their duties and perform well in the classroom. It demonstrates that teachers who are responsible for teaching a big quantity of material are stressed, which reduces their level of professionalism in teaching which is a big challenge for Principal to handle (Lani & Pauzi, 2024). As Durisic (2017) found that familial engagement is critical to children's effective academic achievement in determining their educational levels and successes. However, it has been revealed that some parents neglect their children's education since they rely on the guidance and supervision of the Principal and teachers at the schools. Furthermore, students are concerned about missing school since it may negatively impact their academic progress (Schlesier et al., 2023).

As Luiselli et al., (2022) reported that some students in public schools exhibit disruptive behavior, such as arm-twisting and aggression. Secondary schools continue to struggle with discipline, and current techniques may not be effective, putting Principals in a difficult position. Many institutions lack the capacity to give effective counseling and assistance. Many schools lack counseling and guidance spaces, and those that do have facilities are often located in areas where students feel humiliated to seek help. In accordance with Murphy et al., (2017), teachers and Principal influence the personality development of their students. A teacher's poor teaching skills, lack of attention to students, unpreparedness, tardiness, and lack of discipline can negatively affect their learning experience. Students may replicate negative habits, leading to disruptive conduct that can be challenging to manage.

According to Ahmad et al., (2013) the general challenges facing secondary education in Pakistan included: lack of funding, political meddling, lack of social recognition and lower pay, frequent transfers, lack of professional development, poor human relationships or personality conflicts, teachers' politics, an absence of physical facilities and learning resources, more teaching in impractical working conditions, inadequate supervision, and a lack of coordination.

A review of Riaz, Shahzad, and Kubra's (2024) study on the impact of school Principals' leadership styles, teachers' personalities, and school climate on academic achievement

in Pakistan. The purpose of this study was to assess how collaborative leadership by Principals and teachers improved educational outcomes in District Bahawalpur. A quantitative research approach was used for distributing a survey to students randomly selected from Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools in South Punjab to analyze their thoughts on principal-teacher collaboration. The data was analyzed using linear regression in SPSS, allowing for an examination of the relationships between collaborative leadership and important educational outcomes. The study found that the school atmosphere, which is influenced by leadership and teacher behavior, has an impact on student achievement and the findings also demonstrated that collaborative leadership has a favorable impact on student learning techniques, instructional growth, classroom management, student achievement, and promotes positive teacher personality qualities. To capitalize on these findings, the study suggested that schools employ collaborative leadership approaches through focused professional development, leadership training, and establishing a supportive school climate that supports teamwork among educators.

Furthermore, Setiawan et al., (2022) proved in their study on Leadership in Improving Teacher Performance at Schools that the secondary school Principal is the leader of a learning organization that works as a team, and the institution has entrusted him or her with leading the school and motivating students to work, educate, organize, mobilize, and direct toward educational goals. The study aimed to assess the leadership skills of principal in enhancing teacher performance in a school. According to the study, the teacher plays an important role in the learning process, particularly in assisting students in developing their psychomotor, cognitive, and affective skills. The teacher also aims to pique students' interest, promote independence and precision in intellectual logic, and establish learning environments conducive to achievement. According to their study, the principal needs to supervise teacher performance by monitoring and managing classes and by physically visiting them to see the teacher's methods of instruction. Schedules are in place to keep an eye on teachers' performance when classroom learning activities are not regularly conducted. The Principal offers solutions or follow-up on issues instructors encounter if they encounter barriers or challenges in their teaching.

A review of Daheri et al., (2023) research article on the effects of principal leadership and work discipline on teacher effectiveness. The aim of the study was to look into the impact of school leadership and work discipline on teacher performance in the third group at the state elementary school Banding Agung. The study employed a quantitative research method with a questionnaire as the data gathering tool. Following the research and data analysis, the findings revealed that the Principal's leadership is critical in enhancing teacher work discipline; the implementation of effective principal leadership and work discipline has a substantial impact on increasing teacher performance. According to the research, a school principal as an education leader bears a great deal of responsibility, so he must be adequately prepared, both mentally and psychologically, to carry out his duties, particularly in dealing with all of the problems and challenges that arise in order to create and provide comfort for teachers and students at school. The leadership style of principal can affect the development and achievement of school

goals. School Principals employ a variety of leadership styles, including authoritarian leadership styles, which frequently elicit negative feedback from their subordinates in the form of poor performance and productivity. A more productive strategy would be to adopt directive, supporting, and interactive leadership methods. These three leadership styles can be employed equally and constantly in a leadership process. A balanced combination of these leadership styles will inspire instructors to increase their work performance and productivity. If the administrator excels in his leadership role, the teacher will cheerfully carry out his responsibilities, making it easier to achieve school objectives.

Research Gap
Although various studies have investigated managerial challenges that Secondary School Principals confront, little emphasis has been paid to the challenges that Principals experience when dealing with teachers and students. For instance, prior study (Riaz, Shahzad, and Kubra, 2024) has mostly focused on the school environment, which is influenced by leadership and teacher behavior, and its impact on student achievement. Lani and Pauzi (2024) also focused on the important role of principals in managing the several resources in a school, but they also face numerous challenges such as insufficient teaching staff, teachers' absenteeism, lack of professional development, students' low academic performance, indiscipline, and absenteeism. However, little qualitative study has been conducted on the challenges that Secondary School Principals in the Mardan district confront in terms of teachers and students, as well as how they deal with them. To overcome this gap, this study aimed to explore the viewpoints of Secondary School Principals in the twenty-first century on the challenges of managing and supervising teachers and students.

Research Methodology
The study aimed to explore the perspectives of Secondary School Principals in the 21st century on the challenges associated with teachers and students. The qualitative narrative research technique was chosen because it was most suited for exploring the personal experiences, viewpoints, and narratives of secondary school leaders in District Mardan, resulting in rich and content-specific insights (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Sampling and Number of Participants
The respondents of the study comprised both male and female secondary school Principals from District Mardan. According to EMIS 2024, the district of Mardan has 86 secondary schools for males and 81 for girls. The researcher employed the Purposive sample technique because she was interested in the participants' secondary school designations, such as principal-ship. These individuals provided their personal experiences and thoughts on the challenges regarding teachers and students. According to Guetterman (2015), the ideal number of participants for educational qualitative research is 1–24. Therefore, the researchers selected six participants for the qualitative narrative study.

DIALOGUE SOCIAL SCIENCE REVIEW

Data collection tool
The researcher used semi-structured interviews to collect data. The interview protocol was created by the researcher and reviewed by educational experts. Prior to data collection, the researcher provided the Principals with a consent letter to assure their involvement in the study and scheduled a face-to-face interview.

Trustworthiness
Trustworthiness was assessed using credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability. The researcher purposefully chose the research participants, scheduled the interview after receiving their consents, and recorded the conversation in order to assure the accuracy of the transcriptions. The transcribed interviews were subsequently sent to the concern participants to verify accuracy and reliability.
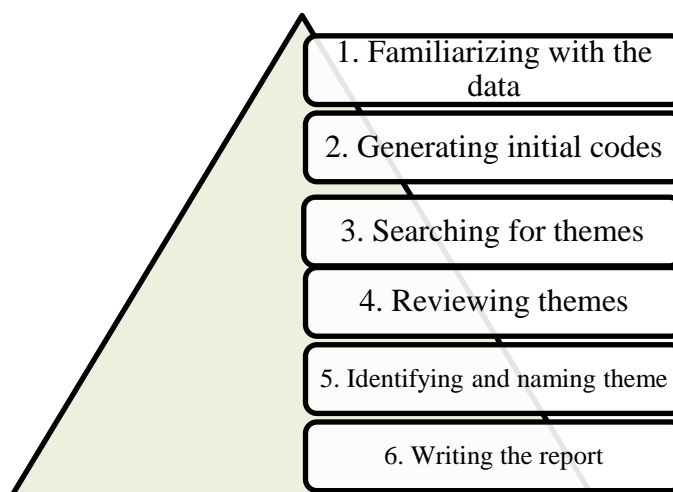
Delimitation
The study was limited to female and male Secondary School Principals in District Mardan.

Data Analysis and Findings
The data gathered through semi-structured interviews was analyzed using theme analysis. The interview was transcribed, coded, and themes were generated manually. The researcher used the six phases of thematic analysis to build codes and themes for examining the gathered data (Braun and Clark, 2006).

Figure 1: *Phases of Thematic Analysis*

1. Familiarizing with the data

2. Generating initial codes

3. Searching for themes

4. Reviewing themes

5. Identifying and naming theme

6. Writing the report

After each interview, the researcher carefully listened to the audio recordings several times before transcribing them. When all of the interviews' transcriptions were complete, the researcher collated them, carefully examined them multiple times, and developed initial codes from them. The researcher merged the comparable codes from

each interview to generate a smaller, more manageable list of possible themes. Every effort was taken to ensure that the codes were interoperable and linked to one another. This was accomplished by looking at how different codes interact to create overall themes. The collected themes were carefully evaluated to ensure they were useful and formed a cohesive pattern that accurately represented the facts. The researcher re-listened to each interview to ensure that the themes were relevant and in line with the material. Some themes were changed as new patterns emerged during the evaluation process. The researcher further identified the essential themes and divided them into sub-themes.

Table 1: Demographic Information

Gender	Age	Academic qualification	Professional qualification	Experience as a Principal
Male	47	Masters in Urdu	B.Ed, M.Ed	4 years
Male	48	PhD Scholar (Economics)	PTC, CT & B.Ed	8 yrs
Male	52	Masters in Mathematics	B.Ed, M.Ed	3 years
Female	54	Masters in Philosophy and Masters in Persian	B. Ed	6 years
Female	57	Masters in Political science	PTC, CT, Bed, M.Ed,	8 years
Female	59	MPhil in History and Masters in Political Science	B.Ed, M.Ed	11 years

The table above show the demographic characteristics of the research participants who participated in the study. The study included six participants: three male principals and three female principals from secondary schools in the district of Mardan. Their ages ranged from 47 to 50 years, with 3 to 11 years of experience as Principals. The majority of respondents has excellent academic and professional qualifications and has also participated in various leadership and management training sessions.

Table 2: Understanding the Managerial Challenges

Main Theme	Sub themes	Categories	Codes

Understanding the Managerial Challenges Secondary School Principals Face	Challenges related to Teachers	Teachers absentees	Insufficient number of teachers Maternity leaves of female teachers Teacher attitude Heavy workload of teachers
		Difficulties in Classroom Management	Noisy classrooms Insufficient subject-matter expertise of teachers
		Rely on traditional methods of teaching	More rely on traditional methods of teaching Resist to adopt new methodologies
	Challenges related to Students	Behavioral challenges	Bullying others, Disrespecting teachers Violating school rules
		Academic challenges	Students' absentees Less interest in academic activities Poor performances in exams Cheating in the exam Lack of parental involvement

The themes and codes that are pertinent to research question 1 are shown in the above table and are explained below.

Main Theme 1: Understanding the Managerial Challenges faced by Secondary School Principals
Sub theme 1.1: Challenges related to Teachers
Secondary School Principals faces several challenges while managing teaching body in the school. These challenges are further categorized into the following categories;

Teachers' absentees
According to Table 1, teacher absenteeism and insufficient number of teaching staff are the most common challenges that a principal experiences at the Secondary level. The majority of respondents described a situation in which some teachers, particularly female educators, are on maternity leave while others are on sick or casual leave, increasing the current teachers' workload and burdening them. This circumstance is extremely difficult for a Principal to handle and also decline the learning process.
As participant 3 explained teachers' absentees as a challenge as;

> Recently one of the teachers was on Maternity leave and another was on sick leave due to some health issues. The students were suffering in their absence; It was a big challenge for me to fulfill their spaces. [P.3]

DIALOGUE SOCIAL SCIENCE REVIEW

Difficulties in Classroom Management

Difficulty in Classroom management is another major challenges related to teachers for secondary school principal. Some teachers lack subject command and classroom management skills, so the class subject coursework is not completed on time, and students disrupt the class by making noises, which not only affects the class's academic performance but also the entire school environment.

Participant 6 describes the classroom management difficulties like this;

> There is a teacher in our school... He is not capable to manage a classroom. All the time his class room is noisy and students are academically weak..... I wish we had some training to boost teachers' classroom management skills. [P.6]
> In similar vein, participant 1 also highlighted this as;
> Oftenly some hardworking students of different classes give me applications to change their teacher of a particular class as he/she has no command on that particular subject. [P.1]

Rely on traditional methods of teaching

Due to a lack of professional development or due to laziness and self-ease, the majority of teachers rely on old ways of teaching, and experienced and elderly teaching staff frequently reject incorporating new technology into their lessons. It is because they lack computer literacy and do not meet the criteria of new curricula that it is difficult for a school principal to improve the school's academic performance while also bringing their school up to date with modern demands and requirements.

According to the response of participant 2;

> Some teachers resist changing like implementing new teaching methodologies in the class...They prepared traditional way of teaching and don't use any technology in the learning process... According to them, it is easy for them to teach with lecture method.... Sometimes, teachers went to the class without any pre plan... [P.2]

Main Theme 1: Understanding the Managerial Challenges faced by Secondary School Principals
Sub theme 1.2: Challenges related to Students

Secondary School Principals faces several challenges while managing students in the school. These challenges are further categorized into the following categories;

Behavioral challenges

At the secondary level, school Principals face a variety of behavioral and discipline issues from students as well as teachers, which can be difficult to manage. According to the participants' responses, some students physically or verbally bully one another, some students misbehave with the teacher, and some students violate school rules by arriving late, not wearing a proper school uniform, or breaking school property such as windows, chairs, etc.

Participant 1 stated behavioral challenges like this;

> As you know, there are some naughty children in every school and class... There is a student in our school who is too healthy and cute, and his classmates sometimes call him "Mottu Pahlawan".... One day, he got angry and hit another guy, causing him to bleed. We gave him first aid right away, but his parents arrived the next day, causing a major problem... I handled the situation and reconciled both of them. [P.1]

In a similar vein, participant 5 mentioned as;

> There is a student in grade 9 who never completes his class work on time, nor does his homework, and shows no improvement in tests. The teacher and I had requested him to bring his parents, but they did not appear..... Last week, in the class test, he did cheating which makes the teacher furious. He just whacked him twice with the stick, but not hard, and then he misbehaved with the teacher, telling him that it is not his responsibility whether I work or not. [P.5]

Academic challenges

Academic challenges are the most visible and serious challenges a principal faces in a school. This challenge stems from students' frequent absences from school, which causes them to miss numerous important lectures and has a negative impact on their academic performance. The majority of participants believed that students are more engaged in co-curricular activities such as sports and debates than in academic activities. Because of their disinterest in classroom activities, individuals do badly on tests and obtain lower grades. Some students try to cheat on exams and class tests. Even their parents blame the situation on the teachers and principal, rather than their child. It means that a lack of positive parental involvement in the teaching and learning process is one of the primary challenges that contribute to academic decline.

As participants 4 illustrated as

> I think poor academic achievement among students is a common challenge we confront... Student absentees is the main cause of this challenge....The disinterest of parents in their kids' education and ... also the unwillingness of some teachers to carry out their duties in an honest manner are also cause academic degradation. Though not all of them but... some teachers prefer traditional teaching approaches over contemporary, activity-based ones. The majority of teachers are reluctant to use technology into the classroom. They said that traditional lecture approaches are simple to follow and save time.[P.4]

Similarly, participant 2 mentioned that academic degradation of students may be cause by the negative attitude of a teacher;

> Teachers attitude is sometimes a big challenge, like sometimes, a teacher just focuses on the bright students and avoid the slow learners by saying they are not showing interest in the lesson.... or they are not picking the concept,..... his reading and writing skills are too bad...... as well as the

students over absentees and lack of interest in academic activities make the entire school environment unfavorable. [P.2]

Research Question 2: How do Principals deal with challenges reverence to Teachers and Students at secondary level in district Mardan?

Table 3: Strategies to address the managerial challenges

Main Theme	Codes
Strategies to address the managerial challenges related to teachers and students	• Clearly convey the school rules and regulations by means of notifications that are distributed from the top down. • Counseling of students and sometime of teachers as well • Collaborative team work • Stick and carrot approach

Main Theme 2: Strategies to address the managerial challenges related to teachers and students
The above table shows the numerous strategies that a secondary school principal utilized to resolve the managerial challenges related to teachers and students.

Clearly convey school rules and regulations
 Majority of the participants highlighted that clearly conveying the school rule and regulations to both teachers and students may reduce the cause to the problem and also help to resolve the situation in an effective way. This may be done through conducting direct face to face meetings or through handwritten notifications from that are distributed from the top down.

As participant 2 stated that;
First of all I have clearly communicated the schools to the students at the start of the session in the assembly…. and then ask each class teacher to display them in each… Because it helps to strictly adhere to the school rules and regulations…. It also helps to maintain discipline, prevent misbehavior…. and improve the academic performance of a school**… Those students who continuously come to school and don't make any absentee, then I appreciated them with gift contain a notebook and a pen and also those who did many absentees without informing the school they gets fined 10 PKR per day…[P.2]**
Similarly participant 3 mentioned it as;
At the start of a month, I give motivational speech to the students in the assembly and also told them that those who

DIALOGUE SOCIAL SCIENCE REVIEW

absentees are less that 75% they will not be applicable for the final exam and will not be promoted. [P.3]

Counseling

Counseling is one of the best strategies which help the principal to overcome many challenges easily. Majority of the participants highlighted that they do students counseling when they misbehave, or when they take less interest in the learning process or they bully others. Counseling teaches people about behavioral issues and psychological needs, allowing them to manage problems more effectively. It's a fantastic strategy that not only solves the problem but also promotes positive relationships between the principal, youngsters, and teachers.

Participant 1 described it as;
As a principal, I also counsel students who are uninterested in the studies and regularly disrupt the class... [P.1]
Similarly, participant 5 described this like;
When the problem is associated with staff or students... In both situations, I believe that behaving gently and providing personal or group counseling are the most successful techniques for resolving the matter without any controversy. [P.5]

Collaborative team work

According to some Principals, collaborative teamwork helps to resolve a variety of managerial difficulties, including as academic challenges, discipline concerns, and teacher maternity leave. In such cases, they also stated that they use a democratic leadership style, solicit feedback from team members, and delegate some responsibilities to employees in order to manage the problem productively.

Similarly, participant 4 talked about it as follows:
To reduce disciplinary challenges, I assigned duties to teachers and students in each class, such as being discipline in-charge, maintaining cleanliness, and monitoring the class... [P.4]
In this context, Participant 2, 3 and 6 described this like
We conduct a parent teacher meeting twice in an academic year to resolve the problems relevant to students academic, discipline and behavior..... PTM allow the parents to know about their child academic and personality. It also help them to aware about the strengths and weaknesses of their children.[P.2]
Last month, one of the teachers was absent for around four days. He got dengue fever. So I take some substitution classes in his place to avoid burdening on the teachers and also wasting students' valuable time. [P.3]
As I told you earlier, recently I have made 3 groups of teachers who will take substitutions classes in place of a teacher who is on maternity leave.... [P.6]

Stick-and-carrot technique

According to Schilling (2009), some respondents adopt the stick and carrot technique, which involves leaders rewarding and punishing subordinates and employees based on their performance. Principals reported that adopting the stick and carrot technique helped them handle with discipline, academic, and behavioral challenges.

> Participant 3 and 5 described this like;
> When students violate the school rules and harm the furniture, windows, or other physical resources, then we give them a strict warning... and also fine them to not repeat such actions..... If a student do some serious treat, other strategies that I used are temporary struck-off and calling a parent-teacher meeting where essential...... [P.3]
>
> **As a school leader I always praise, rewards, and appreciate students as well as teachers to do more efforts and also motivated them to do more things more appreciable...... [P.5]**

Discussion and Conclusion

The thematic analysis revealed that secondary school Principals face a number of managerial challenges relevant to teachers and students. The majority of the respondent further categories the managerial challenges into two categories; the challenges related to teachers and challenges related to students. According to the study analysis, the insufficient number of teachers, teachers absentees and as well as maternity leaves of female teaches are the common challenges that a secondary school principal encounter which in turn boost the workload of the already present teachers and also has a negative impact on the students learning and discipline. Abeles (2009) agreed with the findings and pointed out that female teachers are most frequently absent that male teacher because of family responsibilities. Mashaba and Maile (2018) also agreed with these findings and found that difficulty of bearing the workload of absent teachers undermines relationships between school Principal and teachers, as some teachers refuse to shoulder the additional weight.

The majority of the respondents highlighted that maintaining school discipline is a big challenge as many of the teachers has difficulties in managing classroom such as following class time table, covering course content on time, all times their classes are noisy which not just effect the learning of that class but also effect the entire environment of the school. This finding is similar with Mutlu's (2014) research, which highlighted the necessity of excellent time management and logistical support in creating a successful learning experience. The behavior of potential teachers was also identified as a challenge. School Principals reported that some teachers displayed unprofessional behavior, including poor engagement with students and non-compliance with school policies. As per the responses of the participants, many teachers, not all rely on traditional methods of teaching and resist to adopt to the new methodologies may be because of self-ease and laziness due to which the students learning is not improving. This is supported by Azeem (2011), who found that majority of the experiences and aged teachers rely on the outdated methods of teaching as they lack the relevant trainings in

modern teaching strategies which is a challenge for a secondary school Principal to boost the quality of education in the school.

The challenges related to students include behavioral challenges and academic challenges that a Secondary School Principal face at the school. According to the participants' responses, students physically and verbally bullies one another on their physical appearance, race or caste which cause behavioral issues among the students and also decline the academic performance of the students. This is in line with the findings of Gul, Minaz & N. Baig (2024), who found that bullying is a significant factor in students who are not feeling well at school, including absenteeism, academic decline, exam failure, and eventual dropout. The study also highlighted various behavioral issues of students as a challenge for secondary school Principals such as disrespecting the teachers, and violating the school rules but coming late to school or harming the school property. This is supported by Masekoameng (2010), who describes cases in which students call teachers disrespecting names and make impolite gestures when teachers give them instructions or attempt to restore order in the classroom. Rossouw (2003) also agreed with the findings and highlighted that the irrespective behavior of student towards the teachers is a big challenge which affect the school learning environment adversely and cause difficulty for principal to handle the situation.

The majority of participants stated that maintaining school academic performance is a significant challenge because degradation in academic performance is caused by student absenteeism and a lack of interest in academic activities, resulting in poor exam performance and, on occasion, cheating. According to Ogok (2011), many principals face many challenges while monitoring their students' academic success, which directly interfering with the provision of quality education. The majority of participants reported a lack of parental involvement in the educational process. Scallion et al., (2022) stated that parental participation will assist parents in closely monitoring their children's academic success and collaborating with teachers to maintain outstanding discipline. The study identified some successful techniques for Principals to address managerial difficulties affecting teachers and students. Individual or group therapy for students and instructors, a stick and carrot strategy, clearly communicating school rules and regulations, and collaboration among the principal, students, and teachers were used to effectively manage difficulties. The findings are consistent with Ouma's (2014) assertion that delegating some managerial responsibilities to teachers can assist school leaders perform better in their managerial roles by lowering management challenges and providing quality teaching in schools. This is supported by Abdullah's (2009) findings, which discovered that parents should be consulted on the development of their schools and children on a regular basis.

Recommendations

The study recommended conducting proper training sessions for Principals and teachers to effectively handle the managerial challenges. The study also recommended that the Principals of secondary schools should have to adopt different leadership styles according to the challenging situations to resolve them effectively. The study suggested that the Principals of Secondary Schools should have to motivate students to take interest in the learning and as well as teachers to integrate technology in the lesson to

boost the students' academics and also to improve the standard of education in the district.

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