Perceptions And Reported Practices of Teacher Leadership by Saudi Teachers, Principals and Supervisors in Saudi Arabia

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy

Centre for Research in Educational Leadership and Management

School of Education

The University of Nottingham

November 2024

ABSTRACT

This research investigates teacher leadership in selected public schools within Riyadh's Educational Directorate, Saudi Arabia. It explores the perceptions of key stakeholders: principals, supervisors, and teachers, concerning teacher leadership, the factors that empower or inhibit teachers to lead, and the professional development and nurturing of teacher leadership. The study is framed by Grant's teacher leadership model and three related theories, communities of practice, distributed leadership, and professional learning communities. A nested case study approach was adopted to select two contrasting schools, assessed through their annual evaluations. The qualitative research design combined interviews, observations, focus groups, and reflective essays, involving participants with at least two years of teaching experience.

The findings show very different understandings of teacher leadership across the two schools. Gold school appears to adopt a broad view of teacher leadership, within and beyond classrooms, while Silver school has a narrow perspective, limited to classroom leadership. Supervisors, principals, and teachers have different perceptions about teacher leaders. These differences are influenced by culture as well as the school system. The targeted professional development and school environment promoting empowerment and collaboration is closely related to the effective promotion of teacher leadership. The identified obstacles to fostering teacher leadership include limited autonomy, unclear roles, and a lack of consistent support mechanisms. The study findings indicate the need to structure programmes and policies so that teachers can enact leadership and play more meaningful roles in school improvement.

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DEDICATION

To my beloved late father

Abdulrahman Alhumaid

whose support, prayers and love had been instrumental in achieving my goals but never had the opportunity to see his dream come true.

I dedicate this achievement to you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Globalization has led to an increasingly interconnected world where countries frequently compete and are compared across various domains, including education. Consequently, educational goals are regularly set, and teaching practices are assessed to determine their success or failure. This kind of scrutiny is especially prevalent in rapidly developing countries like Saudi Arabia. Schools that were once considered successful at the turn of the millennium would not maintain that status if they adhered to the same practices today. As a result, schools must continuously evolve and embrace the latest advancements to stay relevant and effective (Sawalhi & Chaaban, 2023).

The involvement of teachers in this ongoing evolution is crucial, as evidenced by a substantial body of literature. Teacher leaders, who take on additional roles beyond their classroom duties to influence educational practice and policy, play a significant role in this process (Bento, 2011; Sepiriti, 2024). Empowering teachers and acknowledging their contributions have been shown to positively impact school development. Empirical studies confirm the benefits of teacher leadership in enhancing educational outcomes (Frost, 2012; Riveros et al., 2013; Fairman & Mackenzie, 2015; Sawalhi & Chaaban, 2023).

Several initiatives have been launched as part of Vision 2030[1] To modernize Saudi Arabia's educational system (Saudi Vision 2030, 2021). These initiatives aim to achieve goals that enhance the provision of education. However, the reforms implemented so far have not realized the anticipated advances in teacher leadership (Hammad et al. 2023). Despite recognizing the importance of supervisors and principals in fostering teacher leadership, the desired progress has not been achieved (Alazzam & Mohammad,2022). Supervisors and principals play a critical role in encouraging teachers, providing them with the necessary time, space, and opportunities to contribute meaningfully to the curriculum and other aspects of school life (Cheng and Szeto, 2016; Chew and Andrews, 2010; Hidayat and Patras, 2023, Hammad et al. 2023).

When examining teacher leadership, it is essential to understand the unique cultural context of Saudi Arabia. Four particular aspects distinguish Saudi culture from Western countries, which

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[1] Vision 2030 is an extensive strategic plan aimed at decreasing Saudi Arabia's reliance on oil, diversifying its economy, and enhancing public services such as education.

have been the primary focus of previous research. First, religion permeates all aspects of life in Saudi Arabia, leading to an authoritarian constitution with single-sex schools. Second, there is a tendency towards an autocratic approach to leadership. Third, government and policy are highly centralized, offering little scope for flexibility. Fourth, teachers generally have low status, with limited opportunities to develop their practices, influence colleagues, or share their methods.

In the Saudi education system, teacher leadership is increasingly recognized as a key driver of school improvement and student achievement, aligning with Vision 2030 educational reforms (Saudi Vision 2030, 2021). While traditionally associated with formal roles such as subject coordinators and instructional supervisors, there is a growing emphasis on informal teacher leadership within professional learning communities (Alsalahi, 2016). In the Saudi context, within a centralized education system, teacher leadership is defined as the ability of educators to influence and guide their peers, students, and school policies through collaboration, mentorship, and instructional expertise. This includes leading professional development initiatives, fostering collaboration among colleagues, and fostering instructional innovation, all while aligning with Islamic values and the goals of the Ministry of Education, without necessarily holding formal leadership positions (Alsalahi, 2016). Teacher leaders extend their influence beyond the classroom by mentoring colleagues, shaping teaching practices, school culture, and educational policies, and contributing to school-wide decision-making (Nguyen et al., 2020). Through collaboration, mentorship, and advocacy, they help to cultivate a positive learning environment, support colleagues' professional growth, and ultimately enhance student learning outcomes, aligning with national educational priorities (Wenner & Campbell, 2017).

There is a notable lack of research on teacher leadership in Saudi Arabia, despite the significant role supervisors and principals play in enabling teachers to demonstrate leadership. While studies such as those by Chew and Andrews (2010) in the US, and Mangin (2007) in Australia and Singapore, have explored principals' opinions due to their influence in facilitating teacher leadership, similar research in Saudi Arabia is scarce. This gap is particularly significant given the unique cultural factors that impact educational practices in the country.

The current study aims to fill the gap by being the first research exploring supervisors', managers', and teachers' insights about teacher leadership within the Saudi educational landscape. Alsalahi (2015), and Hammad (2016), emphasized the need for such analysis,

highlighting the lack of studies considering supervisors' and principals' opinions on teacher leadership in the country. The study aims to achieve several objectives.

Research Problem and Rationale

Efforts to modernize the Saudi education system have been substantial, with a notable emphasis on educational reforms driven by Saudi Vision 2030. This strategic framework aims to transform various sectors, including education, to enhance the nation's economic diversification and growth. Vision 2030 envisions a robust role for education in shaping a more vibrant and competitive economy by improving the administrative and pedagogical aspects of the education system. Enhancing teacher leadership has been identified as a critical factor in achieving these goals, as effective leadership at the classroom level is seen as essential for fostering a more engaging and successful learning environment (Saudi Vision 2030, 2021; Alazzam & Mohammad,2022).

However, despite the ambitious goals set by Vision 2030, there has been limited progress in shifting teacher leadership practices in Saudi Arabia. The Ministry of Education (MoE) has adhered to a top-down approach to education reform, where decision-making authority is concentrated within the Ministry and its officials. This centralized model positions teachers as implementers of policies rather than active contributors to the decision-making process. This top-down strategy has effectively diminished the role of teachers in influencing educational changes, with principals being positioned as the main agents of reform. This approach has led to a scenario where teachers feel disempowered and lack meaningful involvement in shaping educational practices and policies, resulting in a disconnect between the intended reforms and their actual impact (Shah, 2020; Alsalahi, 2015).

The persistence of a centralized approach by the MoE, disregarding the input from teachers, appears to be undermining the effectiveness of the reform efforts (Hammad et al., 2023). This strategy contrasts sharply with the broader objectives of Vision 2030, which advocates for a more inclusive and participatory model of reform. The failure to integrate teachers' perspectives into the reform process not only hampers the potential success of these initiatives but also perpetuates a cycle of disengagement and dissatisfaction among educators (Alkrdem, 2011). The disconnect between policy intentions and practical implementation highlights the need for a more collaborative approach to reform that genuinely values the contributions of all stakeholders, including teachers.

In addition to understanding teachers' perspectives, it is crucial to consider the views and

experiences of supervisors and principals to gain a comprehensive understanding of teacher leadership. Francisco (2020) emphasized that engaging with supervisors and principals provides valuable insights into teacher leadership, beyond the teachers' views. Despite the importance of these perspectives, there is a noticeable lack of empirical research that includes the opinions of principals and supervisors, leaving a significant gap in the Saudi literature.

Research on teacher leadership in Arab countries, particularly in the Gulf region, is limited. Existing studies have predominantly focused on teachers' perspectives, often overlooking the contributions of other key stakeholders such as supervisors and principals. In Saudi Arabia, empirical research on teacher leadership is scarce, with the few studies mostly concentrating on teachers' views and neglecting the insights of supervisors and principals (Hammad et al., 2024; Alsalahi, 2015; Shah, 2020; Alnasser, 2023). Only one study has explored principals' perspectives on teacher leadership, without incorporating the views of supervisors (Hammad, 2016).

Given this context, the current study represents a pioneering effort to explore teacher leadership within the specific context of Riyadh. While previous research has examined teacher leadership in other Saudi cities (Alsalahi, 2015; Shah, 2020; Hammad, 2016), Riyadh, the capital city, and a major centre for educational development, has not been the focus of such studies. This research aims to address a significant gap by providing insights into teacher leadership from the perspectives of supervisors, principals, and teachers in Riyadh. The emphasis on Riyadh not only fills a gap in the existing literature but also provides valuable insights that can potentially influence educational policies and practices in the region.

Research Context

Saudi Arabia, the largest country in the Arabian Peninsula, occupies a significant portion of the region's landmass and was established in 1932. Its strategic geographical location at the junction of Europe, Africa, and Asia underscores its importance. The Kingdom spans approximately 2.15 million square kilometres and is administratively divided into thirteen provinces and 46 directorates or governorates. The vast size of the country results in considerable distances between its major cities such as Riyadh, Jeddah, and Dammam, posing unique challenges to governance and the development of infrastructure (CIA, 2021).

The petroleum industry has historically been the cornerstone of Saudi Arabia's economy. The extraction and distribution of oil and gas have provided substantial revenue, which has been pivotal in funding various infrastructure projects, including the educational sector. However,

to reduce its economic dependency on oil, Saudi Arabia launched the ambitious Vision 2030 programme in 2016. This initiative aims to diversify the economy by developing other industries and modernizing the education system. As part of Vision 2030, there are efforts to implement a new national curriculum and initiatives to enhance teaching standards and learning environments. A crucial aspect of these modernization efforts is the focus on understanding and improving teacher leadership, which is seen as vital for the success of these reforms (Saudi Vision 2030, 2016; Alazzam & Mohammad,2022).

In Saudi schools, the leadership model commonly employed is characterized as a 'top-down' approach (Shah, 2020). This hierarchical style of leadership may be effective for maintaining order and implementing directives, but it struggles to adapt to the rapid modernization of Saudi society and the evolving pedagogical practices both within the country and globally. This rigid approach can jeopardize academic freedom, teacher autonomy, and student achievement (Shah, 2014). The top-down model can be further divided into two main aspects: principal leadership and supervision leadership. Principal leadership involves school heads who are responsible for overseeing classroom practices and implementing policies and guidelines provided by the educational directorate (Alsalahi, 2015). In contrast, supervision leadership assigns external supervisors to schools, granting them significant influence over school policies and practices. Supervisors evaluate teachers based on how well they follow the supervision departments' instructions (Alkrdem, 2011). They also have the authority to monitor, guide, and assess school activities, their progress, their practices, and their staff intermittently (Alazzam & Mohammad,2022). These hierarchical models limit teacher flexibility and reduce opportunities for collaborative leadership.

A significant factor contributing to the limitations in teacher leadership in Saudi Arabia is the compensation structure. Teachers are paid only for their classroom hours and not for the time spent on professional development activities or other non-teaching responsibilities (OECD, 2020). This pay structure discourages teachers from engaging in leadership roles or professional growth activities outside their teaching duties. Without adequate compensation and recognition, teachers are less likely to invest time and effort in activities that enhance their leadership skills and contribute to school improvement.

This study focuses on the Riyadh Educational Directorate, the largest in Saudi Arabia. Established in 1953, the directorate employs nearly 50,000 teachers and educates approximately 700,000 students, both male and female. The directorate's supervision offices

employ almost 500 supervisors, who play a crucial role in implementing educational policies and overseeing schools within their jurisdiction, including Gold High School and Silver High School, two high schools for boys that have been selected as the primary sites for this research. Riyadh has fifteen supervision offices, each responsible for a specific geographical area within the city. These offices facilitate the administration and management of educational activities, providing support and guidance to schools to ensure the effective delivery of academic programmes. Directorates are a significant entity within the Saudi education system, and their practices and challenges provide valuable insights into the broader context of teacher leadership and educational reform in the country.

Aims and Research Questions

This study aims to examine the perceptions of both supervisors and principals, as well as the teacher leaders themselves, regarding teacher leadership and teacher leaders, the practices currently being applied, whether or not teachers feel empowered to lead as well as the factors that affect the professional development of teacher leaders.

To address the stated aims, answers will be sought to four research questions:

1. What perceptions do supervisors and principals have of teacher leaders and teacher leadership?
2. What perceptions do teacher leaders have of teacher leadership?
3. How is teacher leadership enacted or supported in schools?
4. What factors do supervisors, principals and teachers believe influence whether teachers in Saudi Arabia are empowered to be teacher leaders?
5. How does the professional development of teachers relate to teacher leadership?

The explanation for the justification behind each of the four research inquiries is provided below.

RQ1 What perceptions do supervisors and principals have of teacher leaders and teacher leadership?

It is essential to comprehend the viewpoints of supervisors and principals as they have a significant impact on shaping and influencing teacher leadership in schools. Studies show that how educational administrators view teacher leadership significantly influences their efforts in facilitating and enabling teachers to assume leadership positions (Muijs & Harris, 2006; Hammad et al. 2023; Spirit, 2024). Grant (2019) suggests that teacher leadership is often

dependent on the attitudes and beliefs of those in supervisory positions. If supervisors and principals view teacher leadership positively, they are more likely to foster an environment that encourages and supports it. Conversely, negative perceptions may hinder the development of teacher leaders. By exploring these perceptions, the study aims to identify potential barriers or enablers within the Riyadh Educational Directorate, and selected schools, that may affect the implementation and success of teacher leadership initiatives.

RQ2 What perceptions do teacher leaders have of teacher leadership?

It is crucial to comprehend teacher leadership from the perspective of practitioners. Teacher leaders play a vital role in promoting instructional improvements, fostering collaboration, and influencing the school's atmosphere (Harris & Muijs, 2006; Modeste et al. 2022; Khoudri, 2024). the research will assess the attitudes of teacher leaders towards their responsibilities, and their impact on their peers and the school community as a whole (Grant, 2019). Understanding teacher leaders' motivations, challenges, and successful leadership methods is important for gaining insights into their roles (Wenner & Campbell, 2017). Their perspectives can also show the effectiveness of current leadership approaches and whether they feel supported and empowered in their roles (York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Teacher leaders' views can also provide insights into the factors influencing their career growth, including support from administrators and colleagues (Poekert, 2012). Studying the perspectives of teacher leaders gives a deeper understanding of how teacher leadership is practised, and perceived, providing valuable information for enhancing leadership approaches in educational settings.

RQ3 How is teacher leadership enacted or supported in schools?

Teacher leadership requires a setting that encourages and supports it. Teacher leadership is conducted by different methods that turn theoretical notions into real-life applications. This encompasses formal training programmes, opportunities for working together and fostering an environment of trust and collective decision-making (Wenger & Snyder, 2002; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Grant, 2019; Blose & Khuzwayo, 2020). In practice, this implies that teachers are empowered to take the lead in certain areas, such as designing curriculum, guiding colleagues, and engaging in school-wide decision-making (Schott et al. 2020; Brown & Friesen,2023; Khoudri, 2024).

The idea of distributed leadership highlights the importance of sharing leadership responsibilities among different levels in a school, with teachers assuming leadership positions in their areas of expertise (Muijs & Harris, 2006; Modeste et al., 2022; Printy & Yan, 2021).

This research seeks to investigate how selected schools in the Riyadh Educational Directorate promote, encourage, and enact teacher leadership. Through analysing particular strategies, procedures, and behaviours, the study aims to offer an understanding of the practical aspects of teacher leadership in schools.

RQ4 What factors do supervisors, principals, and teachers believe influence whether teachers in Saudi Arabia are empowered to be teacher leaders?

Empowering teachers is a crucial aspect of teacher leadership. Empowerment is when teachers acquire the self-assurance, abilities, and control to assume leadership positions (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). Variables such as school atmosphere, leadership styles, access to resources, and professional growth opportunities, influence teachers' sense of empowerment to take the lead (Grant, 2019; Chaaban et al. 2021). In Saudi Arabia, teacher empowerment may also be affected by cultural, social, and institutional factors (Alsalahi, 2016; Shah, 2016). Through the analysis of attitudes from supervisors, principals, and teachers, this study aims to pinpoint the crucial elements that support or hinder teacher leadership within the specific cultural and educational environment of Riyadh. This investigation is vital for understanding how global theories of teacher leadership apply in diverse cultural settings.

RQ5 How does the professional development of teachers relate to teacher leadership?

Professional development is acknowledged as a key element in the growth of teacher leaders (Brown & Friesen, 2023; Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2015; Shah, 2016). Successful professional development programmes equip teachers with the essential skills, knowledge, and confidence to assume leadership positions in their schools (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Khoudri, 2024; Zarate et al. 2022). continuing professional development is crucial for teacher leadership, as it helps teacher leaders stay up to date on educational practices and leadership strategies (Brown & Friesen, 2023). This inquiry seeks to investigate the connection between professional growth and teacher leadership in chosen schools in the Riyadh Educational Directorate. By examining the impact of professional development on teacher leadership, the research can offer suggestions for creating and executing effective professional development initiatives that promote teacher leadership in Saudi Arabia.

Structure of the Thesis

Following this introduction, the subsequent chapter will delve into the current studies concerning educator leadership, with a specific emphasis on its development and research results on educator leadership actions in Saudi Arabia, the Gulf region, and globally. The third

chapter will explore the paradigms and assumptions (both epistemological and ontological) that influence the research, while also describing the methodology and techniques utilized for gathering and analysing data. This chapter will also cover the procedures implemented to ensure the dependability and accuracy of the study. Chapter Four will discuss results concerning supervisors, Chapter Five will concentrate on results from the Gold school, and Chapter Six will delve into findings from the Silver school. In Chapter Seven, the findings will be examined and discussed about previous studies, highlighting the links between the data and broader conversations on teacher leadership. The Conclusion will demonstrate how the research inquiries have been addressed, examine the importance of the study, and consider the implications for policymaking.

Overview

This chapter presents the examination of teacher leadership in the setting of Saudi Arabia's education system. It starts by examining how globalization is affecting educational methods, especially in fast-growing nations like Saudi Arabia, where schools need to constantly adapt to stay efficient. The chapter emphasizes the importance of teacher leadership in driving educational changes, stressing the significance of teachers assuming leadership positions to impact educational practices and policies. Although attempts have been made to update education with Vision 2030, teacher leadership in Saudi Arabia has not advanced as expected, mainly because of the centralized control of the Ministry of Education and the top-down approach to educational changes.

The chapter also explores the cultural aspects that impact leadership behaviours in schools in Saudi Arabia, including factors like religion, authoritarian traits, and the marginalized role of educators. This chapter fills in the research gaps on teacher leadership in the country, laying the foundation for the current study. The study will explore how supervisors, principals, and teachers view teacher leadership, factors that enable or hinder teacher leaders, and the link between professional development and teacher leadership in the Riyadh Educational Directorate.

The study's research questions seek to explore the phenomenon of teacher leadership in selected schools in Riyadh. These questions collectively provide the potential for a detailed understanding of teacher leadership in Saudi schools, thus guiding future educational reforms and leadership approaches.

The next chapter will present the literature review.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Whilst the previous chapter gave an overview of the study context, this chapter reviews current literature relating to teacher leadership. The findings of this review will be presented and discussed, along with details of key theoretical frameworks, and definitions for some of the key terms for this study. The main focus is on teacher leadership, but two other concepts will be discussed, distributed leadership and communities of practice. Several factors will be considered, including whether teacher leadership roles are formal or informal, and what sorts of leadership behaviours and/or practices are typically considered. The review will also examine how teacher leadership is developed, including what facilitators and inhibitors have previously been identified, at the political, socio-cultural, organizational, and/or personal levels.

Characteristics of the Reviewed Literature

This review takes a broad approach to exploring the literature on teacher leadership to provide a comprehensive overview of the published research. This literature review analyses 241 published works on teacher leadership from 1978 to 2024 to identify research patterns and key elements. The selection process involved three steps: first, searching electronic databases (e.g., EBSCOhost, NuSearch and Google Scholar), using keywords like "teacher leadership" and "distributed leadership," filtering for peer-reviewed studies in English or Arabic without date restrictions, yielding 2,116 results. Second, titles and abstracts were screened, reducing the number to 527. Third, studies were assessed against inclusion criteria: those focusing on general teacher leadership, in-service teachers, and accessible published works. After this filtering, 241 relevant works were included for review. Sources were selected based on their focus on the teacher-leader perspective; 12 chapters, 28 theses, and 201 articles are included in the review (see Figure 2.1).

A literature review was conducted with an emphasis on the main focal areas, including leadership practices, teacher empowerment, and the effects of the teacher's leadership practices on learning outcomes. Within these themes, a variety of research approaches were utilized: Thus, 50% of studies used only qualitative methods, 29% of the studies used only quantitative methods, and 21% adopted a mixed methods approach. Most of the reviewed research (66%) used interviews as the main method of data collection; while only 5% involved focus group discussions (see Figure 2.2).

In the context of the geographical focus, the thematic analysis identified that the USA was most frequently examined (with 59% of the studies), and this was followed by Europe, Asia, and especially the Middle East (with only three papers from the Gulf region).

The majority of the 241 studies involved participants, with 79% being either teachers or teacher leaders and a further 15% comprising principals or supervisors.[2] . The period from 1978 to 2024 was divided into three segments, each lasting 14 years. This was conducted to recognize patterns in the research of teacher leadership throughout the years. Although there is no definite reason for choosing three 14-year periods, it helps in identifying shifts in patterns over time. There was a noticeable rise in the quantity of studies from 2007, and most (81%) of the research was published from 2007 to 2024 (see Figures 2.1 and 2.2).
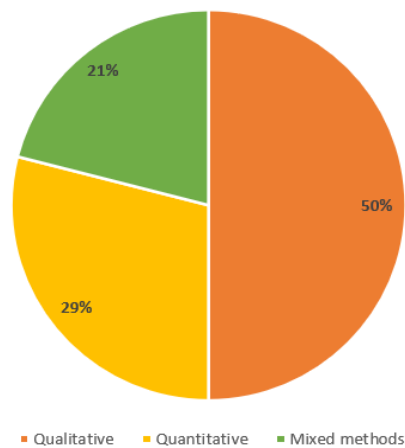
Figure 2.1 Literature Sources
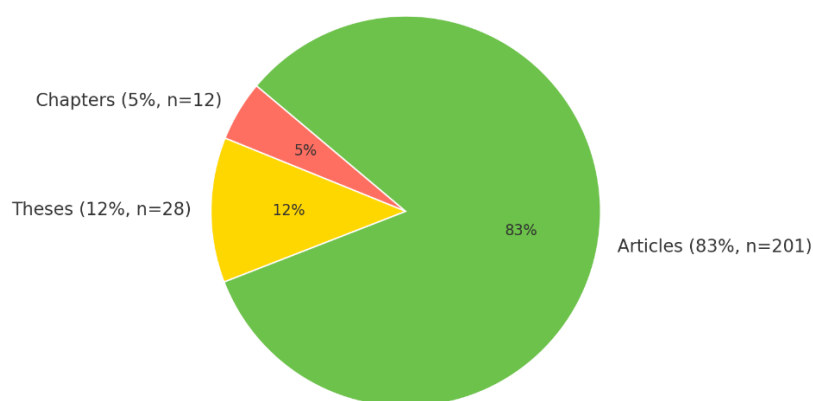
Figure 2.2 Methodology of Empirical Studies

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[2] The person who has the authority to monitor, guide and assess the school activities, their progress, their practices and their staffs including teachers (Kamel, 1983).

Defining Teacher Leadership

There is no consensus regarding the definition of teacher leadership in the reviewed literature (Wenner & Campbell, 2017; Szeto & Cheng, 2018; Öqvist & Malmström, 2018; Nguyen et al, 2020). Numerous empirical studies have merely listed the definitions of teacher leadership suggested by others or remarked on the lack of consensus regarding the definition. (Hunzicker, 2019; Wenner & Campbell, 2017). This view is shared in a meta-analysis conducted by York-Barr & Duke (2004) who asserted that it had not been defined succinctly. Initially, it concerned teachers' formal roles and the assigning of leadership positions but subsequently extended to their informal duties. Indeed, it is distinctly possible that the lack of consensus regarding the definition of teacher leadership stems from the wide range of activities it entails (York-Barr & Duke, 2004).

Teacher leadership is an idea that has developed over time and effectively gives teachers the authority to assume positions of leadership. Although lacking a consistent definition, the idea has been used since the 1990s; a time when school leadership transitioned from a centralised, top-down approach to a more decentralised one, in some countries, including through the adoption of collective leadership (Mangin, 2007). The result was that teachers started to be regarded as human beings performing professional duties with an affinity to the teaching profession, a wide skillset, and an ability to perform a range of roles to help their school develop and maintain good relations with their fellow teachers (Poekert, 2012).

Definitions of teacher leadership can be classified into formal and informal roles. Teacher leadership can be formal, linked to specific roles adopted in the school system where the teacher bears the accountability of training other professionals, designing curricula, and assimilating to the general aims and objectives of the institution (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009). The administration often prescribes these aims, and they may be aimed at fulfilling organizational objectives. In contrast, informal teacher leadership is defined as a democratic process through which the teachers work together and support their colleagues without assuming leadership positions (Danielson 2007). Both forms of teacher leadership may involve cultivating teaching practices and enforcing cohesiveness in education while also claiming that each type is for different purposes and should not be confused with other matters.

Huang (2016) regards teacher leadership as being about all teachers who demonstrate leadership; this is a matter of teacher agency and the contribution they can make to bringing about lasting change. This considers teacher leadership in terms of the notion of teachers'

agency when teaching and acquiring knowledge, where they can make choices, and their agency extends beyond the classroom (Buchanan et al. 2023). The agency of teachers concerns how they make use of their professional knowledge, assume responsibility for their professional practice and professionally involve themselves, irrespective of the roles they perform (Lau et al. 2022). The social constructivist perspective asserts that teacher leadership is a procedure whereby teachers lead by engaging in professional learning communities to enhance the learning processes of pupils; they enhance their school; bring out the best in others; and make stakeholders feel able to contribute towards efforts intended to enhance education (Childs-Bowen et al., 2000. p.28).

Nguyen et al. (2020) conducted a literature review in which they were able to stipulate four common traits of teacher leadership. First, teacher leadership entails exerting influence. Second, teacher leadership requires trust and reciprocal collaboration. Third, teacher leadership is not confined to events that occur in the classroom. Fourth, teacher leadership is intended to enhance the learning of pupils, the effectiveness of the school as well as the quality of instruction. Moreover, Wenner and Campbell (2017) stressed that teacher leaders play a central role in delivering communities of professional learning.

These various definitions help to demonstrate that it is possible to develop leadership through collegiality and influence. As such, leadership is not a quality that can be assigned by somebody else. All definitions indicate some degree of autonomy, but the latter definitions go further by stressing the importance of interdependence. Meanwhile, Huang (2016) emphasises teachers' decisional capital which is part of professional capital and independent agency. It is important to note, however, that such a wide-ranging perception of teacher leadership risks the possibility of undermining teachers' professional development if it fails to initiate classroom leadership. Overemphasising efforts to promote the culture of the school or society at large could cause teachers to take their eyes off their main duties by being overwhelmed by school activities beyond their classrooms (Wang et al. 2022). It is necessary to strike an appropriate balance between clearly defined roles and matching teacher leaders' targets with those of their pupils and their school, with a degree of freedom to perform their duties as they see fit (Woodhouse & Pedder, 2017).

Muijs & Harris (2003) describe teacher leadership as complex and comprising overlapping meanings, with emphasis on the process of empowering teachers and promoting collaboration., They outline several critical domains of teacher leadership, starting with the 'implementation

of specific principles of school improvement into practice in the classroom', and coordination of goals set on the school level with the developments at the teacher level. Another element can be called participative leadership, where teachers are encouraged to participate in and assume responsibility for the implementation of changes and improvements in the school. They also negotiate by being the source of information as well as brokering with other people whenever there is a need to do so. Also, they establish positive working relationships with professionals to encourage the exchange of knowledge. These dimensions show how aspiring teacher leaders can enhance school improvement since they act as formative experts, directors, and contractors who guide students to be mentors for learners as they ingrain the concepts of learning communities and collaborating in the generation of social and intellectual capital in their schools (Muijs & Harris, 2003; Harris, 2010, Harris, 2015).

In most cases, teacher leadership is discussed about trust and collaboration to better understand the impact on teachers, their colleagues, the quality of the school and the outcomes of their pupils. For the current study, teacher leadership is defined as the actions of formal or informal teachers both inside and beyond the classroom, utilising professional capital, professional agency and autonomy to develop the professionalism of not only themselves but also their colleagues, thereby benefiting the outcomes of their pupils and the development of their school as an agent in the community. (Nguyen et al. 2020; Alsalahi, 2016).

Teacher Leadership Roles

The literature indicates that teacher leadership can be discussed in terms of the position occupied by the teacher and/or by the behaviour exhibited by the teacher.

Roles and positions (formal or informal)

Teacher leadership is a wide-ranging notion, with different variations to embrace and to distinguish between formal and informal dimensions. Formal teacher leaders are those who are assigned certain responsibilities and may receive a higher salary. They often work beyond the classroom and may have roles, including teaching, coaching, counselling, and professional development within the school or district. This type of leadership plays a significant role in the leadership and management of a school and is relevant to policy and practice on a larger scale. Key studies emphasize that these roles are essential for the implementation of educational strategies and maintaining school standards (York-Barr & Duke, 2004; Ghamrawi, 2013; Chaaban & Sawalhi, 2021; VonDohlen & Karvonen, 2018; Lovett, 2020; Blose & Khuzwayo, 2020).

In contrast, informal teacher leaders do not hold officially recognized positions or titles but contribute significantly to school improvement and student learning outcomes. Their influence is exerted through peer collaboration, mentoring, and leading by example within the educational community. Despite lacking formal acknowledgement, informal leaders fulfil critical needs within their teams and foster a collaborative culture that enhances educational practices (VonDohlen & Karvonen, 2018). The literature highlights the essential role of informal leadership in promoting innovation and responsiveness within schools (Angelle & Teague, 2014; Szeto & Cheng, 2018). This contrast between formal and informal leadership roles underscores the diverse ways teachers can contribute to their educational communities.

While the formal-informal categorization of teacher leadership roles has been widely used in the literature, an alternative conceptualization has been proposed: teachers' positional and non-positional leadership. Within this framework, positional teacher leadership is defined as leadership by teachers due to their assigned leadership role in the school. Non-positional leadership on the other hand means that teachers engage in leadership in the course of 'capacity building of a profession and constructing a professional identity' of the person in leadership (Hammad et al., 2023).

However, the centralist, top-down management systems prevalent in certain countries, such as Saudi Arabia, pose significant challenges to the development of teacher leadership. In these systems, the principal holds the ultimate decision-making power, and formal teacher leadership roles are highly structured and hierarchical. This rigid structure often stifles the potential of informal leaders who might otherwise contribute to school improvement efforts (Shah, 2020). Research indicates that teachers without formal leadership assignments are often reluctant to assert themselves in leadership capacities for fear of overstepping boundaries or undermining those in formal positions (Sawalhi & Chaaban, 2019). This reluctance can hinder the formation of productive learning communities and limit the overall effectiveness of the school.

Practices or behaviours

Researchers categorize teacher leaders based on either the roles they perform or their practice. York-Barr and Duke (2004) conducted a comprehensive analysis of 240 papers published between 1980 and 2004, identifying seven key aspects of teacher leadership practices: school curriculum work, coordination and management, participation in school improvement initiatives, supporting colleagues' professional development, contributing to the teaching profession, engaging with parents and the broader community, and involvement in pre-service

teacher education. These roles highlight the diverse responsibilities and impact teacher leaders have within educational settings.

Frost and Harris (2003) identify four distinct teacher leadership roles that set it apart from other types of leadership. The first role involves creating social connections within the wider community, a brokerage function ensuring that relations are maintained and opportunities for important developments are maximized (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009). This role emphasizes the importance of teacher leaders in building and maintaining relationships with the community to support educational goals.

The second role is participative leadership, where teachers work collegially to scrutinize and improve instructional practices (Hairon et al., 2015; Szeto & Cheng, 2018). This collaborative approach fosters a culture of continuous improvement and shared responsibility for student outcomes. The third role, mediating, involves teacher leaders helping students learn and supporting school advancement by contributing information and instructional expertise (Shen et al., 2020). This role highlights the direct impact of teacher leaders on student learning and school progress.

The fourth role is collaboration, developing close relationships with fellow teachers, supervisors, and the wider community. This collaborative approach to decision-making fosters trust and enables the emergence of effective pedagogical practices (York-Barr & Duke, 2004; Lovett, 2020; Cherkowski & Schnellert, 2017; Wieczorek & Lear, 2018; Poekert, 2012). Trust and cooperation among colleagues are essential for the flourishing of pedagogical practices (Muijs & Harris, 2007; Fairman & Mackenzie, 2015; Mullen & Jones, 2008; Ghamrawi, 2013).

According to Wenner and Campbell (2017), teacher leaders are involved in professional development and policy considerations due to their critical roles in the institutions and policies that shape learners and teaching practices. Wang et al. (2022) established that teacher leaders are important in enhancing self-efficacy among other teachers, especially within the distributed leadership framework. Rotating leadership responsibilities between teachers and administrators means that teacher leaders are likely to actively support inclusive measures and work closely with outside resources. This distribution of leadership also engulfs not only the communal efficacy of the school but also the personal efficacy of teachers. Modeste et al. (2022) add the critical role of teacher leaders in developing and maintaining Professional learning communities (PLCs) to enhance a collaborative school culture. Some comparative studies (Shah & Eusafza, 2024; Huggins et al. 2017; Modeste et al. 2022) have indicated that

the roles of teacher leaders differ depending on the setting, as depicted by leadership practices of teachers in Denmark and the USA (Modeste et al. 2022), but their impact on both micro and macro education outcomes is still influential.

Harris and Jones (2019) discuss the impact of teacher leadership on student outcomes, reinforcing the value of teacher leaders in both instructional and organizational capacities. They argue that effective teacher leadership can lead to significant improvements in student achievement and school performance. Building on this idea, Ankrum (2016) proposed that teacher leadership involves carrying out peer classroom observations, allowing teachers to enhance their instructional methods by learning from each other. Furthermore, Lovett (2020) emphasized the importance of fostering a team-oriented culture in schools to help teachers feel encouraged and driven to enhance their performance.

To facilitate school development, induction, mentoring, and continuous professional development are essential. Understanding how principals and supervisors view teacher leaders' functions inside and beyond the classroom is crucial. This understanding can help schools develop strategies to support and empower teacher leaders effectively (Alsalahi, 2016)

In Saudi Arabia, it is important to identify the roles that teachers currently perform or wish to assume. This information can help inform policies and practices that support teacher leadership and contribute to the overall improvement of the education system. (Shah, 2016)

Incorporating these perspectives, the evolving landscape of teacher leadership emphasizes the multifaceted and evolving nature of these roles. Teacher leadership involves not only instructional and organizational responsibilities but also the ability to influence policy, foster collaboration, and build strong community relationships. Ongoing research and adaptation to diverse educational contexts are essential to fully understand and support the complex roles of teacher leaders (Alsalahi, 2016; Qian & Walker, 2022)

Theories and Concepts Related to Teacher Leadership

Wenner and Campbell (2017), and York-Barr and Duke (2004), assert that various leadership theories and constructs are closely aligned with teacher leadership. The most significant of these linked ideas are distributed leadership and communities of practice, with the linked notion of professional learning communities. The most commonly cited of these related theories is distributed leadership. About a quarter (25%) of the studies reviewed by the present author referred to distributed leadership.

Grant's (2006) teacher leadership model supports the idea of distributed leadership where leadership functions are responsibilities that are spread across the school community especially with teachers. This approach contradicts traditional assumption that leadership only relates to formal positions such as principals or heads of departments. Instead, teachers may be autonomous and have decision making roles within their classroom, as well as within the school as a whole. Grant (2006) notes that to develop a professional learning community in schools, teacher leadership needs to be recognised as it brings about collaboration, ownership, and participation.

The Grant model contains four levels of teacher leadership, illustrating how teachers can expand their leadership incrementally. At level one, the teachers implement their classroom learning practices and seek to ensure a positive educational atmosphere. These are used in establishing learning objectives, designing learning activities, and monitoring and directing student growth. At this level, there is basic leadership by teachers although their professional decisions and classroom demeanour are involved.

At the next level, teachers start extending their leadership by working with other teachers. This may be on ways to direct grade level teams, supporting and encouraging fellow educators, or being involved in the development of professional learning programmes. Teachers at this level assist in the creation of a community of practice in the school in which practice, knowledge, and understanding are enhanced. According to Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009), at this level teacher leaders play organizational roles through working with their peers, to spread their specialized knowledge, forming a resourceful network Grant (2006).

Level three of the Grant model involves more specific leadership of teachers with organizational responsibilities across the school. They actively engage in whole school development processes such as curriculum work, school policymaking, and vision development for the school. At this level, the teachers act as major stakeholders when it comes to organizational change and development, and they work in collaboration with the administrators to make decisions for the benefit of teachers and students. Grant (2006) adds that those teachers involved in this level of leadership, foster collaborative, and inclusive school culture where leadership is distributed not only among the school administrative team but within the entire community.

Level four of the Grant model takes teacher leadership beyond the school to include teachers in the wider educational community. Teachers may work together with other schools, contribute to district educational projects, and consult with parents and community members. According to Harris (2004), teacher leadership at this level entails making changes to educational policy and practice in the broader context, with teachers acting as advocates at the school level and linking with the community and other institutions of learning (Grant, 2006).

The relevance of this model is that it promotes a school culture in which the teachers are encouraged to engage in leadership responsibilities of the school. Through teacher leadership, schools will be able to harness the strengths that come with involving teachers in the leadership process, such as ideas, skills, as well as thinking and learning capacities to solve problems. According to Grant (2006), this implies that teacher leadership can indeed play a pivotal role in the school improvement efforts that are aimed at turning the institution into a common learning community where the spirit of collaboration, collective accountability and ownership of change initiatives prevails Grant (2006). This model of professional development also helps teachers to perceive themselves as leaders rather than followers, which contributes positively to the development of their profession, and leads to greater involvement of teachers.

Because the teacher leadership model is based on cooperation and community participation, it fits in well with research on how teacher leadership is promoted by school leaders and how it is affected by cultural or structural factors. This model provides a clear structure for analysing local and broader leadership and identifies areas where teacher leadership can be improved through the notion of distributed leadership and increased cooperation.

Distributed leadership

Muijs and Harris (2006) claim that the model of teacher leadership is essentially underpinned by distributed leadership. They argue that it is the activities and processes of distributed decision-making that provides teacher leadership with its notion of collaboration and collective guidance because all school stakeholders can assume some responsibility for demonstrating leadership. As a result, many teachers assume an active role in leadership, thereby benefiting professional development and the sense of collegiality. Moreover, this puts the school on a better footing in terms of its capacity to reform and advance. Teachers and other stakeholders assume shared responsibility, working collaboratively and ensuring that any sense of dissent or isolation is insignificant (Muijs & Harris, 2006; Bryant & Rao, 2019). Essentially, teacher leadership represents a type of collective leadership in which teachers undertake leadership

tasks that proliferate professional agency in all settings, irrespective of the roles that individual teachers are assigned.

Distributed leadership provides the theoretical perspective which allows teachers to be leaders in the classroom, as well as within the wider school and community. In dispersing leadership responsibilities, teachers are given discretion over how to impact and direct school improvement activities, staff development, and curriculum and instruction (Spillane, 2006, p. 167). This connection makes leadership development more participative, thus expanding professional agency and shared leadership culture (Muijs & Harris, 2006). It is difficult to conceive of distributed leadership being implemented in schools without teacher leaders because they play a central role in developing shared and distributive leadership for school improvement (Bush, 2020).

In addition, distributed leadership entails a shared constitution of knowing and deciding, whereby the teachers are able to combine their efforts to develop school improvement initiatives. According to Bennett, Wise, Woods & Harvey (2003), this collaborative approach in the school not only fosters leadership growths of teachers but also builds capacity for change and reform in the school. The relationship between distributed and teacher leadership is mutually reinforcing as both are vested in the process of establishing professional learning communities enriched by collaboration, innovation, and shared stewardship, (Harris, 2014 Muijs & Harris, 2006).

Professional learning communities

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are focused on learning as an organizational process for teachers and leaders. PLC activity is regarded as "an ongoing process in which educators collaboratively plan, implement, conduct research, and engage in cycles of improvement to enhance learning outcomes for the students they teach" (DuFour, 2014). The evidence from this approach highlights that efficient, job-embedded professional development for teachers is crucial for improving student performance. Within PLCs, a shared culture— shaped by common values, vision, and beliefs—plays a key role in setting the institution's direction and guiding actions (DuFour & Eaker, 1998).

Unlike other such frameworks, such as communities of practice (see below), which tend to centre around social interactions and shared construction of knowledge, PLCs are more concerned with organisational learning as well as teamwork. Blankenship & Ruona (2007) stated that while implementing PLCs, leadership and school culture aim at delivering common

educational goals. Shah (2016) adds that PLCs differ from other professional learning structures in that they focus on the development of a culture that supports improvement-related learning processes carried out cooperatively to attain specific educational goals.

Lewis and Murphy (2008) emphasize that practical opportunities to learn within workplaces enable teacher leaders to gain constructive feedback for their practices, as well as engage in personal and professional reflexivity and development within their leadership ranks. These experiences are crucial for enhancing the effectiveness of teacher leaders.

Pasternak, Rigoni, and Roberts (2012) present an analysis of how PLCs provide leadership potential for induction-year teachers. Teachers need professional learning communities to help them remain in the teaching profession while continuing to grow as leaders through enhancing content knowledge as well as knowledge of professional practice. This implies that PLCs can be regarded as potentially meaningful contexts within which teacher leaders can promote their instructional practice and leadership development through continuous learning support from their peers (Brown & Friesen, 2023).

Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009), also emphasised the cooperative nature of PLCs, proposing that teacher leaders will flourish only in a culture in which professional activities facilitate learning among teachers. These interactions play a key role in nurturing teacher leadership, more than formal instructional or leadership training. Teacher leaders seek out collegiality and participate in related activities. Barth (2001) argues that the role of collegial cooperation cannot be underestimated.

Communities of practice

Professional engagement and collaboration are believed to flourish in the school setting when teachers engage in professional agency to develop their teaching materials, classrooms and pedagogy and share their professional agency with their fellow teachers and other stakeholders. In this sense, there are similarities between teacher leadership and Wenger & Snyder's (2002) community of practice (CoP). According to Wenger (1998), there are four components of learning: meaning, community, identity, and practice.

In communities of practice, members cooperate and offer support to others to promote knowledge about tasks and how best to apply their skills in various scenarios. Berg et al. (2018) refer to a CoP as a collection of individuals who have a common interest in a particular aspect of their work and, through regular interactions, develop the way they enact and collaborate. By

interacting, those who are inexperienced learn from those who have considerable experience (Wenner & Campbell, 2018). CoP is primarily concerned with sharing knowledge and interacting socially to enhance practices. Emphasis is placed on social learning to acquire knowledge, while leaders beyond the community, are considered to be less important (VonDohlen & Karvonen, 2018). There is a considerable body of literature stating that CoP has a significant effect on cooperation and collegiality among teachers, providing an incentive to extend the remit of their leadership both within and outside the classroom (Crowther, 2009; Danielson, 2007).

Features, Facilitators and Inhibitors of Teacher Leadership

Several factors are associated with the ability of teacher leadership to affect school-level practice. These factors, discussed below, are personal, organisational, political and socio-cultural, linked to the working conditions of teachers.

Personal level

Research continues to underscore the significant impact that teacher leadership has on educators themselves. By demonstrating leadership roles, teachers may acquire new skills and shift their organizational perspectives, as noted by Grant et al. (2010). This empowerment not only enhances their self-esteem but also leads to greater job satisfaction, improved motivation, and better performance, subsequently reducing employee turnover (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009). Through leadership roles, teachers experience professional growth, cultivate a sense of agency, and develop stronger self-perception and confidence in their abilities (Wenner & Campbell, 2017; Poekert et al., 2016).

According to Muijs and Harris (2006), teacher interaction has a significant impact on the practice of teaching. Teachers' readiness to lead groups is informed by the level of professionalism they exemplify, and how they view themselves (Anderson, 2004; Muijs & Harris, 2006). Curci (2012) highlights that many teachers desire greater involvement in decision-making and seek recognition for their classroom achievements. Some literature suggests that granting teachers higher status fosters professionalism, enhances training, and positively influences their adherence to professional conduct (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). When teachers are regarded as integral contributors to school leadership, they are more likely to innovate and implement effective teaching strategies (Hairon, 2017; Sepiriti, 2024; Sawalhi & Chaaban, 2023).

For teachers to be able to handle leadership functions effectively, it is important to determine their perceptions of leadership (Phelps, 2008). Alsalahi (2015) claims that enhancing the perception of leadership among Saudi Arabian teachers contributes to a better system of professional development and practice. Teachers are more willing to engage in school enhancement activities provided their leadership qualities are appreciated (Shah, 2014).

Teacher leadership has advantages for the individual and professional growth of teachers. Strengthening leadership opportunities and acknowledging the teachers' proactive stance enables schools to develop progressive learning environments that engage all students and encourage innovation (Wenner & Campbell, 2017; Hammad et al., 2023). Building teacher leadership involves cultivating a culture of promoting learning, and professional development, and recognizing teachers as stakeholders in education (Qian & Walker, 2022; Sawalhi & Chaaban, 2021).

Organisational level

Teacher leadership has effects on school culture, the principal, and colleagues within the organization, leading to both positive and negative outcomes. Educators can impact their peers' teaching practices by sharing effective strategies and fostering a collaborative learning environment (Anderson, 2018; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). This peer influence is essential because it allows for the spread of effective practices and new teaching techniques within the school.

In addition to impacting colleagues, teacher leadership also influences the school's overall atmosphere. Educators who take on leadership responsibilities typically cultivate a mindset focused on collaboration, leading to improved teamwork and the exchange of effective approaches within the staff. Teachers' collaboration can result in better student outcomes by collectively tackling problems and introducing new ideas. Moreover, the participation of teachers in decision-making fosters increased ownership and responsibility for the school's achievements, promoting ongoing enhancements and dedication to high standards (Chaaban et al, 2022).

The organizational priorities of teachers are important in determining their readiness to take on leadership positions. Educators gain understanding not just from personal encounters but also from the institutional structures that promote collaboration within the school, which is especially valuable when ideas are exchanged (Johnson & Donaldson, 2007). This sharing of information has the potential to enhance teaching methods and student results. Frost and Harris

(2003) stress the significance of communal elements in education, highlighting the necessity of establishing a supportive and cooperative atmosphere for schools to operate as learning communities. Investing in this communal aspect can reveal untapped leadership skills in current teachers, allowing their potential to be utilized to benefit the whole school community. Teacher leadership is driven by organizational cooperation, enabling educators to come together and collaborate on shared objectives (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009; Murphy, 2005). A friendly environment promotes trust, mutual respect, and a shared sense of purpose. According to Wenner and Campbell (2017), feeling supported and valued by colleagues encourages teachers to assume leadership responsibilities and make a positive impact on the school's environment.

Conversely, poor relationships among teachers, or perceptions that leadership roles are undesirable, can hinder teacher leadership. Barth (2001) noted that, in some schools, demonstrating leadership may be frowned upon by colleagues. This reluctance to embrace leadership roles can stem from a fear of social isolation or backlash from peers. Acting administratively without the support of colleagues can violate unwritten social norms, potentially leading to ostracism.

Donaldson (2007) also observed that not only principals, but also fellow teachers significantly influence attitudes and behaviours. For example, if a formal leader in education does not ask for input from colleagues when making decisions, it can result in resentment and isolation (Anderson, 2004; Fairman & Mackenzie, 2015). This highlights the significance of a cooperative leadership style, in which decisions are made inclusively and openly.

Galland (2008) emphasized the necessity of colleague acceptance for teachers to effectively become leaders. Without the support and endorsement of their peers, teacher leaders may struggle to implement changes or initiatives. Greenier and Whitehead (2016) suggest focusing on authentic leadership to handle negative responses. Authentic leadership involves leading by example, encouraging others to excel, and achieving set targets, which can help build credibility and trust over time.

Some recent studies further support this argument, underscoring the importance of trust, collaboration, and a shared vision in fostering effective relationships between teacher leaders and their colleagues (Qian & Walker, 2022; Wiens & Beck, 2022; Gümüş et al, 2022). These studies highlight that, when teachers perceive their colleagues who take on leadership roles as trustworthy and capable, they are more likely to engage in collaborative practices and support

initiatives led by their peers. Trust and mutual respect are foundational elements that enable teacher leaders to navigate the complexities of school environments and drive positive change, creating a cohesive and supportive professional community.

The role of teacher leadership in shaping school culture is complex and multifaceted, with literature presenting mixed findings. Some studies indicate minimal impact at the school level, while others highlight significant positive effects (Öqvist & Malmström, 2018). Teacher leadership is pivotal in initiating organizational change, fostering collaboration, and encouraging teachers to assume greater responsibility, thus enhancing overall school performance (Wang & Ho, 2020; Carpenter & Sherretz, 2012; Öqvist & Malmström, 2018; Shen et al., 2020; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009). Empirical studies consistently report that a positive school culture not only supports teacher leadership (Jones, 2007) but also aids teacher retention. Barth (2001) asserts that school culture has a more significant influence on school life and learning than national government policies, supervisors' actions, the board of governors, or principals. The organization of a school affects the support and instruction teachers receive, which in turn influences student learning (Bryk et al., 2010).

Creating a supportive school culture requires fostering professionalism and building professional capital among teachers in a non-hierarchical setting (Alsalahi, 2015). In such environments, teacher leaders can significantly influence the development of the school's culture (Gabriel, 2005). Collaboration is a crucial component, encouraging teachers to commit to their school long-term (Muijs & Harris, 2006). Collaborative environments help develop learning communities, whereas a lack of collaboration can impede professional learning and the accumulation of professional capital (Harris, 2003). For schools to enhance student learning, they must provide teachers with continuous opportunities for professional development and innovation (Harris, 2003).

Schools that support communities of practice (CoP) without coercion empower teachers' professional knowledge, enabling them to engage in collaborative activities and assume responsibility for the school (Alsalahi, 2015). This empowerment fosters a culture of shared leadership and collective responsibility. Additionally, the physical structure of a school can significantly influences its culture (Mangin, 2005). Adequate facilities for collaboration, such as staffrooms and training rooms, are essential for supporting teachers' engagement and professional practice (Galland, 2008). Schools that provide these spaces demonstrate a

commitment to valuing teachers' human capital, enhancing their leadership potential as they gain decisional capital through shared experiences (Frost & Harris, 2003).

Teacher leadership is also influenced by various organizational factors. Effective school leadership requires a supportive organizational structure that values teachers' contributions and provides opportunities for professional growth. Schools that foster a culture of shared decision-making and professional autonomy are more likely to see positive outcomes in both teacher satisfaction and student achievement (Wiens et al, 2023; Wang et al, 2022). Studies have shown that several organizational characteristics play a crucial role in determining the level of teacher leadership in schools. Schools that follow relational academic organization with clear patterns of communication and collaboration are most effective in facilitating leadership roles for the teachers (York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Favourable contextual factors that promote shared decision-making (SDM) allow teachers to share their ideas and input in creating and implementing the school plans and goals (Wenner & Campbell, 2017). Specialised professional growth for teachers may improve their leadership skills and increase teachers' enthusiasm and creativity in the classroom (York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Schools that properly address these organizational procedures tend to have better morale, better teacher recruitment and retention rates, and thus better learning outcomes for students (Wiens & Beck, 2022; Wang et al, 2022).

Organizational factors, according to Wang and Ho (2020), are important in enhancing teacher leadership by developing the right organizational structure within schools to empower teachers to improve school performance. Shen et al. (2020) pointed out that the role of teacher leaders as instructional catalysts and leaders is highly dependent on the organizational context within which they function. Schools that encourage PLCs and embedded structures that support daily collaborative practice, afford the conceptual context within which teacher leadership emerges and may flourish (Harris & Jones, 2019). These organisational supports not only enhance the quality of teaching but also enhance the performance of students. The findings indicate that fostering a culture and context in the school that promotes cooperation, support and professional challenge is critical for supporting the development of teacher leaders. Schools that pay attention to these organizational features, and foster effective support structures, can ensure ongoing development and innovation of teachers in the school and the total school population positively (Printy & Yan, 2021).

Ultimately, teacher leadership has a substantial impact on the principal's role within the organization, whether it be positively or negatively. Bogler (2001) has shown that the

leadership style chosen by principals has a major influence on teachers, students' education, and the general school atmosphere. Alsalahi (2014) supports this, finding that principals are conventionally viewed as school leaders, while teachers often adopt more passive roles. Hoy and Hoy (2009) advocate for principals to apply teacher leadership to actively support teachers and ensure they have access to the resources needed for classroom success. Providing necessary resources is a fundamental principle (Hoy & Hoy, 2009). Additionally, administrators directly influence teachers' ability to access classrooms and fulfil their leadership duties effectively (Mangin, 2005).

The literature consistently underscores that schools require effective leaders for teaching practices to evolve and for learning activities to progress. Effective leaders guide the broader school community and help students to realize their full potential. Central to this understanding is the idea that principals should distribute tasks to teacher leaders to realize these benefits (Muijs & Harris, 2007). This includes principals actively encouraging and promoting the process by offering financial rewards or recognition for leaders' work, ensuring that teacher leaders' actions are effective (Birky et al., 2006). Without such encouragement and appreciation, teacher leaders may feel marginalized (Shah, 2014). In contrast, unrealistic workloads and significant administrative tasks can hinder teacher leaders from contributing positively to school progress (Alsalahi, 2015). Hobbs and Moreland (2009) argue that autonomy, professional learning, and participation in decision-making processes, empower teachers.

Some research highlights the significance of these actions. Harris and Jones (2019) point out the importance of distributed leadership that encourages collaboration and shared decision-making, as also emphasized by Modeste et al (2022). Distributed leadership means sharing responsibilities among different members of the school community to establish a feeling of collective ownership and accountability (Heikka et al, 2019). Consequently, this approach boosts both the school's leadership capabilities and encourages a more inclusive and participatory decision-making process. Hammad (2016) emphasizes the importance of creating a supportive school culture that values and motivates teacher leaders. He argues that principals should establish a culture that promotes ongoing professional growth (CPD) and acknowledges the dedication of teachers who show proactive behaviour. Moreover, professional development opportunities should be matched with the objectives of the school and the professional requirements of teachers.

Birky et al. (2006) stress the significance of acknowledging and compensating teacher leaders to uphold their drive and dedication. Notably, recognition can come in different forms, such as being formally acknowledged in meetings, and providing opportunities for professional development, or monetary rewards. Such incentives do not just improve the spirits of teacher leaders but also indicate to the whole staff that the school appreciates and backs teacher leadership.

Conversely, Shah (2014) cautions that a lack of support and recognition from principals towards teacher leaders can result in their marginalization. Marginalized teacher leaders who feel excluded may lose interest and effectiveness, hurting the school environment. Thus, principals should recognize the possible outcomes of ignoring teacher leadership and make an effort to establish a welcoming and encouraging atmosphere. Similarly, Alsalahi (2015) emphasizes how crucial it is to handle the workloads of teacher leaders appropriately. Adding too many administrative duties for teacher leaders can take away from their main responsibilities and decrease their effectiveness (Spirit, 2024). Therefore, principals need to find a balance between administrative tasks and leadership in the classroom to support teacher leaders in their efforts to enhance teaching and learning.

Hobbs and Moreland (2009) stress that giving teachers autonomy, opportunities for professional development, and a say in decision-making processes can empower them. As a result, teachers who have the freedom to make decisions about teaching, actively participate in learning opportunities, and take part in governing the school are more likely to feel empowered and dedicated to their jobs. Ultimately this empowerment results in higher levels of job satisfaction and a stronger feeling of professional fulfilment.

Hence, this research suggests that principals should focus on promoting autonomy and collegiality among teachers rather than just outlining their responsibilities to enhance the overall effectiveness of the school (Shah, 2020). By doing so, principals can increase teachers' professional capital by acknowledging their contributions and supporting their professional development (Brown & Friesen, 2023). Notably, professional capital is the combined abilities, information, and proficiency of the teaching team that are crucial in delivering top-notch education.

The improvement of the professional skills of teachers is an essential aspect in which principals are involved in endorsing Continuing Professional Development (CPD) as well as acknowledging those teachers who actively participate and display leadership (Katzenmeyer

& Moller, 2009; Crowther et al., 2009). This development is mostly specific to the needs of the school as well as the educators since it offers a chance to work on sectors that influence the learners. In this way, through investing in CPD, the principals can make sure that the knowledge and skills of teachers are updated and improved if necessary.

School principals have the major responsibility of identifying teacher leaders who have concern for the institution and are willing to produce positive change. Principals can promote positive cultures that encourage the implementation of teacher leaders and others to embrace leadership positions voluntarily. This can be done in the form of spoken or written appreciation, adding more tasks to their workload or promoting them to higher positions within the organisation (Sepiriti, 2024; Rutherford, 2006). The incentives not only motivate a teacher leader but also can serve as inspiration for other staff members and encourage them to become interested in leadership positions.

Wider socio-cultural and political levels

Teacher leadership exerts both positive and negative effects at the socio-cultural and political levels, particularly in terms of training, professional development, and educational policy. Training and professional development play crucial roles in shaping teachers' leadership capabilities. Preparatory programmes significantly influence teachers' attitudes toward leadership and their sense of responsibility to behave as leaders (Barth, 2001). It is essential that those training to become teachers learn how to implement tasks in the classroom setting (Oppi & Eisenschmidt, 2020). However, they must also acquire extensive knowledge in evaluative and instructional methods to become effective leaders. Despite this, it is apparent that teachers often assume leadership roles with insufficient training, especially in Saudi Arabia (Alsalahi, 2016, 2005, Shah, 2016, Alnasser, 2023). This is problematic because suitable training is essential for effective teacher leadership (Shah, 2016).

Teachers are encouraged to participate in the professional learning process, as their input encourages them to take responsibility for their professional development (Akert, 2009). Curci (2012) recognized that setting aside time for mentoring and actively promoting professional development benefits aspiring leaders while creating an environment where people feel able to take risks without fear of criticism. Therefore, there is a clear need for targeted leadership training before and during one's tenure as a teacher, ensuring that teachers acquire the professional capital they need to thrive (Osmond-Johnson, 2017). Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017) highlight that effective professional development is content-focused,

incorporates active learning, supports collaboration, models of successful practice, and training and expert support, besides, coaching professionals are done. Feedback and reflection sessions are also included. Furthermore, it is of long duration. These elements are the essential parts of teacher leadership development, which enables a teacher to transform education and manage changes successfully. (Kilinç, 2014)

It is important to establish whether the training teachers receive is adequate for their needs and to what extent principals and supervisors regard training as a determinant of leadership success. This involves assessing the content, quality, and delivery of professional development programmes, as well as the ongoing support teachers receive in their leadership roles. It also requires examining how well these programs prepare teachers to handle the complexities of educational leadership, including instructional leadership, team collaboration, and community engagement (Modeste et al. 2022).

Educational policy significantly impacts how teachers interpret their leadership potential. Policies influence the likelihood of identifying teachers' potential, knowledge, and professional engagement (Modeste et al. 2022). Ideally, these policies will enable principals and supervisors, and subsequently teachers, to act autonomously while demonstrating agency in a culture of collaboration and leadership (Johnson & Donaldson, 2007).

Vision 2030 in Saudi Arabia aims to align the education sector towards specific goals. However, a definitive vision and agreement on the desirable level of teacher empowerment are still lacking, which is crucial for overhauling the school learning environment and teaching quality ((Saudi Vision 2030, 2016; OECD, 2020). The Ministry of Education's top-down approaches hinder the full implementation of Vision 2030, affecting effective appraisal, recruitment, and assessments for headteachers, supervisors, and teachers (Alazzam & Mohammad, 2022)

Fullan and Quinn (2016) stress the importance of coherence in policy and practice to drive systemic improvement. Effective educational policies should facilitate a clear demarcation of labour concerning teacher leadership roles. Bolman and Deal (2002) argue that specialization and division of labour enhance organizational efficiency. Establishing teacher leadership practices in school reforms requires specified roles (Galland, 2008). Bolman and Deal (2002) also assert that an organization's performance relates to the clarity of relationships and roles and the degree of coordination. Without clear expectations, uncertainty and role confusion

prevail. Clear definitions of teacher leadership roles ensure accountability and provide the freedom necessary for effective action.

Policies are expected to promote teacher engagement, professional capital, and practice by minimizing top-down assessments and isolated school structures (Muijs & Harris, 2006). Respecting teachers' professionalism is crucial for accurate assessments of their learning, engagement, and practice. Failure to do so could disengage teachers and increase turnover rates for leadership positions (Glab, 2018). Often, teachers lack input in assessment methods, perceiving imposed structures as disregarding their professional engagement, which influences leadership roles beyond the classroom. Consequently, the scope for professional engagement and practice is constrained (Shah, 2014).

Kraft, Marinell, and Yee (2016) argue that supportive work environments, which offer opportunities for professional development and participation in decision-making, are crucial for both retaining teachers and enhancing leadership skills. Policies need to be created to establish a collaborative environment in which teachers are appreciated and empowered to actively participate in school improvement initiatives.

Teacher leadership is substantially influenced by the contextual nature of school systems within the overarching socio-political environment. The roles of teacher leaders are shaped by factors such as policies on education, the expectations of the community, and the availability and access to resources (Heredia et al. 2024). Teacher leaders, as defined by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009), sometimes play the role of communicating ideas and strategies from the system level in schools and vice versa. Yet, how far the facilitation and diffusion of such strategic advice can be realistically accomplished is determined by the political and institutional environment that favours or constrains such collaboration.

In the case of community involvement, teacher leaders' involvement in programmes may include literacy programmes, health programmes and after-school activities. According to Wang et al. (2022), teacher leaders are social agents who work between different schools to facilitate the spread of successful strategies for teaching students to increase learning achievement. Despite the formation of community-based projects by teacher leaders, the implementation process depends on local government policies and support.

Parents' and communities' participation in education, which is commonly initiated by teacher leaders, may depend on socio-political factors. Epstein (2011) discusses the role of families and communities in enhancing student performance, but teacher leaders' ability to facilitate

such relations is determined by regulations that support or discourage parental participation. Chaaban et al. (2022) also highlight that teacher leaders are under the local and national regulations and standards of education systems, potentially diminishing their organization of events, workshops, and other initiatives that may promote parental engagement.

Teacher leaders equally have a critical part to play in social capital which Putnam (2000) describes as the relations, reciprocity, and reliance among the members of a society that enable collective action for communal good. Many of the cases can only speak and fight for policies necessary for the distribution of equitable education because of the prevailing political systems and the preparedness of politics to embrace change. In this regard, Palmer et al., 2022, highlight the functions of teacher leaders as community enablers since community involvement may enhance impact on student accomplishment and well-being.

Overall, teacher leadership occupies a very significant place in the socio-political strand of education. Teacher leaders' capacity to foster change, and collaboration and to enhance learners' learning outcomes is constrained or enhanced by environmental conditions, practices, and resources available for use. To create the climate for teacher leadership to flourish, these socio-political realities must be addressed in training and policies that empower these teacher leaders with the skills and mandate necessary to manage them.

Middle East and North African (MENA) Research

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region is a distinctive locus for research because of its special socio-cultural, educational, and political contexts and because of a shared history and language. Teacher leadership practices have been greatly altered by recent governance changes, social movements, and educational reforms in this region. The cultural and linguistic shared identity between MENA countries makes research and literature from this region especially significant for a study of teacher leadership in Saudi Arabia.

Teacher leadership has become one of the key concepts in the educational systems of countries in the MENA region, consistent with global towards strengthening the teachers' role in shaping educational practices. While these regions are undergoing large-scale changes in educational systems, the role of teachers as leaders is receiving increased attention. Research on teacher leadership has developed in Qatar, Oman, Egypt, and Morocco (Hammad et al. 2023; Khoudri, 2024; Chaaban, & Sawalhi, 2021).

Research on teacher leadership finds interconnected themes in Qatar, such as leadership in times of crisis, early career development, mentorship, and systemic challenges. Together these studies emphasize that teacher leadership is shaped by situational, developmental, and policy factors.

Chaaban et al. (2021), and Sawalhi and Chaaban (2023), focus on how teacher leadership was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Chaaban et al. (2021) describe how teachers and principals assumed new leadership roles in supporting professional learning, during this unprecedented time. Sawalhi and Chaaban (2023) add that teachers developed critical skills in adaptability, communication, and IT, which provided them with leadership opportunities.

Teacher leadership is linked to early career development in studies reported by Chaaban and Sawalhi (2020), and Sawalhi and Chaaban (2022), who explain how novice teachers take up leadership responsibilities. The analysis of novice teachers' growth as leaders showed that the quality of university preparation, and the ability to support students' welfare, have a significant impact on how early professional experience influences novice teachers' professional development as leaders. The findings from this research underscore the value of strategic support for new teachers so that they can establish themselves as leaders as their careers evolve.

Studies by Sawalhi and Chaaban (2021), and Shah and Eusafzai (2024), also trace the role of professional collaboration and mentorship. According to Sawalhi and Chaaban (2021), experienced mentor teachers, with their great knowledge and expertise, reported higher self-defined leadership competence which suggests the inherent role played by mentorship in developing leadership qualities in novice teachers. The TESOL teachers were successful in growing their leadership through professional collaboration and development opportunities as also highlighted by Shah and Eusafzai (2024). These two authors added, however, that these teachers found challenges because of their minimal authority and restricted decision-making, which limited their ability to lead effectively. The findings of this research suggest that mentorship and opportunities for collaborative work are key to developing teacher leadership, but that it is only when teachers are also afforded greater autonomy that they can be fully empowered.

These studies also point to systemic challenges that influence teacher leadership. According to Chaaban et al. (2021), high workloads, accountability measures and lack of administrative support were barriers to teacher leadership during the pandemic. Shah and Eusafzai (2024),

found that TESOL teachers suffered from restrictions in their decision-making roles coupled with a lack of professional authority. Taken together, these findings indicate that changes to policy are needed to establish a more supportive environment for teacher leadership and support the ability of teachers to lead effectively and sustainably.

Other MENA research

In Morocco, Khoudri (2024) focused on how different leadership styles affect student motivation and academic outcomes among students and how teacher leadership behaviours affect students' attitudes and performance. In this study with 141 secondary school students, the author found that transformational and transactional teacher leadership styles lead to the greatest increase in student motivation. Particularly influential in helping to enhance student achievement were transformational teacher leadership, which inspires and motivates with vision and personal example, and transactional teacher leadership, which focuses on rewards and discipline. Adapting teacher leadership styles to address the needs of their students can make a large difference in the motivation and academic success of these students (Khoudri, 2024). The findings reinforce the need for educational leadership to be flexible and responsive.

Hammad et al. (2023, 2024) emphasize the importance of teacher leadership in promoting teacher efficacy and commitment in diverse educational contexts in the Middle East and North Africa. In their 2023 comparative study of Qatar, Oman and Egypt, teacher leadership as a facilitator of collective efficacy is stressed. The results reveal that Qatari teachers are more involved in leadership behaviours, such as sharing expertise and principal selection, than their Egyptian and Omani colleagues. This shows that cultural and political landscapes heavily influence the possibilities of teachers' leadership, while Qatari pedagogical structures offer greater empowerment for active leadership development. The 2024 study, based on 497 teachers in Egypt, also shows that teacher-leader participation moderates the relationship between collective efficacy and teacher commitment so that, when teachers assume leadership roles, they are more likely to develop a shared belief in their ability to improve student outcomes. Together, the two studies demonstrate that teacher leadership boosts teacher collective efficacy and commitment, while also signalling the need for local policies to recognize and foster teacher leadership socialization in the context of each country's cultural and institutional settings.

Collectively, research on teacher leadership in the MENA region offers insights into various ways of improving the efficacy of educators and securing better student results. For example,

Hammad et al (2023) show shows that teachers in Qatar are more likely than those in Oman to participate in leadership activities, such as sharing expertise. The Morocco study (Khoudri, 2024) emphasizes the importance of teacher leadership in motivating students and helping them to succeed academically. However, research on teacher leadership in MENA settings is limited, showing the need for more empirical studies.

Research in Saudi Arabia

The Saudi Arabian educational system is characterized by a highly centralized structure where principals and supervisors hold significant authority over school operations. Supervisors are responsible for monitoring, guiding, and assessing various school activities and staff, reinforcing the top-down approach (Shah, 2020; Alazzam& Mohammad, 2022; Kamel, 1983; Alnasser, 2023). This system does not traditionally recognize informal leaders, focusing instead on formal leadership roles.

Research on the concept of teacher leadership in Saudi Arabia is in its infancy. In a series of studies (2016, 2019, 2020), Shah investigated teacher leadership in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, specifically at the English Language Institute (ELI) and other Saudi higher education institutes. All these studies identify some common themes and challenges faced by EFL teacher leaders. Shah's research suggests that, while teacher leadership is developing at ELI, and in higher education more generally, teacher leaders' function within hierarchical structures that curtail their autonomy and ability to work effectively. In EFL settings, teachers take on a variety of instructional and operational roles that are aligned with historical models of teacher leadership from the US. Located at the middle management level, EFL teacher leaders are fundamental to encouraging our colleagues to work in collaborative practice.

As a result of the studies, lacking decision-making power is a common challenge faced by all three EFL teacher leaders; heavy administrative workloads, weak organizational support and no follow-through in professional development are also identified as potential problems. However, they prevent their full leadership and hamper their professional growth. Despite this, teacher leaders remain dare to personal and professional development to grow their leadership abilities.

These challenges notwithstanding, Shah's studies show that EFL teachers are adaptable and utilize shared leadership as they attempt to use these challenges. In addition to easing workload and lack of autonomy problems, these practices also lead to school effectiveness. As there are

only a few studies on teacher leadership in Saudi Arabian schools, much of the available research focuses on EFL.

Alnasser (2022) offers a clear understanding of the perceptions held by Saudi special education teachers regarding teacher leadership within elementary and middle schools. The researcher conducted interviews with 14 special education teachers and found several factors that hinder these educators from attaining leadership positions. The participant's knowledge of teacher leadership was limited, and this could explain their lack of willingness to participate in leadership processes. Other reported challenges included resistance to embracing leadership positions, poor rewards and incentives, and an unhealthy school climate. These findings highlight the need to design and implement robust leadership development programmes that not only explain what teacher leadership is but also nurture teachers to assume leadership roles (Alnasser 2022).

Alsalahi's (2014, 2015, 2016) doctoral research addresses teacher leadership, professional identity, and systemic issues in the Saudi Arabian educational framework. The first study, published in 2014, examines the barriers that teachers resist in assuming the role of leadership. School culture and top-down policies, according to Alsalahi, are critical factors that work to limit the capacity of teachers to lead because they inhibit them from being courageous and do not allow their full participation and support. The systemic challenges disempower the educators, thereby undermining their potential as true professionals. Insights from this study point to the need to address cultural and policy hurdles to allow teachers to lead (Alsalahi, 2014).

Alsalahi (2015) studies the professionalism of Saudi English teachers by focusing on how different policies and supervisory practices influence their professional standing. The teachers' resilience under challenging circumstances is evidenced by their retained professional identity, though characterised by certain challenges. This finding underscores the productive role teacher leadership can play in fostering professionalism and identity in such a restrictive environment (Alsalahi, 2015).

Alsalahi (2016) takes an exploratory look at alternate roles teachers can play beyond that which you would expect from any other teacher. Through focus groups, semi-structured interviews, and reflective essays conducted with nine teacher leaders, Alsalahi discovered great enthusiasm for teacher leadership among educators. While enthusiastic, there were concerns about inadequate preparation and support. The lack of support demonstrates the pressing importance

of a 'professional teacher leadership' model that will best facilitate teachers to become more autonomous in accomplishing their work and develop as professionals (Alsalahi, 2016).

Hammad's (2016) study explored how principals in the secondary schools of Al-Ahsa Governorate support teachers' professional development within the framework of teacher leadership. This study employed a cross-sectional survey design and targeted male teachers (265) and principals (38) in boys' secondary schools. The study established that principals were important agents of professional development, particularly in school administration and collaboration. However, while most principals had positive perceptions of professional development, the teachers had mixed attitudes towards it. The author advises the development of a mutual understanding of leadership between teachers and school principals. Teacher leadership is good practice if teachers are given the mandate to practice leadership tasks and engage in school change processes. However, to foster teacher leaders, principals should extend beyond typical leadership responsibilities by providing additional opportunities for teachers' participation in decision-making and professional learning communities. When the expectations between both parties are brought closer, it helps to foster a more positive school climate in professional development and the shared leadership model, which is the basis of teacher leadership (Hammad, 2016).

The literature review on the practice of teacher leaders in Saudi Arabia revealed that the country is governed by a centralised MoE. In this model, the decision-making process is mostly centralized at the ministry level and teachers are mostly reduced to the position of implementers. This can produce barriers to the creation of meaningful partnerships that are necessary for the long-term advancement of educational improvement, or reform, which is critical in contemporary society (Shah, 2020). Therefore, the educators' self-organizational and career enhancement processes are being constrained, while their contributions to practical educational practices are marginalized.

The study reveals one strong thread of understanding that emerged from the literature: that of the principal/supervisors occupying an immensely central position in the leadership process in education. It is still the case that these leaders are known as change agents, though the existing body of knowledge draws attention to an absence of knowledge concerning how these leadership perspectives affect teacher leadership. Yet, these research findings indicate that supervisors and administrators play a crucial role in espousing particular educational practices and in ensuring necessary support and resources for teachers, yet empirical research related to

the Saudi context has paid relatively scant attention to their viewpoints. This is rather worrying given the fact that their inputs could otherwise complement the shared leadership approaches required to effectively engage teachers in process decisions (Alkrdem, 2011; Hammad et al., 2023; Alsalahi, 2016).

Moreover, nearly all of the current research work has been limited to teacher perceptions of leadership, with limited space for other key stakeholders. For example, although some research has integrated the perceptions of principals, little research has focused on the perceptions of supervisors which are valuable for a better understanding of teacher leadership processes (Hammad 2016; Sawalhi & Chaaban 2023; Chaaban et al., 2022). Such a restricted scope does not allow having a broad discussion about the factors that either enhance or hinder teacher leadership because educational leadership often requires dealing with multiple factors which can be viewed from many different perspectives.

To fill these gaps, this research seeks to undertake a comprehensive examination of teacher leadership in Riyadh while including the views of supervisors, principals, and teachers. Applying an integrated qualitative research approach that entails the administration of interviews, focus group discussions, reflective journals, observation, and document reviews the study aims at presenting additional insights of the different stakeholders and how they understand and embrace teacher leadership. Besides, the approach used in this study not only focuses on adding the speciality but also enables us to look for similar patterns, different viewpoints, and new themes of the existing research.

The existing studies of teacher leadership in Saudi Arabia leave some gaps, to be addressed in the author's research. For example, data have been collected primarily from teachers, excluding the views of supervisors and principals. Previous research also does not provide insights into teacher leadership in Riyadh, the national capital. The author's study aims to address these gaps, thus enhancing and broadening the understanding of teacher leadership in Saudi Arabia.

Overview

This literature review offers an extensive discussion of the concept of teacher leadership and its evolution and implementation, notably within Saudi Arabia and the wider Mena region. It analyses the literature on teacher leadership theory and linked concepts such as distributed leadership. Communities of practice, and professional learning communities. Through examining these models, the review sheds light on how teacher leadership is defined and enacted. It also discusses how cultural, social, and systemic factors impact teacher leadership

and provides insights into the challenges of enacting leadership practices in this environment. However, some important research gaps remain. For example, most of the limited research focuses on teacher views, neglecting supervisors', and principals' attitudes. There is also very little research on teacher leadership in the major city of Riyadh. The author's research addresses these gaps by providing insights into teacher leadership in Riyadh, through exploring the views of supervisors, principals, and teachers.

The next chapter discusses the methodology and methods adopted to conduct the research.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the methodology and methods utilised to conduct this research on teacher leadership in Saudi Arabia, based on the interpretive paradigm and using a qualitative approach. First, it provides a brief review of the theoretical and methodological considerations that informed the selection of the research methods. Second, the data collection techniques and sampling procedures are presented. The chapter reports on the data analysis and provides a discussion of validity and triangulation. The chapter also explains the ethical issues underpinning the research.

Research Questions

The study is underpinned by the following research questions:

RQ 1. What perceptions do supervisors in Riyadh, and principals and teachers in selected Riyadh schools, have of teacher leaders and teacher leadership?

RQ 2. How is teacher leadership promoted or supported in Riyadh's schools?

RQ3. How does the professional development of teachers relate to teacher leadership in selected Riyadh schools?

RQ 4. What are the perspectives of supervisors, principals, and teacher leaders in Riyadh about whether and how teachers are empowered to be teacher leaders?

Research Paradigm

This study adopts an interpretive approach, which posits that 'reality' is subjective, as seen by participants. This perspective contrasts with post-positivism, which acknowledges that reality exists but is imperfectly understood, shaped by multiple perspectives, and influenced by the researcher's assumptions and biases. The interpretive basis of this study is considered more suitable because participants were invited to discuss their experiences and perceptions of teacher leadership in a social setting. By engaging with participants personally, this approach captures the nuanced and diverse experiences that shape the understanding of teacher leadership (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Educational research involves systematic investigations to provide detailed insights into various factors that can be interpreted through different philosophical paradigms and arguments (Pring, 2000; Bryman, 2012). Paradigms are theoretical frameworks that guide the methods adopted and the approach to data collection, analysis, and discussion (Grix, 2010; Creswell,

2014). This chapter organizes methodological arguments around four main elements: ontology (understanding the topic of teacher leadership), epistemology (developing knowledge of teacher leadership), axiology (values), and methodology (including the choice of method) (Cohen et al., 2013). These elements are crucial for grounding the study in a coherent and philosophically sound framework that supports the interpretive approach.

Post-positivism can be seen as a departure from the fixed values associated with the positivist approaches. Post-positivism challenges the beliefs of the positivist approach which views the world as linear and observable by scientific research. This, in some way, validates the existence of truth, though real life is multifaceted, contextually influenced and shaped by researcher bias (Pring, 2000). As Wood and Smith (2016, p. 57) note, "Positivism as a worldview is now almost non-existent and has generally been superseded by the post-positivist worldview.". The most radical practitioner post-positivists claim that knowledge is provisional, knowledge is subject to change. This paradigm maintains a focus on stringent empirical research yet without losing consideration for the shortcomings of objectivity, measurement, and generalities.

Most post-positivist research often combines quantitative and qualitative methods using triangulation to enhance findings on the question of validity (Punch, 2013). The approach avails critical reflection upon the research process, realizing that any researcher will bring into the investigation his own biases, assumptions, and values. Post-positivists accept that observations are always theory-laden, and perfect detachment from the object of the research is unimaginable (Cohen et al., 2013). Therefore, a positivist paradigm is not suitable for this research as it does not align with the research aims or questions.

The current study is based on the interpretivist paradigm, which views knowledge as something personally experienced, with reality interpreted and understood by those living in society, specifically teachers, principals, and supervisors (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This paradigm is grounded in a relativist ontological position, assuming reality is based on experiences and social engagement. Epistemologically, it follows subjective principles where meaning is constructed through these experiences (Cohen et al., 2013). This approach allows for a rich, detailed understanding of the participants' perspectives, acknowledging the complexity and variability of human experiences.

This means that the social reality of teacher leadership is based on what participants experience and it gives significance to relativist social ontology. This viewpoint interprets reality as being socially constructed and that the views of each participant add to a fuller picture of the

phenomenon (Bryman, 2016; Cohen et al. 2013). The interpretation of phenomena relates to very specific sensory, cultural, and social contexts which results in multi-layered impressions (Schwandt, 2000). From an epistemological perspective, the researcher interacts with participants to experience their views of teacher leadership in their settings. Participants talk about their stories, which are then listened to, interpreted and reflected on so that the findings reflect participants' lived experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). The interpretive paradigm enables a stronger exploration of participant experiences and their meanings and social context concerning teacher leadership. For these reasons, the present study utilized an interpretivism paradigm.

Methodology

This study focuses on teacher leadership in Riyadh, investigating how teachers, supervisors, and principals perceived and experienced this phenomenon. The aim was to understand how teacher leadership impacted professional practice. A review of the literature revealed no consensus on the definition of teacher leadership, indicating that its perceived reality varied according to individual experiences and opinions (Wenner & Campbell, 2017; Nguyen, Harris, & Ng, 2020). Teacher leadership is multifaceted and relational, involving interactions among teachers, supervisors, and principals within a school context, which itself is part of a broader environment (Smylie & Eckert, 2018). Different scenarios of teacher leadership could occur within a school, depending on the actors involved and other contextual factors (York-Barr & Duke, 2004).

To capture the complexity of teacher leadership, the study adopted a qualitative case study methodology. This approach was justified as it allowed for examining context, programmes, and individuals within the particular 'case' to provide valuable insights (Bush, 2002). According to Yin (2012), a case study provides insights into how a select number of people function in real-world settings. This approach is beneficial because it offers a sound grasp of ideas grounded in context rather than relying solely on out-of-context principles or theories. Each educational context is unique, and case studies illuminate the reality of complex interactions between humans and other factors (Cohen et al., 2011). The insights gained from supervisors, as well as case study participants, enriched the understanding of the phenomenon.

Within the broader study of teacher leadership in Riyadh, the research included two case studies: the "Gold" and "Silver" schools. These schools were selected via the annual evaluation conducted annually by the Ministry of Education. Purposive sampling was used to identify

different levels of schools based on which teacher leadership practices were implemented. Purposive sampling involves the selection of participants based on characteristics relevant to the study. It is commonly used in qualitative studies to gather in-depth views from targeted groups with specific experiences or knowledge (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). The assumption is that participation may capture the widest range of perceptions about teacher leadership.

The researcher had a meeting with the main supervision office representative in Riyadh, where the records of yearly assessments of all schools within this office could be reviewed, reporting annual evaluation results. With this collaboration, it was possible to pinpoint successful and less successful schools, in terms of their perceived leadership practices. The criteria that defined the selection of these schools included their score on the evaluation criteria; to secure maximum variation in terms of teacher leadership practices. This case study approach allowed for a comparative analysis of teacher leadership in schools with differing levels of success (Thomas, 2010).

The case studies of the Gold and Silver schools provided a rich, comparative perspective on teacher leadership within the Riyadh educational context. By examining schools with different levels of success, the research identified commonalities and differences in participants' perceptions, practices, and factors associated with teacher empowerment and professional development (Cohen et al., 2011). An exploratory case study approach was chosen to seek participants' views on teacher leadership and the factors affecting teacher empowerment and professional development in the selected schools.

It is especially important to use case studies in educational research as they facilitate depicting various social aggregates in their natural contexts (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This method is beneficial in capturing interpersonal relationships between teachers, supervisors, and principals (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Thomas (2010) argues that social scientific endeavours involving case analysis aim to acquire knowledge through relatability rather than generalizations. However, some researchers identify several disadvantages associated with case studies, including limited generalizability, difficulty in cross-checking conclusions, and potential bias (Gustafsson, 2017). Although case studies are somewhat limited in securing generalizability, this project offsets this weakness by prioritizing detail over scope. By conducting a comprehensive analysis of the chosen cases, the study provides useful lessons for educators and policymakers in comparable settings.

Data Collection

This exploratory case study adopts five methods for collecting qualitative data: observations, interviews, focus groups, reflective essays, and documentary analysis. This section describes these five data collection methods, how they were used, and the benefits of each method for studying teacher leadership in Riyadh.

Semi-structured interview

Interviews are one of the most common qualitative research approaches, as they allow participants to express their thoughts in detail and elaborate on their feelings and experiences. As Robson (2002) notes, one of the advantages of conducting individual interviews is that participants can provide independent and personal perspectives. This aligns with Kvale and Brinkmann's (2009) comment that interviews encourage openness and receptiveness, enabling participants to explore topics in greater depth.

Robson (2002) identified three distinct types of interviews. Structured interviews follow a highly standardized format with pre-determined questions (Bryman, 2016). Unstructured interviews, on the other hand, do not have a fixed set of questions and may lead to unexpected insights. However, they can make categorization and comparison of responses more difficult compared to structured techniques (Fontana & Frey, 2005).

Given the nature of the research questions, which required a balance between structure and flexibility, the most appropriate approach for this study was semi-structured interviews. This approach allows for a certain degree of structure while also offering more flexibility than structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews follow a broadly consistent series of questions, but participants are encouraged to elaborate on their responses and explore topics in greater depth as the conversation unfolds (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). This method enables personalized participation, ensuring that key topics are covered while allowing room for spontaneous discussion. It also facilitates follow-up questions and prompts, ensuring that emerging themes and insights are explored as they arise.

For this research, semi-structured interviews were conducted with supervisors, principals, and administrators. Each participant was interviewed separately to ensure an in-depth exploration of their unique perspectives. The interviews took place in quiet, neutral settings to enhance participant comfort and openness. All interviews were audio-recorded (with consent) to ensure accuracy in transcription and analysis. The use of semi-structured individual interviews allowed participants to express themselves freely and provide detailed, well-articulated

responses. Additionally, individual interviews helped reduce social pressure, enabling participants to discuss their experiences more openly (Robson, 2002).

A total of thirteen semi-structured interviews were conducted (see interview protocol in appendices C and D). This included five interviews with supervisors at the supervision office, and four interviews each with principals and administrators from different schools. The duration of each interview ranged between 60 and 90 minutes, ensuring that participants had sufficient time to share their views comprehensively.

The adoption of semi-structured interviews significantly enriched the study by allowing for in-depth discussions while maintaining a structured approach to data collection. This method facilitated a nuanced exploration of teacher leadership by capturing diverse perspectives from supervisors, principals, and administrators. The flexibility of the interviews allowed the researcher to probe deeper into unexpected themes, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of leadership practices in Riyadh high schools. Furthermore, the audio recordings and detailed transcriptions ensured that participant responses were accurately analysed and interpreted, strengthening the reliability of the findings. The interview guides may be found in Appendix C.

Observations

The role of the observer in research involves engaging with the ongoing "reflexive rationalization of conduct," focusing on how participants continuously interpret and integrate new knowledge within their social context (May 2011, p. 173). This definition highlights the value of the observation process (Yin, 2012). In this study, the researcher employed both semi-structured and informal observations to explore teacher leadership in Riyadh high schools.

Observations may vary in their structure and level of formality, with each type offering specific advantages. Structured observations systematically record specific behaviours or events using predefined categories or checklists. While this method provides consistent data across settings, it can be too rigid to capture deeper insights. In contrast, a flexible observation guide outlines key topics or questions that can prompt new insights during the observation process, enabling the discovery of unanticipated findings while ensuring that essential areas are covered (Cohen et al., 2013; Flick, 2009).

Unstructured observations, which lack predefined categories, allow for the recording of all relevant phenomena, including behaviours, interactions, and contextual factors (Bryman, 2012;

Robson, 2002). This approach enables the researcher to shift focus dynamically as significant events emerge, leading to richer, more detailed data.

In this study, the researcher adopted informal observations in a highly flexible and spontaneous manner, without predefined protocols. This allowed for immersion in the school setting and facilitated a deeper understanding of the real-life interactions and behaviours of teacher leaders and principals (Bryman, 2012; Cohen et al., 2013). The observations took place over two months in both schools, focusing on two teacher leaders and one principal per school. The researcher accompanied them during their daily routines, including classroom observations, meetings, supervisory activities, and other professional interactions. Each observation session lasted between 30 minutes to one hour, depending on the activity. .

The selection of the teacher leaders for observation was based on their active engagement in leadership roles and supervisory responsibilities. However, due to time constraints and limited access to certain individuals, only three participants per school were observed. To ensure comprehensive data collection, these observations were supplemented with other research methods.

The researcher also took detailed field notes to document participants' communications, actions, and interactions, capturing critical aspects of teacher leadership in practice. This approach not only provided rich contextual insights into the dynamics of teacher leadership but also allowed for an understanding of the real-life challenges and successes experienced by teacher leaders in these Riyadh high schools.

The use of informal observations enhanced the depth and authenticity of the research findings by enabling the researcher to witness firsthand how teacher leadership unfolded in real-world settings. This method allowed for the identification of patterns and emerging themes that might have been overlooked in more structured approaches. Additionally, it provided valuable insights into the social and organizational context of schools, teacher leaders' roles, and their professional development. By integrating firsthand observational data with other research methods, the study achieved a holistic understanding of teacher leadership in Riyadh high schools.

Focus groups

A focus group is a structured discussion involving individuals who share a common characteristic or interest. The moderator facilitates the conversation to gather in-depth insights from participants on a particular topic (Williams & Katz, 2001). Focus groups are particularly

valuable as they create a welcoming environment, encouraging participants to express their opinions, thoughts, and experiences openly (Kruger & Casey, 2009). This dynamic foster an interactive exchange of ideas, allowing for a deeper understanding of the participants' perspectives and capturing nuanced professional insights (Williams & Katz, 2001). Given these advantages, focus groups align well with the exploratory nature of this study and support the research aims (Bryman, 2012).

One of the notable advantages of using focus groups is the opportunity for interaction, which allows participants to discuss, agree, and disagree, leading to cumulative understanding and validation of key findings. Kleiber (2004) emphasized that the richness of focus group data emerges from participants' ability to explain their feelings in depth. Unlike surveys or individual interviews, focus groups enable the researcher to observe group dynamics and listen to evolving discussions, providing insights into themes that might not have been evident in isolated interviews (Kleiber, 2004).

The literature highlights the role of shared beliefs in teacher leadership, suggesting that collaboration supports shared educational goals (Muijs & Harris, 2007). Since teachers often work together to solve challenges (Alsalahi, 2016), focus groups serve as a valuable method for capturing collective opinions on teacher leadership. For this study, two focus groups were conducted, one in each of the selected schools (Gold and Silver). Each focus group comprised five teacher leaders, totalling ten participants. Before the discussions, participants were fully briefed on the purpose of the study and the ethical considerations involved. The focus group discussions explored teacher leadership practices, the factors that facilitated or hindered leadership, and the elements influencing their professional development.

The focus groups were held in a school classroom at a convenient time for participants, ensuring a comfortable setting conducive to open discussion. Each session lasted approximately 60 to 90 minutes, providing sufficient time for participants to express their views in detail. The group discussion format influenced the depth of participant responses and their willingness to share information (Kleiber, 2004). While this approach encouraged participants to be open, there was also the potential for group dynamics to either enhance or inhibit discussion.

To mitigate the risk of dominant voices overshadowing quieter participants, the researcher, acting as the moderator, played a crucial role in ensuring balanced participation. The moderator

encouraged quieter participants to share their insights, while also managing more dominant voices to maintain an inclusive and productive discussion.

The researcher adopted a focus group discussion protocol to maintain coherence while allowing flexibility to explore emerging themes, ensuring that discussions remained structured yet open to new insights. The topics explored included general perceptions of teacher leadership, challenges faced by teacher leaders, conditions that support or restrain leadership, and professional development opportunities and barriers. These discussions provided a platform for participants to share their experiences, highlighting how teacher leadership is enacted, the challenges encountered, and the factors influencing professional learning. The interactive nature of the focus groups allowed for deeper engagement, fostering a collaborative environment where participants could build on each other's ideas, leading to richer and more nuanced insights that might not have emerged in individual interviews. By facilitating open dialogue, the focus groups generated valuable data that contributed to a more comprehensive understanding of teacher leadership in Riyadh high schools. The structured approach of the focus group protocol (see appendices A and B) ensured that conversations remained focused and insightful, ultimately strengthening the depth and reliability of the study's findings.

Reflective essays

Reflective essays are commonly used in qualitative research as a method for participants to write narrative reflections on topics most relevant to the study (Jasper, 2005). In this research, teacher leadership served as a lens to analyse critical incidents and significant moments that contributed to meaningful changes in professional practice. While such incidents can sometimes be dramatic, they are often ordinary events that gain importance through reflective analysis (Tripp, 2011). By employing critical incident reflection narratives, the study explored teachers' reflections on these pivotal moments, providing deep insights into their leadership experiences and professional development within case study schools.

To implement this method, two teacher leaders from each school were invited to write reflective essays about a specific event that had significantly impacted their role as leaders. The essays were submitted via email in the participants' preferred language to allow for greater individual expression and introspection (Smith, 1999) (see the reflective essay protocol in Appendix H). This approach ensured that teachers could convey their experiences in a way that felt most natural and reflective of their thoughts. Farrell (2013) highlights the benefits of reflective journaling, emphasizing that it gives teachers time to critically reflect on their practice and

articulate their thoughts more clearly. In this study, teacher leaders who were not part of the focus groups were specifically invited to prepare reflective essays, allowing for the identification of different perspectives beyond the more spontaneous responses gathered from focus groups and interviews.

Including reflective essays in the research design enriched the study by capturing personal experiences, emotions, and thought processes that might have been overlooked in group discussions. This method provided participants with a deliberate platform to express their perspectives, thereby empowering them to share their insights on teacher leadership more fully. The integration of reflective writing into the research methodology contributed to a more comprehensive understanding of teacher leadership practices in Saudi schools, ensuring that both structured discussions and deeply personal reflections were considered in the analysis (Jasper, 2005).

Documentary analysis

Documentary analysis is a qualitative research method that involves examining and interpreting documents to gain insights and a deeper understanding of the subject matter being studied. According to Fitzgerald (2012), this method provides a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents—both printed and electronic materials. The analysis of documents includes coding content into themes, following a process similar to how focus groups or interview transcripts are analysed.

Documentary analysis was instrumental in this study, particularly in examining official documents from the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia and from the two case study schools, Gold and Silver. These documents included job descriptions, school policies, and strategic planning documents, which provided crucial insights into how teacher leadership was structured and supported within each school. For instance, job descriptions detailed the formal expectations of teacher leaders, while archival records highlighted how leadership responsibilities were distributed among staff members. Additionally, policy documents and mission statements helped to assess how teacher leadership aligned with broader educational goals and school improvement strategies (see Appendix I).

An example of how documentary data was used in this study involved analysing school policy documents to assess the extent to which teacher leadership was embedded within school structures. The researcher reviewed professional development policies to understand how schools supported teacher leaders in their roles. For instance, professional learning records and

meeting minutes provided evidence of how leadership training and mentoring programmes were implemented. This analysis contributed to the study by identifying the alignment (or misalignment) between policy expectations and actual teacher leadership practices.

Additionally, the documentary analysis helped identify teacher roles and responsibilities, including how leadership was formally assigned and how teacher roles evolved. It also highlighted gaps in training opportunities, revealing areas where teacher leaders required further support. Through the analysis of teaching strategies and leadership styles mentioned in policy documents and professional development plans, the study explored how different leadership approaches were applied in practice. Furthermore, reviewing documents provided insights into the challenges and opportunities teachers faced in their leadership roles, helping to highlight how teachers collaborated with others in their schools.

One of the key contributions of documentary analysis is its ability to corroborate findings from interviews and focus groups, thereby enhancing the study's reliability through triangulation. By comparing teachers' accounts with documented policies and practices, the research was able to validate claims regarding the support structures available for teacher leaders. Furthermore, as documents provide a permanent record, they allowed the researcher to track historical changes in teacher leadership roles over time, offering a more comprehensive perspective on leadership evolution within the schools. This non-intrusive method was particularly useful in gathering objective data without the risk of participant bias, reinforcing the study's validity and depth (Fitzgerald, 2012).

Sampling

Sampling specifies a smaller number of individuals or cases from a larger group. Sampling approaches include probability sampling, which gives statistical representation, and non-probability sampling common in qualitative studies, whereby targeted participants are selected. The sampling approach is influenced by the study's purpose design and constraints, as well as the ability to gather useful information (Bryman, 2012; Cohen et al., 2013; Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia, is governed by several directorate supervision offices. The primary directorate supervision office was closely involved in identifying two case study schools by selecting those in the top and bottom 10% for leadership practices, as determined by annual evaluation criteria stipulated by the main central office for supervision. These criteria can be grouped under instructional leadership/management, collaboration, professional

practice, contribution towards one's professional development, students' learning and achievements, programme improvement, innovation, community, external engagement, and overall leadership effectiveness. This study was carried out in the Riyadh Educational Directorate, the largest directorate in Saudi Arabia. The researcher has been teaching and researching in this directorate since 2009, and this created an understanding of the area and this directorate since the capital city is culturally diverse. The directorate is composed of students from several regions across Saudi Arabia as well as non-Saudi students originating from more than one cultural background.

Purposive sampling was adopted in this study. It is one of the common non-probability techniques that is widely applied in qualitative research. Purposive sampling means that participants are recruited who are well-placed to provide knowledge of the phenomenon under review (Cohen et al 2013 and Silverman 2013). This approach ensures that participants with requisite skills or roles are included, thus adding more substance to the data that are obtained (Patton, 2015).

The Gold and Silver schools were chosen because they were deemed to have very different leadership practices according to evaluations by the Riyadh Educational Directorate. In this study, selecting schools perceived to practice leadership in a starkly different way facilitated a comparative approach to aspects of teacher leadership practice. This approach is consistent with maximum variation sampling (Yin, 2012).

The selection of participants was based on their positions and their relevance to teacher leadership. The school-level key participants for interviews were one principal, two deputy heads and a student advisor in every school. These roles were chosen to provide deep insights and perspectives (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018) on teacher leadership, providing valuable perceptions on policy and decision-making.

Seven teacher leaders at each school were selected because they were actively involved in leadership roles such as peer observation and lesson demonstration. The participants in this study were recruited by approaching all teacher leaders in the selected schools who met the study inclusion criteria and inviting them to take part. Five teacher leaders from each school participated in focus group discussions, offering useful insights for eliciting experiences and understandings of the topic (Krueger and Casey, 2009). The other two teacher leaders from each school participated in writing reflective essays.

To widen the organizational view, five head office supervisors were approached. These supervisors were purposively sampled since they were actively working with the teacher leaders of the selected schools. Including supervisors provided an external perspective on the leadership interactions within the schools, which helped to broaden the understanding of teacher leadership (Cohen et al., 2013). It was beneficial to have the supervisors' opinions in understanding how the district advocates and evaluates teacher leadership (Flick, 2009).

Demographic details, including participants' years of experience and professional backgrounds, were presented as ranges to ensure confidentiality and prevent the reidentification of individuals or specific schools. This approach helped maintain the anonymity of participants while still offering relevant context about their professional profiles. Additionally, all participants in this study were male, and this demographic characteristic was consistent across the entire participant group.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was employed to analyse the qualitative data collected from the participants. Thematic analysis is a popular method of analysis in qualitative research across a broad range of disciplines, including education, to categorise and explain regularities in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Given the study's focus on teacher leadership in Saudi Arabia, thematic analysis was deemed the most appropriate method because it enables the identification of commonalities, variations, and unexpected details (Nowell et al., 2017). This also provides a rigorous approach to examining participant views linked to the study's aims and research questions.

This was followed by data familiarization where the researcher engaged with the collected data to get an overall feel of the phenomenon (Bryman, 2012, p. 267). In this study, the interviews, and focus group sessions were documented through transcription of the data The initial process of transcription involved listening to the recording several times, to grasp the essence of the data as suggested by Roulston (2010). Notes and preliminary ideas for further analysis were taken during this stage, and the most important points were recorded for subsequent analysis.

The next step was participant coding. Within this phase, the data were categorically scrutinised, and sections of the data were annotated with summary codes (see Appendix J: an example of coding interviews with supervisors). Coding is an essential process in analysing qualitative

data because it means the data can be segmented into small parts that can be analysed further by the researcher (Saldana,2016).

After coding, the next method used by the researcher was to develop broader themes. This step focused on describing the connections between codes and arranging them in terms of the possible themes that portrayed important patterns within the collected data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). These themes should reflect ideas germane to the analysis of the research questions and describe important facets of the nature of participants' response patterns (Ibid).

Following this stage, the themes were checked for credibility and review to ensure that they depicted the results accurately (Nowell et al., 2017). In the process of review, it is common to return to the collected data to ensure the authenticity of the themes which might lead to merging, bifurcating, or deleting some of the themes to improve clarity (Gibbs, 2007). Member checking was used to enhance the validity of the study. Participants were asked to check the transcripts of their interviews.

The next phase was to define and label the themes that had been identified during the exploration phase. This step involved naming each theme, being cautious to ensure that the theme described what was gathered from the data and that it was connected to the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Defining the themes helps to avoid free-floating and scattered analysis and provides deeper insight into the participants' perspectives. All the themes were labelled, helping to give the thesis a cohesive view of the more encompassing analysis.

Finally, the analysis of the emergent themes was documented with a detailed description of each theme accompanied by quotations from the collected data. This facilitated discussion of the findings about the research questions and the body of knowledge, with an understanding of the repercussions of the study and, where applicable, the limitations.

Validity and Trustworthiness

This study adopts interpretive concepts of quality that are associated with qualitative research and are guided by how trustworthy it is. This contrasts with more positivist concepts of quality, such as reliability and objectivity, which are used to determine the worth of quantitative data (Bryman, 2012).

The process for ensuring the quality of data in the current research has several aspects, which can be categorised as dependability, credibility, transferability, relatability, and confirmability (Bryman, 2012; Given, 2008). Dependability and relatability concern how enquiries are

undertaken and the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that a logical, recorded, and repeatable process is applied (Schwandt, 2001). The current study ensures dependability by accurately describing the processes undertaken. Reflective essays, interviews, focus groups and observations were utilised to collect the necessary data, by employing triangulation and corroboration to enhance the credibility and validity of the findings (Attia & Edge, 2017)., with a six-phase analysis process, to achieve a solid grasp of the opinions and practices associated with teacher leadership.

Credibility concerns the choice of data sources as well as the methodology applied to ensure that the researcher accurately interprets the opinions of the participants (Given, 2008). When conducting qualitative research, the results may be obtained from a range of constructed realities and, therefore, the researcher must ensure that the opinions of the participants are accurately interpreted (Holliday, 2001). The current study adopted two policies to ensure that the data are credible. Firstly, a collaboration approach was applied to accurately record the opinions expressed (Holliday, 2001). The transcripts from the interviews were checked through collaboration with participants (member checking), to secure approval of what was recorded (Creswell & Miller, 2000). The second policy is that the researcher's experience and association with the participants helped to develop trust and a productive rapport, to facilitate a better grasp of their opinions (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003).

Transferability concerns how aware the researcher is of the data's similarity to alternative contexts (Given, 2008). Qualitative data's transferability is governed by a combination of the variety of sampling, the extent to which the concepts have been abstracted, and how detailed are the context descriptions (Punch, 2013). Each of these elements has been addressed in the current study, thereby potentially ensuring that the results can be transferred to directorates elsewhere in Saudi Arabia. The thick description of data also helps in assessing whether the results can be applied to similar contexts, groups, or settings.

Confirmability concerns the efforts made by the researcher to guarantee that the research results tally with the participants' opinions (Given, 2008). Care was taken to ensure that the claims made in the study were supported by data. When analysing the data, the researcher ensured that the themes, codes, and categories truly represent the opinions of the participants. As previously mentioned, member checking of transcript content helps to verify that the data are confirmable. This also links to the other criteria, particularly credibility, which is also enhanced by making connections between evidence and similar published research.

Triangulation increases the validity and trustworthiness of research by using multiple methods, data sources or perspectives to confirm findings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Flick, 2009). It means the results are not limited to one method or perspective (Patton, 2015). In this research, triangulation was achieved by combining data from interviews, observations, focus groups, reflective essays, and document analysis, and by including perspectives from different groups of participants (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). By checking across all these sources, researchers can see consistencies, strengthen interpretations, address gaps, and reach more complete conclusions (Shenton, 2004). This validates the findings and gives more depth to the phenomenon.

Ethical Considerations

This research was conducted according to established ethical principles to protect the well-being, rights, and trust of participants. The research followed the University of Nottingham's Code of Research Conduct and Ethics, BERA (2018) guidelines and relevant policies in the Saudi context. Ethical approval was obtained, and the approval letters can be found in appendices K and L, four main ethical principles were observed: avoiding harm, informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity.

Avoiding harm

Every effort was made to minimize any potential harm to participants, physical, psychological, or social. The principle of "not harm" (Hammersley & Traianou, 2012) was applied throughout the research. Participants were fully informed of the research objectives and methods, so they knew what was involved. Also, care was taken to create a respectful and safe environment for participants to feel comfortable and protected during data collection.

Informed Consent

Informed consent was obtained from all participants. Consent forms and information sheets explained the purpose of the research, and the participants were advised of their right to withdraw at any stage with no adverse consequences (BERA, 2018) (see appendices E, F and G). This is in line with the principles of ethical research, which is respect for the participant's autonomy, that they fully understand the study and voluntarily agree to take part (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2013). The information sheet included contact details of the researcher, his supervisor, and the University's ethics committee so participants could seek clarification or raise concerns, a key part of being transparent and trustworthy (Flick, 2009). In the Saudi context, consent was sought from the school principals following approval from the Saudi

Ministry of Education. This additional consent layer recognises the cultural and institutional frameworks in which the research is conducted, as Yin (2012) recommended.

Confidentiality

To maintain confidentiality, all data were stored and handled according to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) policies (Information Commissioner's Office, 2018). Digital data were stored on a password-protected computer and physical documents were locked in a desk. Only the researcher and the supervisor had access to the data. These measures protected participants' personal information and minimized the risk of unauthorized access. Confidentiality is a key ethical principle in research, as it means participants' personal information is kept private and used only for research purposes (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018). By keeping the data safe, we are upholding participants' privacy rights and preventing harm or misuse of sensitive information. According to Flick (2009), maintaining confidentiality builds trust between researcher and participant, which is essential for securing honest and reliable data. Using secure storage methods. such as password protection and locked storage, is in line with the Information Commissioner's Office (2018) guidelines and means compliance with data protection regulations and reducing the risk of unauthorised access. These measures contribute to the overall integrity of the research.

Anonymity

Participants were anonymized throughout the study using numbers for identification (e.g., teacher 1, teacher 2), to ensure that their identities were untraceable. Anonymity allowed participants to speak freely and honestly, which increased the credibility and trustworthiness of the data. Anonymity is particularly important in educational research as it creates a safe environment and reduces the risk of social or professional consequences for participants (BERA, 2018; Hammersley & Traianou, 2012).

Saudi context approvals

In the Saudi context, there were also certain procedures necessary to secure approval. A formal letter from the University supervisor, including research objectives, duration of the fieldwork, and the location of the study, was sent to the Saudi Ministry of Education. When Ministry approval was given, permission to enter schools was authorised. In the selected schools, the principals, acting as gatekeepers, permitted the researcher to conduct his research in their respective schools. Consent from participants was sought following agreement from the principal.

By following these ethical principles and protocols, this research protected the rights and dignity of the participants and ensured the validity and trustworthiness of the research.

Chapter Overview

The purpose of this chapter was to present a thorough description of the research methodology employed in this study on teacher leadership in selected Riyadh Educational Directorate schools. This starts by presenting the epistemological and ontological assumptions without which the research paradigm would not exist, followed by an outline of the qualitative research design which utilizes the case study approach. Details are given about the sampling strategy: how participants and schools were purposively selected, what data were collected, including interviews, focus groups, observations, and reflective essays. The chapter ends with a reflection on the steps that were followed to make the findings trustworthy and credible (triangulation and member checking).

CHAPTER FOUR: SUPERVISORS' PERSPECTIVES

This chapter presents the findings of the interviews with supervisors. It is divided into two sections. The first shows participants' characteristics, and the second offers a thematic analysis of the supervisors' responses. The four themes are understanding teacher leadership, the attributes and skills of teacher leaders, the effects of teacher leadership, and motivators and demotivate. The following section addresses participants' characteristics.

Participant Characteristics

Participants	Age Range	Educational level	Years of experience as a supervisor
Supervisor 1	55–60	Bachelor's degree	15–20 years
Supervisor 2	45–50	Bachelor's degree	10–15 years
Supervisor 3	35–40	Master's degree	3–5 years
Supervisor 4	30–35	Master's degree	1–5 years
Supervisor 5	35–40	Master's degree	5–10 years

Table 4.1: Participants' Characteristics

Table 4.1 shows the biographical features of the five supervisors, from the main educational office in Riyadh, who agreed to participate in the study. They are all experienced educators, aged between 35 to 60 years. Three participants have a master's degree while two have a bachelor's degree. The next section discusses the supervisors' understanding of the concept of teacher leadership.

Understanding Teacher Leadership

Teacher leadership at the organisational level

The participants were asked a question: what do you understand by the term "teacher leader" or "teacher leadership?" The most prominent responses were that teacher leadership relates to educators' practices in school at the organizational level. At this level, the concept has three sub-themes: direct support of the school environment, achieving educational goals, and establishing teacher roles.

The teacher leader as direct support

One of the recurring topics in the participants' perceptions of teacher leadership is the importance of teacher-leader support for the school's organisational culture. This includes support and improvement of the school, for both teachers and students, via active teacher

leaders. This perception is linked to the perceived success of teacher leaders, who claim to be doing their best to improve the school while raising the educational level between schools.

> *"If the teacher has an active role in the school to advance it, raise its level between schools, and develop it, this, in my opinion, is teacher leadership." [supervisor 3]*

> *''In short, this leader [teacher leader] is the main engine for improving the school as a whole, whether his colleagues or students" [supervisor 2]*

Supervisor 2 described a very wide-ranging role, including leading and reforming the school in various academic fields to meet government standards. These standards bring external (macro) pressure to bear on the role by facilitating inputs that promote satisfactory educational outcomes.

> *"The teacher leader is the one who leads the school as a whole towards reform in all fields, scientifically and practically, that is consistent with the vision of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia 2030... so that these teachers will help to produce a generation of students who are distinguished in all aspects of life'' [supervisor 2].*

Four supervisors defined teacher leadership in terms of the human element. This entails a positive interaction between the teacher leader and the school community as a whole. This, in turn, positively affects the educational process and the formation of effective relationships with all members of the school. This role stands apart from the formal teacher leader, meaning that official lead teachers hold positions as members of the school management team. By contrast, the informal teacher has not been assigned official duties nor has an official position at the school level.

> *''The teacher who leads often does not occupy an official position but has a direct and indirect significant impact on the whole school community regardless of his role and position, and he can do this through his daily interaction with students, teachers, parents, and the local community." [supervisor 4]*

Four participants mentioned the specific interaction of teacher leaders and their school colleagues. This interaction was defined by some as "cooperation with cooperating teachers and distancing from others." If teachers are unwilling to cooperate, it can be disappointing for teacher leaders. The degree of non-cooperation varies. These teachers may be encouraged by some supervisors to interact with teacher leaders.

Uncooperative teachers exist, but it is not common among teacher leaders. Instead, they actively interact with collaborating teachers and form effective professional communities. Such community interaction can positively improve the educational process; for example, though, transferring knowledge from more experienced teachers to younger or less experienced educators. This may improve the school environment and promote the application of community practice among teachers, while enhancing collaboration between them, according to supervisor 4.

> *"I believe that promoting communication between teachers and colleagues, staying away from uncooperative teachers, helping teachers to help each other, and especially the expert teacher helping new teachers by setting up some model lessons and making them benefit from their experience, is a form of teacher leadership." [supervisor 4]*

Four supervisors defined teacher leadership as supporting students both inside and outside the classroom. Managing students and boosting their educational achievements comes from guiding them to improve their behaviour with a focus on successfully understanding their subjects. This is done by establishing good relationships with students, earning their respect, and then influencing and improving their behaviour. The ability to control the classroom, and use a variety of effective teaching methods, is at issue as this affects the students' understanding and success within the bounds of the curriculum.

> *''The teacher's leadership is to support the students not only about the curriculum but also to evaluate his behaviour outside the classroom ... Some teachers influence the students' behaviour by establishing a good relationship with them and trying to direct them to good behaviour." [supervisor 4]*

> *'' The teacher leader has to do his best to set a good example for the students, in addition to easily presenting the curriculum by using a group of diverse and effective teaching methods." [supervisor 2]*

While one of the supervisors indicated that a teacher leader is limited to supporting the students academically and behaviourally, this role is within the classroom only.

> *''Teacher leadership, in my view, is the ability of the teacher to lead and manage his class and students, ensuring their understanding in their academic subject, and continuous encouragement for them to achieve success in it, in addition to guiding them to improve their behaviour." [supervisor 1]*

Teacher leaders and school goals

The second component of the organizational level mentioned by the supervisors is the achievement of educational goals. Two participants reported that the term "teacher leadership" denotes leadership, such as directing joint efforts between the school staff, including the principals and teachers, and the students toward achieving educational and pedagogical goals. This is perceived to be different from management which primarily seeks to carry out specific tasks.

> *''I think that the teacher's leadership may mean managing and directing efforts towards achieving the school goals." [supervisor 3]*

> *''I* believe *that the teacher leadership is not the same as the management, but rather the partnership with the members of the school to reach the success of the educational process"[supervisor 5]*

Teacher leader roles

The final sub-theme in this section relates to the definition of the teacher leader's role. Supervisor one argues that the term "leadership" generally applies to those who hold an official role granted by the Ministry of Education, such as the director, his deputy, and the educational supervisor. If a teacher accepts leadership tasks in their school, he may be deemed to be an expert teacher rather than a teacher leader because they were not assigned a formal role. This means that the leadership will be restricted to the holder of the official position and only a few will be qualified.

> *"The real leaders are those with authority who have formal powers to run the school such as the educational supervisor, principal, and deputy. The teacher [teacher leader], in my opinion, is not an official position, so it can be called by other names, such as the expert teacher or the volunteer teacher." [supervisor 1]*

Three supervisors, however, believe that teachers are leaders as long as they direct, practice, exercise leadership tasks, or lead the school and its members toward achieving success, even without an official role:

> *''I found some teachers, even their supervisors and managers, benefited from them by guiding schools and correcting some educational concepts for them in dealing with students' and teachers' mistakes. They are leaders, even if they do not have an actual position... I was like that when I was an active teacher, I was a teacher leader without a job title or an official position." [supervisor 2]*

"Sometimes the leading teacher without an official position is better in his role than the rest of the administrators." [supervisor 3]

''Their role (teacher leaders) is not surprising, as they have a role in achieving clear achievements in schools and with all their members." [supervisor 5]

Attributes and Skills of Teacher Leaders

Three supervisors claim that the qualities characterizing a teacher leader can be developed by anyone through practice. Some leaders are believed to be inspired such that others benefit. These teacher leaders engage in workshops, development courses, or reading. Supervisor four distinguishes between habitual and developed traits:

"Teacher leaders are people who have developed their skills by practising leadership in a small group until they have mastered the art and skills of leadership or have attended training courses for their development." [supervisor 4]

"Every person can be a leader if he develops himself...Leadership comes through accompanying leaders and a lot of knowledge and reading in the field of leadership." [supervisor 1]

"In my opinion, a teacher leader must have innate qualities that qualify him for leadership, such as body shape, leadership charisma, and an assertive tone of voice... and then he can increase these skills by learning." [supervisor 3]

The supervisors say that the traits of a teacher leader can be divided into habitual traits and acquired categories. Both habitual traits and learning and development characteristics might be developed through personal and professional growth.

habitual traits of a teacher leader

All participants mentioned that teacher leaders may have habitual traits, but in the opinion of the majority, they are not essential. However, one participant mentioned that they are the basics of leadership. These traits are either physical or behavioural. As for physical characteristics, supervisor three mentioned a firm body and an assertive voice, factors associated with charisma. Other participants mentioned the teacher's proactivity to take a leadership role in the school. This person may take the initiative and not just sit back, waiting to be told what to do. In addition to the strength of the teacher's self-confidence and abilities, this individual may exhibit commitment and honesty in dealing with others.

"In my opinion, an outstanding teacher must have essentially innate leadership qualities, such as body shape, leadership charisma, and an assertive tone of voice." [supervisor 3]

"In schools I see teachers enthusiastic about the leadership role and sometimes even taking the initiative." [supervisor 2]

"A teacher who does not trust his abilities, himself and others cannot be a leader...He must be honest in his dealings and honest in his words." [supervisor 4]

Teacher leader development

The participants expressed the view that teachers can be leaders by developing leadership and teaching skills. Most explained that there is a clear lack of official courses and workshops for teacher leaders to develop their skills. This is because, in the view of two supervisors, the Ministry suffers from a significant shortage of teachers. These teachers hardly cover instruction of the students' lessons, so they have work pressure and do not find time for leadership work in the school.

'"The number of teachers decreases every year, as there are teachers who retire early, and the teacher's number of classes increases, so his pressure increases." [supervisor 5]

As supervisor 4 assumed, the Ministry must be limiting leadership matters to the administrative staff, including the principal, deputy principal, student adviser, and other administrators. These administrators are provided with leadership training courses, while teachers are provided with courses for the classroom. Supervisor five claims this is due to the Ministry of Education marginalizing the role of the teacher leader:

"The shortcomings on the part of the Ministry are evident in providing them (teachers leaders) with leadership courses" [supervisor 3]

"In my opinion, the Ministry provides them with basic courses in education...the shortage of teachers, especially after their early retirement, they have a full quorum, and there are some teachers who cover other schools. Teachers are pressured not to hold leadership [roles] in the school, and for this reason, the Ministry may have limited leadership development courses to the principal and those in their position…As you know, the Ministry reports showed that the number of teachers employed every year is very low, which is never sufficient for the current needs of schools." [supervisor 1]

"Unfortunately, I say it, some officials in the Ministry are still marginalizing their leadership role (teacher leaders) ...even leadership courses have denied them." [supervisor 5]

''The Ministry believes that the real leaders are confined to the principal, deputy principal, student advisor, and the rest of the administrators.'' [supervisor 4]

''As you know, the Ministry of Education employs a small number that is not sufficient to meet our needs due to the shortage of teachers in our schools, which forces us to borrow teachers from other educational centres.'' [supervisor 2]

These supervisors collectively point to a clear shortage of leadership courses and workshops for these teachers and the marginalization of their leadership role. In addition, the second supervisor claimed that the Ministry of Education still employs a limited numbers of teachers every year; it is not enough to meet the needs of the existing schools. The participants note that a number of teachers usually retire early due to work pressures. Other teachers are then obliged to cover the shortages to meet the current needs, even in other schools. This highlights that the supervisors claim the Ministry's marginalization of teachers through their limited employment of teachers, as well as their marginalization in terms of their involvement in leadership courses. However, the Ministry still offers leadership courses and development workshops for principals and administrative staff only.

Four participants further stressed that, in the pre-service university stage, teachers do not make decisions, or determine curricula, and are not offered workshops or activities related to leadership development. In the past, they did not even have adequate educational materials; but now the teachers who have not previously studied educational curricula are obliged to obtain a diploma to qualify to teach. Supervisor one confirmed that teachers in the university stage may join some activities, for example, a scouting group, claiming that it gives them the necessary leadership skills.

"At university, they did not even study education courses, let alone learn leadership skills." [supervisor 3]

"Currently, teachers are obligated to obtain an educational diploma if he has not previously studied at his university level." [supervisor 4]

"I see leadership opportunities available even at the university. I joined the Scouts group and was a leader in it and acquired some leadership skills from them." *[supervisor 1]*

The four participants claim that teachers seek to develop themselves; some enrol in development courses and workshops while others learn by sharing their experiences with fellow leaders inside and outside the school. For some, skills come by practicing and constantly rehearsing, in-depth reading regarding leadership, and listening and watching Internet courses. Despite the lack of formal training and support available from the Ministry of Education, two supervisors believe that teachers must constantly evaluate themselves to assess their level of progress and to ensure development.

"The Ministry's problem is that its training courses are few and confined to administrators." *[supervisor 2]*

"Teacher leaders are always keen to develop themselves, even in terms of leadership." *[supervisor 4]*

These leadership courses, which the supervisors believe benefit teachers in becoming school leaders, are diverse, including problem-solving, building relationships, and decision making. Some participants explained that teachers had access to courses on group leadership and strategic planning at one time. This was done by enrolling in some of the free and paid courses offered by educational institutions, including private universities, commercial institutes, and electronic training platforms. Some teachers volunteered to hold workshops inside the supervision centre for other teachers, without charge, to seek reward from God. Some participants suggested that the school principal prefers to be supportive, encouraging teachers while advising them on self-development.

"They [teacher leaders] use several methods to develop their skills such as deep reading and watching some programmes on YouTube. I think problem solving skills are useful to them." *[supervisor 4]*

"There is no doubt that their learning from the experiences of others helped them a lot in their development. They [teacher leader] should always evaluate themselves to make sure whether they have developed in this skill or they need another way to develop." *[supervisor 3]*

> *"One of the teachers [teacher leader] was a volunteer with us and we provided him with one of the equipped halls. He held workshops for us on group leadership and the formation of team spirit without taking any fees. The school principal is supposed to contribute to the development of their teachers professionally and leadership by urging, encouraging and advising him on appropriate courses." [supervisor 5]*

Teacher leaders, according to these participants, seek to develop their leadership skills in multiple ways outside the formal setting, whereas the basic official role of supervisors, as required by the Ministry, is to monitor, evaluate, and hold the teacher accountable, while also assisting in developing skills related to teaching students only. The Ministry of Education hires the supervisors to play this role. However, all participating supervisors, in addition to their official roles, claim to provide additional informal roles; but it is considered an initiative for which the teacher leaders are grateful. This is done by supporting these teachers and encouraging leadership development by preparing rooms and providing advice.

The supervisors claim to provide continuous encouragement to the leading teachers to engage in educational courses on developing a leadership role. They encourage teachers who have experience to present some of these leadership courses to other teachers and supervisors while providing resources and equipped rooms in the supervision offices. This indicates that supervisors may be more likely to support teacher leaders' development than Ministry officials.

Effects of Teacher Leadership

All participants mentioned that the influence and benefits of a teacher leader are limited to certain areas: personal, organizational, and a broader influence at the political level:

Benefits of teacher leadership at the personal level

Two participants mentioned that the effects of teacher leadership may be on the teachers themselves - their personal and professional development. The teacher leader sometimes attains stability and comfort, pushing them to continue working in the same school, where they have a voice in the development of programmes. Thus, loyalty is born, and school retention may increase, as the teacher tries to develop their school.

> *"It is enough for them to obtain stability and continuity of work in the same school...Their reputation is great even at the level of our centre or at the level of other neighbouring schools." [supervisor 2]*

This indicates how personal and organizational development may be mutually supportive. Two

participants also mentioned that those students positively affected by such teachers may still maintain good relationships and communicate frequently, affording them satisfaction and a sense of pride, especially after seeing the fruits of the teacher's efforts. Thus, after the teacher devotes himself to the school, and develops good relations with the students, he can help in the development of the school.

> *"I have previously seen that a student was influenced by one of the teacher leaders and kept in contact with him until he was appointed as the most senior eye consultant in Riyadh and this teacher became one of his reviewers and was always proud of him."* *[supervisor 5]*

> *"Often they (teacher leaders) get excited and creative if they find the right environment that listens to them."* *[supervisor 4]*

These supervisors claim that teacher leaders are stable, and they are relieved when they find that these teacher leaders are more likely stay in their schools. The more the teacher leader has a voice in the school, and the more empowered they are to lead, the more likely they are to be retained. Leadership may offer the teacher a great relationship with the students, allowing for continued communication even after graduation. This may enhance personal satisfaction.

Benefits of teacher leadership at the organizational level

The participants believe that teachers are a key factor in school success if they contribute to managing the direction of change positively. It raises the level of productivity and contributes to improving educational outcomes.

> *"A teacher leader is an essential element in every school and contributes to its success... Changing the school for the better."* *[supervisor 4]*

> *"These practices of the teacher leader will raise the level of the school and raise the level of its students."* *[supervisor 3]*

All participants stated that the effects are clear in terms of students' understanding of the required curriculum, as their progress is constantly monitored. This ensures adherence to the curriculum and establishes the goal of academic achievement and success, so they achieve more. As for behavioural progress, most mentioned that a teacher is interested in improving student behaviour by involving them in activities, both inside and outside the classroom. Two supervisors consider that their strong relationships with students have led to a positive impact.

"I see that the students' level of academic achievement of the teacher's leader is better than other teachers. When I visit these teachers in the classroom, and ask their students, I find that the scientific level of the students is distinguished between those teachers." [supervisor 2]

"God wills them, their relationship with the students is so wonderful that the students love and are morally influenced by them... they share some extra-curricular activities with them." [supervisor 4]

Three participants indicate that the positive impact of the teacher leader on achieving the educational and behavioural success of students is clear to all. It may be due to the good relationships fostered with the students, the ability to manage the classroom effectively, and the use of modern teaching methods. As claimed by supervisor, four, a teacher leader is considered to be a better than the average teacher, partly due to their positive impact on student morals while sharing and integrating their interest in activities to win students' love.

The third supervisor asserted that this preference of the teacher leader over others may cause some problems such as jealousy among few teachers but, in practice, it has not created any issues either for teacher leaders (as individuals) or teacher leadership (as a relationship process). On the contrary, this preference has made the teacher become more encouraged and motivated to continue this achievement with students. In addition, other teachers often acknowledge that this makes them compete with teacher leaders, perhaps to learn and benefit from them, thus contributing to reaching the same success with their own students.

'' There may be a preference for these leaders [Teacher leaders] over other members and a few may become jealous... and sometimes it may be a motivation for them and an incentive for other teachers to follow their example." [supervisor 3]

There are also benefits for other teachers. Two participants mentioned that the teacher leader supervises his or her colleagues. This supervisory role differs from that of school principals and supervisors, given that the role of teacher leaders may be informal. Their task is to advise and guide colleagues, while the role of school principals and supervisors' rests on formal evaluation and teacher accountability. Therefore, these teacher leaders are perceived to be supportive and enthusiastic in managing the classroom and interacting with students. Particularly when they are having problems at school, they may act as counsellors, promoting a good relationship with colleagues while developing their skills by holding courses that help other teachers solve their problems.

"They have a good relationship with the teachers in the school. They consult with them on any problems that happen to them inside and outside the classroom." [supervisor 3]

"The (teacher leader) may supervise some teachers in the classroom to guide him in the way he teaches and manages him...especially with troubled students." [supervisor 2]

A teacher leader may be appointed without a title by some principals as a supervisor of other teachers, especially new ones. The purpose is to guide and help new teachers solve problems with bad behaviour, for example. In addition, three participants saw a clear effect on the school principal and staff after using their skills to supervise and evaluate classroom teachers. They provide notes before being evaluated by the principal.

These supervisors further mentioned the use of teachers to help the school principal, especially a new one, in solving problems with difficult teachers, parents, or students. They sometimes consulted with them on school concerns and interests, while participating in making decisions. They may also accomplish administrative tasks, such as writing reports or letters to the supervisory office. This indicates delegation or perhaps even distribution of leadership.

"We have previously used them (the teacher leader) to guide the new school principal. They give him some ideas and teach him how to deal with parents or teachers and not difficult students, and they share school decisions because they are more expert than him." [supervisor 1]

"Sometimes they evaluate some teachers and provide them with their feedback before the principal evaluates them." [supervisor 4]

''They can help (the principal) in writing letters or reports to the supervisory office.'' [supervisor 2]

Supervisor one's comments indicate some authority over teacher leaders by using them to support and guide the school principal, especially a new principal in practice. This supervisor implies a kind of coercion and marginalization of the ability of teachers to lead by themselves. However, the role of the teacher leader is still to guide new principals, supporting them in making school decisions, given their leadership experience. Sometimes they help with administrative tasks, showing additional value. This is an important recognition of the skills that individual teacher leaders can offer the school.

Benefits of teacher leadership on a broader political level

Three participants discussed the effects of teacher leadership outside the school. There are two sub-themes: parental engagement, and teacher networking, outreach, and support.

Parental engagement

Three supervisors confirmed that teacher leadership has a clear impact on relationships and communication with parents. Teachers can directly inform them of problems facing their children, whether educational or behavioural. The teacher leader may also become a source of moral or material support:

> *"Their roles go beyond school to families, so I know one of these teachers helps students' families by providing for their household needs, and I don't know if he is the one who takes care of them or a benefactor." [supervisor 5]*

> *"He communicates with parents directly to find a solution to any problem facing the students, one of them formed a WhatsApp group with parents to discuss everything that concerns their students." [supervisor 4]*

Teacher networking, outreach, and support

Teacher leadership may also involve relationships with other schools. Supervisor three mentioned that some teacher leaders try to communicate and form groups in other schools. They may have informal meetings outside the school to discuss common issues and share mutual goals.

> *"One of the teachers holds a monthly out-of-school meeting with teacher leaders in other schools who discuss with each other everything that matters to them." [supervisor 3]*

Three supervisors mentioned that these teacher leaders provide support even to their supervisors and the supervisory centre. They conduct workshops on administrative matters free of charge; sometimes they also advise their supervisors in finding informal solutions for issues that concern teachers in other schools.

> *"Some of the teachers (leaders) found their benefit even to their supervisors and managers...they held workshops for us in the centre regarding, for example, persuasion skills." [supervisor 5]*

> *"As I mentioned, we the supervisors benefited from them [teacher leaders] in various fields. I do not say it as a matter of humility, but it is the truth." [supervisor 4]*

> *"We may encounter unfaithful teachers at work, and we consult these teachers [leaders] to help us because we do not want to use the formal method with them, which may do more harm than good." [supervisor 2]*

The data show that one of the supervisors believes that teacher leaders play a role in supporting parents morally and financially as well as deepening communication to contribute to the educational and behavioural development of their children. They also have a role in activating professional societies, even at the level of cooperation with other schools. They offer supervisors help with development issues, and to find solutions to teacher accountability, even in other schools, before they resort to the official method as a last resort.

Significantly, the supervisors did not report on the impact of teacher leadership on the Ministry of Education. This may be due to obstacles from the Ministry or the lack of recognition. However, as noted above, they did comment on the effects of teacher leadership on parents, schools, and even the supervisors themselves.

Motivators and Demotivators for Teacher Leadership

Three sub-themes emerged from the participants' findings on the factors that motivate and discourage teachers from seeking to become leaders: political, organizational, and personal. The supervisor data show that political-level issues are perceived to be the most common, followed by factors at the organization or school level, and finally personal factors.

Demotivating factors for teacher leadership at the political level

At the political level, three sub-topics can be summarized: the motivating or discouraging factors for teacher leadership at the Ministry level, the community level, and the supervisors themselves.

Demotivating factors for teacher leadership at the Ministry level

Three supervisors confirmed that the Ministry's policies constitute a major obstacle to teacher leadership. The hierarchical and centralised policy gives the Ministry absolute authority and power with only a small role for those in the education centres, with even less power for school principals. This hierarchy makes it difficult for teacher leaders to assume any leadership responsibility in their schools. The full powers of the Ministry give a small part only to those

below them in the hierarchy, so there is limited scope for teacher leaders. Some also stressed that the financial factor demotivates a teacher from leading, even though the Ministry has a large budget compared to other ministries. No incentives are given to these teacher leaders to encourage them to perform their roles, as expressed by supervisors two and five.

> *"The Ministry has full powers. We have limited powers. As you know, the education centre is higher than us in the Riyadh region, and we, in turn, are trying to give part of the powers we have to the directors." [supervisor 3]*

> *"The Ministry has a higher budget than the state, yet we give very few incentives, so how about these teachers (teacher leaders) who do not have any incentives?" [supervisor 5]*

> *"Where is the official position? Unfortunately, there is none. If the teacher leader is like others (other teachers), without having any additional advantages in terms of reducing the teaching load (the number of classes per week). For example, he (teacher leader) should get half of the teaching load compared to other teachers, and he should also get an additional salary. It is difficult for them to be enthusiastic about leadership without any benefits" [supervisor 2]*

The education policy in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is perceived to be an obstacle to teacher leadership because of the limited freedom of those at the bottom of the hierarchy. There is little room for the teacher leader to practice his role except for what was narrowly given, whether from the supervisory centre or the principal.

Demotivating factors for teacher leadership at the community level

Two supervisors indicate discouragement for teacher leadership by students' families and the wider society, suggesting that the teacher's role does not go beyond the classroom. Teachers are expected to focus on student education, while the principal is the only official leader in the school. This view indicates a lack of awareness of the teacher's role, perhaps because there is no official position or title:

> *"Parents see that the role of the teacher is only to teach, and if they have any complaints, suggestions or inquiries, they turn to the principal directly." [supervisor 5.*

> *"There is a lack of awareness in the community of the roles of these leaders (the teacher leader) and they do not even have a job title from the Ministry." [supervisor 3]*

These comments suggest that parents and the community are programmed to see the role of the teacher as limited. Their roles are not expected to go beyond the boundaries of the classroom, and explaining the subject matter to students, since they do not have an official position at the Ministry. The Ministry does not raise awareness of the importance of the teacher's role, especially their leadership role. Parents are thought to perceive the role of teacher leaders as dedicated only to teaching students because the principal has control over the school while ignoring the importance of teacher leadership. Thus, the parents naturally deal directly with the principal, as the main decision-maker of the school (principal).

Motivating and demotivating factors for teacher leadership at the level of supervisors

Three supervisors see themselves as supportive, directing, and encouraging teachers to assume leadership responsibilities in their schools. They claim to be keen to follow up on the progress and development of these teachers while encouraging them to engage in those areas of leadership in which they may have an effective role. They also encourage seeking the reward from God, which they believe is one of the most important motivators for teacher leadership.

> *"We try on our own to guide and support teachers to be effective leaders in their schools." [supervisor 1]*

> *"We always encourage teachers and remind them that their work in developing the school is really outside the framework of their basic tasks required of them, but that they will receive a reward from God alone…This encouragement from us gave these teachers the enthusiasm and desire to take on these tasks. " [supervisor 2]*

The supervisors also perform roles outside the framework of their duties because their mission, as stipulated by the Ministry of Education, is to guide and develop the teacher in knowledge of scientific materials, and teaching methods while giving advice and direction. These supervisors also see the positive role of teacher leadership, so they have added to their responsibilities the guidance and encouragement of teachers – considered to be voluntary functions. The positive role of the supervisors is perceived to create a generation of teachers eager to assume leadership roles, especially since they see the supervisors as having higher authority. This is an important primary motivator for teachers to take on leadership roles - as claimed by supervisor two.

This subsection shows the demotivating factors affecting teacher leadership, notably centralization, the near-monopoly power of the Ministry of Education, the lack of awareness in the community of the role of the teacher leader, as well as the official position of the teacher leader without financial incentives. By contrast, the role of the supervisors in supporting and

encouraging teacher leadership, while reminding them of the reward from God, is claimed to be one of the most encouraging factors.

Motivators and demotivators for teacher leadership at the organizational level
There are motivators and demotivators at the level of the school administration and that of other teachers and students.

Motivators and demotivators for teacher leadership at the school management level
Two supervisors claimed that there are still principals who maintain a kind of exclusivity in decision-making, exhibiting authoritarianism, although some of the supervisors have advised these principals to involve teachers who manifest enthusiasm for leadership. The principals are encouraged by the supervisors to distribute and share leadership. Participants reported that principals may sometimes be authoritarian and not give the teacher the freedom to be responsible for what happens in the classroom, thereby interfering with how teachers work with students.

> *"Unfortunately, there are uncooperative principals who do not want the teacher to be a leader; not even to consult him, let alone have the ability to make decisions." [supervisor 3]*

> *"You know that there are managers who have centrality in making decisions...even observing the way the teacher teaches the students, they are often not given freedom." [supervisor 1]*

> *"One of these teachers was frustrated that the principal did not reciprocate his appreciation and respect because unfortunately, he sees himself above him." [supervisor 4]*

However, three supervisors stated that there are school principals who do motivate and encourage their teachers, even trying to involve them in school decisions. They try to give them confidence and responsibility for what happens in the classroom. Supervisor Five also mentioned that principals may provide financial and/or moral support:

> *"There are examples of supervising principals who involve their teachers with them in solving some problems within the school... They give teachers freedom and responsibility for their classrooms." [supervisor 2]*

> *"In one of the schools, there was a principal who was offering financial incentives from his account to these teachers as encouragement to them." [supervisor 5]*

The principal's support and encouragement of the teacher leader in undertaking leadership roles is one of the greatest motivating factors for the teacher, according to the supervisors. It implies giving the teacher full responsibility and confidence in his decisions, involving him also in the decisions of the school, and contributing to solving problems.

Finally, good treatment and mutual respect may have a positive impact on these teachers, helping them to feel important and engender a sense of loyalty in their practice. This may contribute to the continuity of enthusiasm for the development and advancement of their schools.

Motivators and demotivators to teacher leadership at the level of other teachers and students
Two supervisors claimed that teachers who do not want to assume a leadership role may not want another teacher to take on this responsibility, out of professional jealousy. They may not cooperate with the teacher leaders and sometimes do not display respect, for example, in the formation of effective professional communities. This may hinder the teacher and curb enthusiasm. Two supervisors also mentioned the opposite scenario, where there is great harmony and camaraderie among the teachers.

> *"One of the teacher leaders mentioned that he does not want to take over some leadership responsibilities in his school because some are jealous of them... at the same time they do not want to assume them or interact with others." [supervisor 4]*

> *"Some schools meet, teachers interact with each other, they cooperate and exchange their experiences." [supervisor 1]*

Supervisor two also expressed that one teacher leader mentioned his suffering with bad-natured students in the classroom. When he tried to use various teaching methods, it did not work for this group. Similarly, when he tried to involve them in extracurricular activities outside the classroom, they did not want to participate. This caused the teacher to experience exhaustion and fatigue.

> *"One of the teachers suffers from frustration and complains about the lack of interaction and cooperation of students with difficult behaviours, neither during the lesson nor in extra-curricular activities." [supervisor 2]*

Four supervisors stressed that the teacher suffers pressure and fatigue as a result of the number of hours required to teach, plus the task of correcting students' homework as well as preparing lessons for the next day. All these pressures cause some teacher leaders to become stressed.

"The teacher is stressed in the vertical lessons like other teachers and psychologically stressed. He corrects at home and prepares for an adult lesson, so how does he have time to play leadership roles." [supervisor 5]

"I know some of these teachers who suffer from the pressure of classes, which, over time, causes them to collapse in their psychological health." [supervisor 3]

Demotivation to teacher leadership on a personal level

Three supervisors mentioned that many teachers do not want to assume leadership roles on their own, perhaps because of perceived limited ability, or may choose only to perform their official duties.

"Some teachers have weak personalities and lack of self-confidence...or leadership skills are not developed for him, or he does not want to develop them. These things may prevent him from leading." [supervisor 3]

"Some teachers are not enthusiastic about leadership and want their role to be passive…he only performs the duties required of him by the Ministry." [supervisor 1]

If the teacher has enthusiasm, and the desire to assume school leadership practices, they can develop in terms of both performance and the social dimension. However, this enthusiasm is perceived to decline if the teacher does not feel the need to perform the role, does not see the impact of his leadership in the school, and does not feel a reward from God in his work, and they also may be constrained by the Ministry.

Overview

The study has revealed key points for teacher leadership as well as what hinders it, which are pertinent on four levels, as elaborated by Grant (2006). Within the classroom, teacher leaders aspire to improve students' performance but at the same time they have to deal with issues like behaviour and workload overload, therefore efficient management of workload and support are required. Among the coworkers, teacher leadership can be actualized through developing strong collaboration and mutual respect, nevertheless, professional jealousy still hinders the leadership, thus the need for cultivating collegiality and team spirit is underscored. At the school level, it is noted that the principals who provide opportunities for shared decision-making and recognize teacher leaders thus they get a sense of leadership very important to them whereas the teachers who are being inflicted with de-motivation because of the authoritative behaviour of the school heads this proves the importance of distributed leadership.

Outside the school, the policies of the central government and the perceptions in society are the obstacles that limit the teacher leaders from expanding their influence, thus, the emphasis is on the need for policy reforms, incentives, and community awareness efforts to broaden the choice and impact of teacher leadership. In sum, the evidence suggests a range of developmental, structural, and cultural measures that would enable teacher leaders to exercise their empowerment and collaborate better in the teaching processes.

The next chapter presents the findings from the first case study, Gold School.

CHAPTER FIVE: GOLD SCHOOL

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the Gold School case study, comprising interviews with four administrators, a focus group with five teacher leaders, the reflective writing of two teacher leaders, and my field notes. This chapter is divided into two sections. The first shows participants' characteristics, and the second offers a thematic analysis of the data. The four themes are concepts of teacher leadership, attributes and skills of teacher leaders, the effects of teacher leadership, and motivators and demotivators. The next section addresses participants' characteristics.

Case Study Context

Gold School is located in the Riyadh region, at the centre of the capital. It is a high school affiliated with the Main Office of Education. The school consists of three grades, from the first to the third grade (high school), with each grade comprising approximately 190 boys distributed across five classes. The majority of students are Saudi, along with a mix of other nationalities, including Yemeni and African students. The surrounding neighbourhood has an average level of education and income.

The school leadership includes one principal, three deputy principals, one student guide, and three administrative assistants. The school has 38 teachers specializing in different subjects. Most of the teachers and administrative staff have remained at the school for more than 10 years, providing stability and experience. Teachers have an average workload of 19 lessons per week, in addition to supervising students during break times and dismissal.

All teachers and administrative staff hold at least a bachelor's degree in various fields. Additionally, four teachers have earned master's degrees, and one holds a doctorate, contributing to the school's academic strength and expertise. The average age of teachers is 36 years, and all are Saudi nationals. Meanwhile, the principal, deputies, and administrative staff have an average age of over 45.

The school is equipped with 26 classrooms, 21 student restrooms, and five dedicated staff restrooms. There are two well-equipped laboratories and a new but functional library. Three large classrooms have been converted into rest areas for teachers. Additionally, a spacious storage area holds both new and old curriculum books, along with around thirty extra tables and chairs.

Gold School holds meetings every two to three weeks between the principal and teachers to discuss academic and administrative matters. Furthermore, parents are invited to meet with teachers three times per semester to discuss their children's progress and address any concerns. These regular meetings contribute to better communication and continuous improvement in the student's academic experience.

Participants Characteristics

This section shows the characteristics of the four senior leaders, namely the school principal, two deputy principals, and the student advisor, followed by the other participants (teacher leaders). Table 5.1 shows the biographical features of the four school leaders. They are all experienced educators. Two participants have a master's degree while two have a bachelor's degree.

Table 5.2 displays the characteristics of the teacher leaders who attended the focus group and completed the reflective writing.

Participants	Position
Participant 1	Principal
Participant 2	Deputy Principal
Participant 3	Deputy Principal
Participant 4	Student advisor

Table 5.1: Leaders' characteristics

Participants	Position	Data source
Participant 5	Teacher leader	Focus group
Participant 6	Teacher leader	Focus group
Participant 7	Teacher leader	Focus group
Participant 8	Teacher leader	Focus group
Participant 9	Teacher leader	Focus group
Participant 10	Teacher leader	Reflective writing
Participant 11	Teacher leader	Reflective writing

Table 5.2 Teacher leaders' characteristics

Table 5.2 shows the biographical features of the seven teacher leaders of Gold school, who agreed to participate in the study. Five of them participated in the focus group while two contributed reflective writing. Participants were purposively recruited for both focus groups

and reflective writing. They are all experienced educators, aged between 35 to 55 years. Two participants have a master's degree while five have a bachelor's degree. The next sub-section discusses the participants' understanding of the concept of teacher leadership.

Understanding Teacher Leadership

The overall focus of the participants, both principals and teacher leaders, is that teacher leadership focuses on two dimensions. The first relates to the organizational level (see below), while the second focuses on the personal level.

Teacher leadership at the organizational level

All four interviewees define teacher leadership as participatory and distributive, rather than just management focusing on top-down authority. It is not about assigning tasks to employees but depends upon participatory action and interaction between individuals in the school.

> *"There is no doubt that the teacher leader can distribute leadership among the members of the school and bear responsibilities with them."[Participant 4: Gold]*

> *"Aptly named (Teacher leader) is a leader, not a manager, so his leadership shares it with everyone, interacts with them, and helps them in it instead of distributing tasks to them and dominating them. [Participant 3: Gold]*

Four of the focus group participants agree that cooperation and sharing is an essential feature of the leadership system in schools, while one of the participants offered a different view, that the central system is still in control of the leadership system. He emphasized that the principal is still the primary controller within the school, who gives orders to the staff:

> *"I disagree with what my colleagues mentioned (that the principle of cooperation is still the dominant feature of the leadership system in our schools). I have previously dealt with many school principals, and I have not seen a principal like our school principal's handling of this because he is cooperative... while the others I dealt with were authoritarian and singular in decision-making. [Participant 5: Gold]*

This participant confirms that this school's principal has a spirit of cooperation, and this does not contradict his colleagues' views. He added that some principals in other schools ignore this principle of cooperation and deal with school decisions through an authoritarian approach.

Three of the participants were more specific in defining teacher leadership at the organizational level. This includes the support of teachers, principals, administrators, and their colleagues,

even though some do not have a formal job title. The reason is that they feel responsible for and enthusiastic about their school environment.

> *"The teacher leaders, even if they are mostly leaders without an official position such as the principal, in my opinion, are the experienced teachers who have enthusiasm, care and a sense of responsibility towards their school environment and the ability to help their principals, administrative staff or teachers in the school, so they are constructive leaders." [Participant 4: Gold]*

The participants involved in reflective writing emphasized that teacher leadership also implies assisting other teachers as well as the school principal. These teachers have educational, and leadership experience gained over time and can use that background to help others.

> *"I also consider myself a leader as the school principal was a relative newcomer. I had, by this time, gained many years of experience in education and leadership which helped him a lot in the beginning in dealing with staff and students... by my familiarity with all the laws and regulations that govern the system school." [Participant 10: Gold]*

All focus group participants reported that teacher leadership meant that they had complete freedom to engage in multiple leadership roles such as supporting principals, students, and their colleagues, but some teachers were not interested in taking on any role due to work pressure, preoccupation with extra work, or too busy with personal business.

> *"Teacher leadership is a process that involves multiple roles, including supporting the students and the principal.... We help them run the resource room and suggest and implement some extra-curricular activities"[Participant 5: Gold]*

> *" Also adding the teachers' support to each other... and also help the principal. The principal has given me full responsibility for entering grades for students .... I also think the pressures from working might stop them "[Participant 6: Gold]*

> *"But some teachers have businesses as we work overtime without an official position or for money"[Participant 7: Gold]*

> *" Yes (teacher leaders) are the ones who can implement and supervise some extra-curricular activities and have full freedom to practise leadership. " [Participant 8: Gold]*

> *" Assisting the student advisor and deputy principal" [Participant 9: Gold]*

These participants collectively define teacher leadership as the support of school members as a whole, such as supervising resource rooms, participating in extra-curricular activities, or supervising administrative work. One also notes that their leadership is undertaken without compensation or even an official job title. However ,some teachers do not want to engage in leadership, because of the additional work during school and free time. This may be because they are looking for additional sources of income.

The participants also considered the teacher leader to be a person with the ability to support students, whether at the educational or behavioural level. As such, leadership is distinguished from the role of administrators and is considered stronger because of the clear ability to lead both inside and outside the classroom. For example, teacher leaders may enjoy effective communication with others and prioritise listening over speaking, while seeking to understand different points of view.

> *"These teachers can also be defined as having the potential to advance the student's educational and educational level inside or outside the classroom ... I see that they are often more capable and endurable than some school administrators. Their positive impact on students is clear to everyone, and it is enough that they are leaders in a manner active in the classroom and outside it ... For example, the student advisor in the school sometimes uses these leaders to guide and direct the students, listening to their problems and comments about different aspects of school ... these leaders have different skill to deal with students." [Participant 2: Gold]*

The same point was made by focus group participants who, as teacher leaders, support their students in improving their learning in all subjects while addressing their morality in their dealings with teachers, friends, and parents by creating a strong relationship.

> *" Like improving their dealings with everyone, students, teachers, or their parents."[Participant 8: Gold]*

Similarly, reflective writing participants claimed that the teacher leader is the one who has a wide role in helping students, not only inside the classroom but outside the classroom as well, and to help students to solve any problems they face, whether inside or outside the classroom, and whether the problems they face in scientific subjects are for the same teacher, the leader or other teachers. This contributes to solving students' problems, whether with other teachers or with the school administration, as they are the link between these students and the rest of the

school staff. This differs from the role of other teachers, whose role is mainly confined to the classroom and is narrower than the role of teacher leaders.

> *''I also have roles in the classroom where I can create and come up with new ideas to help my students understand the lesson and solve any problems they may encounter, whether with my subject or other subjects and with other teachers…I also act as a mediator between these students and the administration when they have any problem''.*
> *[Participant 11: Gold]*

This quotation appears to indicate that the concept of teacher leadership is mainly focused on the student. While the teacher leader claims to have a direct positive impact on the performance and behaviour of students, these students still need to understand their needs and help them to solve the academic and behavioural problems they face.

It is clear that the leadership in this school, at the organizational level, as perceived by the participants, focuses on distributive and participatory leadership instead of top-down authority. This means that leadership is not centralized within the administrative staff, but teacher leaders are involved in distributing and conducting leadership, involving participatory work and interaction between individuals in the school. The participants also explained that the concept of teacher leadership includes supporting teachers, principals, administrators, and students without holding a formal position and without financial compensation.

The teachers who were observed, especially the teacher leaders, had a strong relationship with their principal. They worked in a participatory manner, and the principal is involved in the school's decision-making process with them, including those related to new teachers.

"When observing one of the meetings between the school principal and the teachers, I saw that the principal respects the teachers as a whole and his relationship with them is very good. He listens to them carefully and respects their points of view, especially the teacher leaders. At the meeting, some teacher leaders were assigned to follow up on the new teachers - newly appointed in the school - and try to improve and evaluate them and take full authority about distributing classes and developing them professionally and writing a report on them on an ongoing basis to the supervision office."[Gold School, field notes]

The next sub-theme focuses on understanding teacher leadership on a personal level.

Teacher leadership at the personal level

Four participants define teacher leadership at the organizational level, but two of them also highlight that the definition of teacher leadership includes a focus on the teacher's development on a personal level. They claim that teacher leaders should always continue to develop their knowledge and skills, including communication skills, and evaluate themselves as needed.

> "...the teacher's leadership is also by constantly developing the skills of the teacher himself and evaluating himself because leadership as it relates to others, it is the priority for the teacher to develop himself by acquiring the necessary knowledge and leadership skills raising his self-confidence and his ability to lead and the way of dealing with others, and from time to time he evaluates his level of progress In practising these skills." [Participant 1: Gold]

The principal believes that teacher leaders should try to improve themselves, using self-accountability to increase their awareness of their weak or strong areas. This may be the case with some teachers, but it may be clearer with the teacher leaders. This is perceived to help them in performing their teacher-leader roles in a better way while enhancing their professionalism. Self-development is part of the definition of the teacher leader as well. One participant claims that a teacher leader should be eager to develop himself and secure progress.

> ''I see that as a teacher-leader, I must be very keen on developing myself in terms of education and leadership. I always look for new ways to develop it, of course outside the Ministry system. ... Also, I am always evaluating myself, asking if I have already progressed in what I learned or do I need further development. In my opinion, this method of self-assessment is lacking in some teachers. " [Participant 10: Gold]

Four focus group participants added that teacher leadership includes the professional development of the teacher leader when they assume leadership roles. They have a continuous need to develop in various leadership areas, and this development is perceived to enhance their confidence and sense of appreciation for their abilities.

> " And do not forget that it (teacher leadership) means that the teacher is constantly developing himself professionally, and among the fields is what is related to leadership himself" [Participant 10: Gold]

> " It increases his perseverance in accomplishing the tasks assigned to him." [Participant 11: Gold]

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" Yes, as my colleague mentioned, a development that helps him to acquire knowledge and seeks to benefit from it"[Participant 8: Gold]

" I also add that this development helps him gain confidence and gives the teacher capabilities to help him solve the problems he is exposed to and how to deal in difficult situations"[Participant 9: Gold]

It appears that the definition of the teacher leader in this school is perceived to relate to continuous development and that this development increases confidence in their abilities. This may lead teacher leaders to support other school members, including students and other teachers, by solving school problems, encouraging their colleagues, and helping them to deal with difficult circumstances.

It should be noted that seven participants clearly emphasized that teachers need to constantly develop their skills and knowledge while evaluating their level of progress. The difficulty they face is in improving the school. Their views reinforce that it would be best if teacher leaders continually build on their strengths and overcome their weaknesses to be more effective. The next section discusses the attributes and skills of a teacher leader based on the views of the participants in the first school.

Attributes and Skills of Teacher Leaders

All participants stated that to be effective teacher leaders requires them to have certain characteristics and skills, either habitual or acquired (developed over time).

"Teachers leaders are people who have traits and characteristics that already exist in their personality or learned them through attending some courses related to leadership and frequent reading of materials related to leadership and learning and applying those skills. Honest with you, I benefit from them." [Participant 3: Gold]

" He means traits with which they are born, such as charisma" [Participant 5: Gold]

" I believe what you said, but the acquired qualities may be more, for example, I know teachers who have developed themselves and become more influential than a teacher who has a charismatic leadership"[Participant 6: Gold]

" Teacher leaders are teachers who have inherent qualities that give them a character that distinguishes them from others... Of course, it means traits that they are born with and traits that a person can learn in a variety of ways..."[Participant 7: Gold]

"And let us not lose sight of the qualities that each person can learn."[Participant 8: Gold]

It is clear from these participants that teacher-leader attributes are perceived to be either habitual or acquired. The next sub-section focuses on the perceived habitual qualities of a teacher leader.

Attributes of a teacher leader

Among the habitual features mentioned by participants is their willingness to take on leadership roles in their schools and to lead on their own

"One of the characteristics that they characterized is their internal enthusiasm on their own without motivation from anyone or influence from anyone. We find that the teacher, while working in the school, participates and assists the school administration in carrying out some responsibilities and helps the school in making the decision. He is also enthusiastic about doing some activities in the school without waiting for praise. by someone or an official mandate" " [Participant 4 : Gold]

One of the perceived habitual characteristics of teacher leaders is that they are inspired by those around them. They use their strengths and self-confidence, radiating a leadership spirit and motivating others to love their work and achieve success. This, in the opinion of the school principal, comes from the teacher's sense of reward from God, and that any work done is benevolent and helpful to others. This is what makes teachers happy and satisfied.

"What distinguishes these leaders from others is that they are benefactors of others, instilling in their enthusiasm for leadership, because their first and last concern is the satisfaction of their Lord and obtaining the reward because, without this belief, the person will not be enthusiastic about leadership, especially because they do not get any financial incentive." " [Participant 1: Gold]

This point was also noted by the teacher leaders, that enthusiasm is an essential characteristic of the teacher leader, and they may be superior to some administrators in the school with this trait.

"Yes, I believe that as teachers, we can be excellent leaders. Our skills are equal to those of the administrative staff within the school; we have a greater depth of experience, ability and enthusiasm that drives us to achieve what some of the

administrative staff cannot achieve and this enthusiasm stems from within us.''
[Participant 10: Gold]

Some additional teacher leader characteristics were added by the participants of the focus group: activity and vitality are essential, important, and habitual characteristics along with the ability to be patient and show endurance. The success of the teacher leader relies on performing his role effectively. This depends on the extent of the activity, his vitality and flexibility, and his ability to withstand the pressures and problems faced by school members.

> *"We can withstand pressures, as we have a degree of flexibility that makes us bear these pressures. "[Participant 5 : Gold]*

> *''Mostly what distinguishes them from others is that they are [more] full of activity and vitality. "[Participant 6 : Gold]*

> *" You mean what distinguishes us from other teachers, yes, indeed, so you always find us energetic and energize those around us"[Participant 7 : Gold]*

The focus group participants indicated that habitual qualities may distinguish leaders from other teachers, including internal enthusiasm. It is about their sense of leadership spirit that motivates others to love their work and achieve success. In addition, they exhibit vitality in their interactions with patience and flexibility in dealing with the problems and difficult situations within the school.

During my fieldwork, I noticed that the teacher leader inside the class began to deal with great patience, less to find in some of the other teachers and try to solve the problems of the quarrelsome students in the fastest way. While the rest of the teachers transfer these students to the school administration without trying to solve their problems. In addition, he has the spirit to bear these students and try to contain them and understand their needs and the ability to deliver the curriculum to the students in a variety of ways and likeable ways.

> *"When I watched one of the teachers in the classroom, I found some students deliberately trying to provoke the teacher with silly questions that have nothing to do with the curriculum. The teacher treats them with a smile and a high level of patience in dealing with these students tries to make their questions of value and promises them to answer outside the classroom so that they do not waste class time. In this class, the teacher used some teaching methods, such as the collaborative learning method, the brainstorming method, and the use of a projector to display some PowerPoint slides.*

The students were very interactive with the lesson, even the troubled students."[Gold School, field notes].

The next section discusses acquired skills.

Acquired skills of teacher leaders

All participants highlighted that leadership skills, especially those related to teacher leadership, need training to be developed, and they added that there are few courses, if any, offered by the district education office or even the national Ministry. Teachers are not prepared to be leaders during their studies at a university, and they have not learned about teacher leadership. However, a few volunteer teachers support their colleagues by offering some leadership development courses.

> *"About leadership courses, some experts teach them voluntarily, but there are no courses related to developing leadership skills, especially for teachers, there are limited courses only for school administrators, I mean for the principal and deputy principal only, and teachers are not accepted in them." [Participant 3: Gold]*

During their university studies, there were few opportunities to learn skills that might help them in leadership roles after graduation. Their focus was on teaching methods, such as how to use cooperative learning effectively in the classroom, with some information imparted in psychology such as the growth and development of the child. After they are appointed teachers, the Ministry sometimes provides some in-service training, and the new teacher programme aims to develop the teachers.

> *I also attended at the beginning of my teaching the art of diction to teach me how to utter in the classroom in front of the students and how to influence them. I think these courses have not been available for a long time... "[Participant 5 : Gold]*
>
> *"Most of us attended the teacher preparation course for new teachers. " [Participant 6 : Gold]*
>
> *" Most of the focus of the ministry was on teaching us the various teaching methods and how to effectively manage the class and the students"[Participant 8: Gold]*
>
> *"As for the new teacher preparation program, I have not attended it before, as it is only available to a limited number of teachers and focuses on his role within the classroom"[Participant 9: Gold]*

Two participants mentioned that teachers mostly try to develop themselves by attending courses and paid workshops held outside the framework of the Ministry, and they may attend some free courses held online. Most course topics relate to dealing with students and colleagues, effective leadership, as well as how they can pass on their experience to other teachers.

> *"We, in turn, always advise teachers to enrol in free courses related to the development of leaders that benefit them, and I find that they know about it before I advise them…and get the courses, even paid ones, and they pass on what they have learned to other colleagues via some workshops." [Participant 1: Gold]*

The reflective writing participants affirmed that the Ministry has a weakness in terms of developing these teacher leaders as they must rely on their resources. However, teacher leader one is anxious to enrol in leadership-related courses.

> *''I always strive to develop myself in multiple areas at my own expense about some leadership-related skills such as interpersonal skills and problem-solving skills. I try to apply them to reality. These skills helped me a lot in solving school problems. I was also able to form a strong relationship with teachers, students, and even their parents.''*
> *[Participant 11 : Gold]*

These views were confirmed by five focus group participants. The Ministry is perceived to focus on what benefits the teacher in the classroom instead of providing teachers with courses and workshops on interpersonal and effective leadership skills. These participants stressed that this does not prevent teachers from looking for an alternative to develop themselves outside the framework of the Ministry.

> *" I agree with what you mentioned, except for the lack of leadership courses offered by the ministry, so we do not blame others. Everyone can develop himself anywhere and by any means even if it was paid. "[Participant 5 : Gold]*

> *"I think that the Ministry believes that our task is confined to the classroom, for example, it only provides us with courses related to the classroom. "[Participant 6: Gold]*

> *" It is clear that leadership courses are only for members of the school administration... "[Participant 7: Gold]*

" My school principal has told me about some commercial courses, such as effective leadership. I believe her advice has been helpful."[Participant 8 : Gold]

" I think we need courses that we can use, such as ways of dealing with other people."[Participant 9 : Gold]

These participants seem to indicate that the way of developing leadership features of the teacher leader is that he always seeks to develop in new and different areas, including acquiring leadership skills because the training courses offered by the Ministry of Education usually only cover teaching methods. The courses available to teacher leaders do not meet their specific needs.

Overall, the participants perceive that teacher leaders exhibit either habitual or acquired characteristics. They claim that habitual qualities include enthusiasm, the desire to take on a leadership role, and leadership spirit. They believe that these qualities lead to personal motivation and the need to motivate others. In addition to enjoying a great deal of vitality and activity, which in turn affects the performance of those around him, they are perceived to have a high degree of patience and tolerance for work pressures. Participants claim that teacher leaders exhibit a kind of flexibility that makes them adapt to any circumstances that may affect them.

The skills to be developed the most are related to teacher leadership, including communication, interpersonal communication, problem-solving, and effective leadership skills. Such courses are perceived to help participants to perform their leadership roles more effectively. Again, the Ministry of Education is perceived to be remiss in not providing such courses because they are still limited to administrative staff only as employees of the central system.

Effects of Teacher Leadership
The administrators and principal indicated that the impact of teacher leadership is at the organizational, personal, and broader political levels. These emergent themes are derived from the research data.

Benefits of teacher leadership at the organisational level
Nine of the participants – principals, administrators, and teachers - believe that the teacher leader has a major role in the development of the school as a whole, regardless of whether he holds an official position or not.

"I see that these teachers [teacher leaders] are considered a great treasure in every school. They are the main driver in the development and success of the school, whether academically or educationally...even if they do not have a position from the Ministry." [Participant 1: Gold]

" Our leadership benefits the principal, student, teacher, guide, and activity leader. "[Participant 6: Gold]

" Yes, we teachers [teacher leaders] are the link between the student and the school administration"[Participant 7: Gold]

" Our influence outweighs the influence of other members of the school" [Participant 8: Gold]

" We [teacher leaders] influence everyone without any position, so how if we had a position"[Participant 9: Gold]

All participants mentioned the impact and benefits of teacher leadership on the school, including students, teachers, and the principal. They claimed that these teachers guide students to improve their academic achievement and behaviour. They add the claim that these teachers build strong relationships with the students, who then enthusiastically listen and learn. In the process, they gain knowledge and skills from the teacher leader. This special relationship encourages them to love and understand the class subjects, leading to greater well-being. The principal and his deputy (participant 2] expressed those engaging students in extracurricular activities inside and outside the classroom is the way to reinforce the lessons learned in the classroom. The students have the opportunity to apply their skills in a real-world context and are thus considered to exhibit a well-rounded education.

The participants believe that it takes both good relationships, and participation in extracurricular activities, to improve students' behaviour and morals. The teacher leader is important in building important values, including teamwork, and individual and group responsibility.

"These teacher leaders are working as an influential guide to students in this school, despite the presence of a student advisor in this school. But I believe that their [teacher leader] influence might be stronger than a student advisor due to their good and influential communication with their students that make students to be more enthusiastic and try their best to satisfy their teachers by understanding lessons and

getting excellent marks, so that their students' achievement were clearly improved."
[Participant 3: Gold]

"They [teacher leaders] are always keen to influence the behaviour and morals of their students and be a role model and good example to follow their behaviour. They always try to encourage students to be engaged and interact in all school activities including social, physical, cultural, educational activities that help develop the students' sense of engagement or attachment to their school, thereby decreasing the likelihood of school failure and drop out. In these activities they can practice what they learned in classes."
[Participant 2 : Gold]

Similarly, all the participating teachers reported benefits of teacher leadership for students. They stated that they are keen to form a strong relationship with them, showing good manners. This relationship is perceived to have a great influence on their behaviour in school. They also emphasized that appearance and good behaviour of teacher leaders are part of being a role model with impact. They also claimed that they monitor, direct. and evaluate student behaviour inside and outside the classroom while supporting student needs, especially in delivering the curriculum in a clear manner.

" We do not forget that we try to be good behaviours with them and with others because we see them as a good example for them to understand. They watch our behaviour and are affected by it. "[Participant 5: Gold]

" We treat students with respect and appreciation so that we can influence them. "[Participant 6: Gold]

" I think that the students love us, and we try to facilitate the curriculum for them in a friendly way"[Participant 7: Gold]

" I think that if the student loves the teacher, he will love the approach that he presents. "[Participant 8: Gold]

" We monitor their behaviour and try hard to evaluate them and give advice in evaluating them in a beautiful way. "[Participant 9: Gold]

These quotes indicate that teacher leaders are seen as always trying to control their actions, behaviours, and words because they are role models for students. They expect their students to be influenced by them. Teacher leaders are seen to be encouraging and motivating their students to engage in different activities to enhance their skills and learning outcomes. It serves to give them confidence and accustoms them to take responsibility and to display independence. This role is shown more clearly for teacher leaders than for other teachers.

Teacher leaders are perceived to have an effect, not only on students but also on other teachers and colleagues at school. Three participants mentioned that teacher leaders offer courses to transfer their skills and experiences, especially to new teachers. They usually serve as mentors for novice teachers by helping to acclimatise them to their new school and advising on instruction, curriculum, procedures, practices, and politics.

> *"These (teacher leaders) provide courses for new teachers to gain them important knowledge and skills in their field of teaching to students, and they share with other teachers some knowledge, educational and practical experiences through some mutual visits between them… some teachers need a help because they have less sufficient academic knowledge of the subject or effective teaching methods." [Participant 1: Gold]*

> *"These teachers have roles outside the classroom, such as providing help and support to the teachers including new teachers. The experienced leader guides and directs those who are less experienced, or even new teachers, because they usually do know exactly how to manage students, solve problems, or what is the school's policy." [Participant 2: Gold]*

The focus group teachers added that they share and cooperate with teachers from different disciplines. They try to meet in their spare time between lessons to discuss common issues regarding modifying the behaviour of students or any problems that occur between the teachers themselves. They also claimed that they exchange experiences, regardless of age or seniority, and try to form a cooperative environment that helps in guiding, evaluating, and developing each other. It could be through developmental courses that benefit them in their work and practical lives.

> *" Yes, for example, yesterday I had a problem with one of the students, as he frequently goes out to the toilet a lot. One of the leaders advised me to speak to his father to make sure of his condition, and today it became clear to me that he has diabetes, so I*

understood the matter, and this is one of the benefits of the cooperation of the teacher leaders. "[Participant 5: Gold]

''We meet in free time or between classes to exchange experiences and discuss any problems that happen to one of us together with students or teachers, and we seek to find the best ways to solve them. "[Participant 6: Gold]

" I agree with you, we are the leaders who strive to create a better learning experience"[Participant 9: Gold]

In addition, the administrators and school principals claimed that these teacher leaders had a clear role in the school's reform movement. Principals strive to engender a relationship of trust with these teachers, affording them the chance to make decisions about teacher and student issues related to school improvement.

"They [teacher leaders) are always trying to break the ice between management staff and colleagues .... the manager always trusts them and trusts their decisions that they make so I feel they have a wonderfully positive relationship" [Participant 4: Gold]

The teachers also claimed that they strive to be a link between the students and the school administration and between the teachers and the administration. While also performing general administrative tasks, these teachers participate in school administration, along with other administrative staff, in preparing the educational process, both inside and outside the classroom.

"Yes, and I think we help even the deputy principal, the activity leader, and the student guide in carrying out some of their duties. "[Participant 5: Gold]

" The student deals only with the teacher with what he needs, even from the school administration, and the administration deals with the teacher with regards to the student, so we connect them. "[Participant 7: Gold]

" Also, I previously helped my former principal in another school, where I had experience in ways of dealing with students and parents, in addition to my familiarity with some regulations related to the Ministry of Education."[Participant 9: Gold]

Two participants expressed concern that the principal has insufficient time to concentrate on all his duties. Thus, teacher leaders must support them in making the right decisions while freeing them from tasks such as staff supervision. School principals thereby should find more

time to focus and concentrate on important tasks including the preparation of traditional administrative tasks, e.g., reports for the school supervision centre.

"They (the teacher leaders) help the school administration and the principal in solving many of the problems they face and trying to find right solutions to them...because he [the principal] is sometimes under pressure and does not have time as he is busy with other routine administrative work" [Participant 2: Gold]

One of the teachers added that the principal always asks him to prepare comprehensive reports at the supervision centre, in addition to taking full responsibility for entering the students' grades.

" The director gives me full responsibility for entering the students' grades... and I help him in writing some reports for the centre, as he trusts me very much and in my writing." [Participant 6: Gold]

Teacher leaders also assist school principals in developing expertise by working collaboratively and sharing experiences. For example, the principal reported that one teacher leader supported him a great deal in the beginning by helping him solve conflicts between teachers and difficult parents. It helped that these teachers understood everyone's feelings, thus building trust between the school and the parents.

"I don't forget when I was first appointed as principal of a school, one of the teacher leaders helped me by gaining some important skills in solving some of the problems I faced such as dealing with teachers and also parents...Sometimes I benefited from their experiences as they may benefit from my experiences." [Participant 1: Gold]

"These teachers are usually closer to students and their parents, so they understand their needs and desires more" [Participant 4: Gold]

It has been observed that teacher leaders and other teachers have a strong relationship, they are constantly consulted, they benefit from each other, they respect each other, and they help them solve some of the problems that they face.

"It was observed that two teachers consulted one of the teacher leaders about a problem he encountered in the behaviour of one of the students and the other in the poor level of the students. The teacher leader suggests to them some ways to help them in how to modify the behaviour of this student and how to improve the level of students. The relationship between

these two teachers and the teacher leader was a treatment of respect and mutual trust between them." [Gold School, field notes]

Overall, all participants claim that teacher leaders have a role in school improvement. They benefit all members, including students, teachers, and the school principal, as well as the rest of the administrative staff. They try to form an effective cooperative environment among themselves based on trust and respect. Their ultimate goal is perceived to be the improvement of the student's level of education and behaviour .Their relationship with school members comes through exchanging experiences, thus creating a more positive and disciplined school environment for everyone to act independently and professionally.

The next sub-theme addresses the effects of teacher leadership at the political level.

Effects of teacher leadership at the political level
Two school administrators reported that the effects of teacher leadership go beyond Gold school. These benefits extend to other schools, the local community, and parents, by providing support as appropriate. This entails holding development and training courses, doing extra-curricular activities, or even engaging teachers in solving problems facing other schools or the local community.

> *"Some teachers have a prominent role in training and developing other teachers in other schools...and sometimes they are consulted on solving some of the problems they face, for example, how to deal with some quarrelsome students in their schools."* [Participant 4: Gold]

> *"We have one of the teachers who has positive imprints in the neighbourhood in terms of holding some extra-curricular activities for them and holding some educational meetings among the neighbourhood's people to educate them about ways to deal with their children. Sometimes he makes home visits to check on the reason for the absence of students."* [Participant 1: Gold]

The other participants confirmed the views of school administrators. They explained that, as teacher leaders, the benefits extend outside the school district, for example in being involved at the supervision centre or in other schools. They may work at the neighbourhood level to provide informal activities and courses. Their role may also include solving problems in a student's family, which may affect the student's psychology and stability.

" We have roles in supervision centres where we help them if they face any problems with teachers or students in other schools as they want to solve this problem in a friendly way instead of using regular methods. I also offer activities and help in doing some courses and workshops in the supervision centre"[Participant 5: Gold]

" A while ago, a lecture was held on ways to deal with adolescents in the neighbourhood centre "[Participant 6: Gold]

" Not long ago, I coordinated to meet the parents of one of the students, as his educational level was reduced and it was found that his parents had family conflicts they were instructed to go to the reform committee between the spouses and, after a while, I saw the level of the student improving, and this is one of the advantages of the teacher who holds them responsible. "[Participant 9: Gold]

These comments suggest that the benefits of teacher leadership go beyond the school, to include other schools, the Supervision Centre, the local community, and even the family. They were involved in problem-solving, although generally outside the teacher's usual tasks. These activities enhanced their role as teacher leaders. The next sub-section discusses the effects of teacher leadership at the personal level.

Effects of teacher leadership at the personal level

Three participants claimed that teacher leadership is not limited to the organizational or political level. They also play a major role at the personal level in terms of helping others gain experience in developing their skills and leadership abilities. They believe that teacher leadership may make teachers seek continuous professional improvement after assessing their current level. They claim that the teacher leader can provide great benefits in helping others to make positive changes in their practice. It increases the level of respect they deserve and gives them the empowerment they need to become confident and satisfied.

"Also, this leadership makes him [teacher leader] keen to constantly develop himself in various fields, especially leadership, and this gives the teacher a feeling of satisfaction with himself and makes him keen to evaluate himself, and this is a benefit that characterizes the leader." [Participant 2: Gold]

"If the principal trusts these teachers [leaders], the principal gives them more power, and this thus increases the percentage of mutual respect between them, and this increases the trust of these teachers." [Participant 3: Gold]

> *" What distinguishes them from the rest is that they desire leadership and seek to learn from others and constantly develop themselves as leaders… helping others to develop their skills as well."[Participant 4: Gold]*

The participating teacher leaders added that a leadership role gave them the desire to develop in all fields. The teacher has an active role and a place among his colleagues, students, and the school administration. This position encourages them to make decisions and the ability to lead, thus increasing their level of confidence and self-satisfaction.

> *"I have benefited from leadership, and it gives me many professional development skills, social and leadership skills and makes me want to develop myself without stopping. "[Participant 5: Gold]*

> *" The teacher has his place and destiny after he was marginalized in school, and it gives him a feeling of satisfaction. "[Participant 7: Gold]*

> *" It increased my confidence in myself and my abilities and gave me a feeling of satisfaction. "[Participant 8: Gold]*

> *" It gave me a kind of strength in school in making decisions related to myself and the school sometimes. "[Participant 9: Gold]*

This body of evidence suggests that a leadership role may have an impact on the teacher's level in terms of motivating others to develop themselves while giving them agency and independence in making decisions. Their desire to assume leadership roles in the school seems to have increased their self-satisfaction, confidence, and pride in their achievements.

Demotivators for Teachers to Become Teacher Leaders

Participants were asked to discuss the motivators and demotivators of teacher leadership to help in understanding the current system. The results indicate a general agreement that Saudi teachers face many obstacles in building their ability to be active teacher leaders. The participants reported challenges and obstacles that prevent teachers from being leaders at the political, organizational, and personal levels.

Demotivators of teacher leadership at the political level

Most participants in this school mentioned that teachers lack the power to lead. The Ministry of Education's policy for teachers does not go beyond the classroom - and managing lessons and students.

> *"In my opinion, the biggest challenge they (teacher leaders) face is the lack of a provision in our education policy in Saudi Arabia that stipulates enabling these teachers to lead in schools. Their role is only limited and often does not exceed the boundaries of the class." [Participant 1: Gold]*

One of the teachers participating in the reflective writing added that there are limitations in their ability to make decisions, and they do not enjoy the autonomy and trust of the Ministry.

> *"Our voices are always not heard by the Ministry, and they do not trust our decisions and they do not give us space to make decisions. Even at the level of our teaching, we do not have the full possibility to make decisions about for example what to teach, and how to assess students' progress" [Participant 11: Gold]*

This view was also expressed by all teachers in the focus group, that the Ministry's view of the teacher is limited. In general, teachers' opinions are not taken into consideration in determining what is important to the educational process. The Ministry even restricts the teacher's dealings with students. In the past, the prestige, and power of the teacher were perceived to be somewhat stronger. This has caused a lack of trust between teachers and the Ministry.

> *" In the past, more than twenty years ago, teachers had prestige and respect from the Ministry, the students, and their families ... The teacher's powers were much stronger. "[Participant 5: Gold]*

> *" To be realistic, the Ministry does not look at us with appreciation as it does with the Director. "[Participant 6: Gold]*

> *" For example, I have many comments on the curriculum, and I contacted the Ministry, but there was no answer, and I was not even able to meet the official. "[Participant 7: Gold]*

> *" With all due respect, how do they want us to trust them and their decisions, even the simplest things they do not share with us? "[Participant 9: Gold]*

The participants' comments indicate that there are clear obstacles to attaining a leadership role at this school. The Ministry operates a centralized system that inevitably affects leadership. The prevailing system does not encourage teachers or give them the strength to exercise leadership even at the school level. Teachers do not have real confidence and independence while making decisions, even at a class level with students. This is one of the most important obstacles claimed by participants at this school.

Demotivators of teacher leadership at the organizational level

One reported demotivator is that teachers may lose their title and job position or role as teacher leaders in the school. This is probably because this is not a formal Ministry position. In addition, they do not have incentives, such as Teacher of the Week, from the school administration to encourage participation in leadership.

> *"One of the main obstacles for the leader is that he does not have a job position, and this makes him lose some enthusiasm for leadership, if he sees that he is like other teachers"* [Participant 3: Gold]

> *"We teacher leaders are often not paid any more money than the rest of the teachers. Or even lack encouragement sometimes, for example, Teacher of the Week, Professional Lunch, etc. to encourage them, so lacking these rewards leads them to be not involved in the teacher leadership roles "* [Participant 4: Gold]

Two participants confirmed that rewards and incentives, such as money and prizes, or less tangible rewards, such as encouragement, are not present in the school. These incentives may have motivated these teachers to take the reins of leadership in the school. In contrast, focus group teacher A commented that a reward from God is a great motivator for them to take the lead.

> *" Sensing the reward from God is sufficient for the teacher leader. "* [Participant 5: Gold]

> *" The principal usually has a budget in the school. If he gives part of it to the teacher leader, the teacher will be motivated to lead, such as prizes or money. "*[Participant 6: Gold]

> *" At the very least, a moral honour by encouraging him in front of his colleagues. "*[Participant 8: Gold]

" I think the budget is low in the school. "[Participant 9: Gold]

Focus group participants stated that the Ministry gives more powers to the school principal to make decisions for the school. Sometimes, the school principal holds these powers alone, and this may demotivate teacher leaders.

" Yes, I agree with you, in many cases, the principal may greatly hinder the teachers' work. "[Participant 6: Gold]

" Sure, but I mean other schools. "[Participant 7: Gold]

The teacher who lacks a job title at the school level may be discouraged from taking on a leadership role. This may be exacerbated if there is a lack of material incentives, such as promotion or other rewards, or an expression of thanks and appreciation. In addition, some teachers suffer from a lack of mutual trust with the principal and experience weak support for self-government at the school level. This occurs if the principal reduces the teacher's full range of responsibility. All these matters negatively affect the teacher's desire to take on a leadership role, even if it would contribute to improving the school.

Demotivators of teacher leadership at the personal level

At the personal level, two of the administrators mentioned that teachers lose their enthusiasm to practice leadership. It may be due to the belief that they have little influence on those around them or that they lack awareness of a reward from God.

"The biggest factor for some people's reluctance to drive is their lack of enthusiasm… This enthusiasm may be due to their lack of awareness of the impact of leadership and the weakness of calculating the reward and reward from God." [Participant 3: Gold]

"They may have enthusiasm at first and then it starts to diminish little by little." [Participant 2: Gold]

One teacher indicates that enthusiasm fluctuates or subsides due to the presence of some other influences, such as the unwillingness of some teachers to cooperate with them.

"I see the enthusiasm of some fluctuate or disappear due to the presence of non-personal reasons such as the authority of the manager or the lack of cooperation of colleagues." [Participant 11: Gold]

Four focus group teachers added that one of the personal reasons for teacher reluctance to take the lead is that some lack experience, either because they do not practice leadership, or because

they are new teachers, lacking knowledge of leadership skills. This may lead teachers to shirk leadership responsibilities:

> " *True, and they also have weakness in some leadership skills*"[Participant 5: Gold]

> " *Or they are not new, but they did not have a leadership role before.* "[Participant 6: Gold]

> " *True, once I asked one of the old teachers, I said Why don't you have an active role in school? He said, "I don't know how to act as a leader.* "[Participant 7: Gold]

> " *There are new teachers who may find it difficult to be leaders.* "[Participant 8: Gold]

Overall, the demotivators cited at the personal level include the loss or fluctuation of enthusiasm for leadership among some teachers. In the participants' opinion, this is due to frustration with their low level of influence on those around them, including principals, teachers, and students. Sometimes, it is because they are new, with a lack of experience and leadership skills. In addition, it stems from an inability to seek reward from God. It is known that this is one of the main motivations for teacher leaders. Teachers who would otherwise be motivated show low enthusiasm due to non-personal reasons such as a tyrannical principal (not in this school but in some other schools) or a lack of cooperation among peers. These reasons may hinder teacher leadership and thus negatively affect the development of the school.

Overview

In short, it appears that cooperation and participation are an essential feature of the leadership system in this school and that teacher leadership systems are participatory and distributive as well. They often have some kind of freedom to participate in various leadership roles such as supporting the principals, students, their colleagues, and certain school decisions. The teacher leaders in this school have a great sense of responsibility and enthusiasm for their school environment. It is clear from the opinion of the participants that they have a great awareness of the role of the teacher leader in improving the school as a whole, including students, teachers, the principal, and the rest of the administrators. This is evident through their attempt to form an effective cooperative environment among them based on trust and respect, thus creating a more positive and disciplined school environment for everyone to work independently and professionally. These leaders were willing to assume leadership responsibilities in their schools because they had the ability and autonomy to make decisions. This strengthened their role as teachers' leaders and increased their self-satisfaction, confidence, and pride in their

achievements. This readiness and enthusiasm for leadership despite the presence of some obstacles they have, foremost of which is the policy of the Ministry of Education and its central system, which does not give them any appropriate roles, not even job titles and does not share leadership responsibilities with them. However, the principal of this school was a great supporter of these leaders in terms of his attempt to encourage and support these leaders, consult them, and take their opinions regarding school issues, and this is his diligence and not one of his administrative tasks assigned to him by the Ministry. This is a general overview of this chapter.

The next chapter presents the findings of the second case study, Silver School.

CHAPTER SIX: SILVER SCHOOL

This chapter presents the findings of the Silver School case study, comprising interviews with four administrators, a focus group with five teacher leaders, the reflective writing of two teacher leaders, and my field notes. This chapter is divided into three sections. The first presents the case study context, the second shows participants' characteristics, and the third offers a thematic analysis of the data. The four themes are concepts of teacher leadership, attributes and skills of teacher leaders, the effects of teacher leadership, and demotivators. The next section presents the case study context.

Case Study Context

Silver School is located in the Riyadh region in the centre of the capital. It is a high school affiliated with the Main Office of Education. The school consists of three grades, from the first to third grade (high school), each grade consisting of approximately 245 boys distributed over five classes. Their nationalities are mostly Saudi, with a few Syrians and Palestinians. The level of education and income for the neighbourhood's population is average (Al-Juhani et al, 2018)

The leadership of the school comprises one principal, three deputy principals, one student guide, and four administrative assistants. The number of teachers is 42, with different specializations. Every year, some teachers transfer from this school and change to another in the same city, but the administrative staff, including the principals. have stayed the same for more than 15 years. The teachers have a full load of 24 lessons per week. They are also required to supervise and monitor students during break times as well as when they are leaving school.

The majority of teachers and administrators in this school have a bachelor's degree in various fields; only one teacher has a master's degree. The average age is 42 years, and all are of Saudi nationality. However, the average age of the principal, the deputies, and the administrative staff, exceeds 56 years.

There are 23 classrooms in the school. There are 18 toilets for students with just 3 toilets for school staff, an equipped laboratory, and an old library. Two large classrooms are used as a rest area for teachers. A large storage area contains both new and old curriculum books and approximately thirty tables and chairs.

A meeting is held at the beginning of the semester between the principal and teachers, to distribute pre-set schedules and some tasks. In addition, there is an evening discussion meeting

between parents and teachers once per semester, during which parents ask questions about their children's academic level. The next sub-section presents the participants' characteristics.

Participants' Positions

This section discusses the positions of the four senior leaders, namely the school principal, two deputy principals, and the student advisor, followed by the other participants (teacher leaders). Table 6.1 shows the participant numbers allocated to the four school leaders. They are all experienced educators. All four participants have a bachelor's degree.

Participants	Position
Participant 1	Principal
Participant 2	Deputy Principal
Participant 3	Deputy Principal
Participant 4	Student advisor

Table 6.1 Participants' Positions

Table 6.2 displays the roles of the teacher leaders who attended the focus group and completed the reflective writing.

Participants	Position	Data source
Participant 5	Teacher leader	Focus group
Participant 6	Teacher leader	Focus group
Participant 7	Teacher leader	Focus group
Participant 8	Teacher leader	Focus group
Participant 9	Teacher leader	Focus group
Participant 10	Teacher leader	Reflective writing
Participant 11	Teacher leader	Reflective writing

Table 6.2 Teacher leaders' roles

Table 6.2 shows the roles of the seven teacher leaders of Silver school, who agreed to participate in the study. Five of them participated in the focus group while two contributed reflective writing. Participants were purposively recruited for both focus groups and reflective writing. They are all experienced educators, aged between 25 to 45 years. All participants have

a bachelor's degree while just one has a master's degree. The next sub-section discusses the participants' understanding of the concept of teacher leadership.

Understanding Teacher Leadership.

The overall focus of the participants, both principals and teacher leaders, is that teacher leadership focuses on two dimensions. The first relates to the organizational level (see below), while the second focuses on the personal level.

Teacher leadership at the organizational level

Three senior leaders did not see a clear difference between defining leadership and management, as they see them as having one meaning. They believe that the teacher leader is the teacher who manages the task management process in an organized manner, and these tasks are required by the main leaders in the school, headed by the principal.

Participants mentioned the term teacher leadership at the organizational level and three of them said that teacher leadership exists at this level only. Teacher leadership is perceived to relate mostly to classroom management and student discipline issues within the class. It also applies to student success in academic subjects. Discipline can be achieved only by a few teachers with leadership and personal capabilities to control their classes. They also emphasized that the teacher leader can control students at break time and supervise them outside the classroom to prevent wrong behaviours.

> *"I see that the teacher's leadership can be defined as the teacher who possesses some administrative characteristics, such as the strength of personality and the ability to control the class that enables him to control his class, manage the behaviour of his students, and manage the scientific material effectively, so that the information reaches the student and then they achieve success "[Participant 1: Silver]*

> *"In addition, the definition includes the teacher outside the class that, as we said, has the ability and strong character to control and supervise students at the time of supervision and break." [Participant 3: Silver]*

However, in the reflective writing, the participants saw that the teacher leader has a role in helping students, not only controlling them in the classroom but also helping with their academic and practical development by building good relationships and seeking to influence them.

"I consider this work a good example of leadership. It has fostered interaction with students while assisting their mental, physical, and social development…It has helped students understand lessons better and has tried to diversify teaching methods rather than focusing on the traditional method of memorization. This was seen as a leadership role." [Participant 11: Silver]

One deputy principal mentioned that the teacher leader can teach and guide new teachers in the school and help them benefit from their experience in dealing with students in the classroom:

''This term includes the teacher who directs and guides the new teachers in the school to give some lessons in their class so that they benefit from them and gives the new teacher how to manage the class and control the bad behaviour of students so that they maintain a quiet class and thus, increasing the opportunity for students to absorb the curriculum." [Participant 2: Silver]

The teachers in reflective writing also mentioned that one of the important roles of the teacher leader is the ability to advise and guide other teachers, especially new ones, in dealing either with the school administration or with the students, while providing them with some modern methods of teaching.

"Also, when we have a new teacher, I try to give him advice because I have a lot of teaching experience. I benefit from him as well as from my experience. I make him enter my classroom to benefit from my teaching method and apply it to his students."
[Participant 10: Silver]

These comments are consistent with what all teachers in the focus group emphasized, that their principal always obliges them to make sure that students are disciplined, and that the teacher leader can control the class more than others, in addition to communicating the academic material to them. Four teachers offered a different perspective, seeing themselves as leaders, whose goal is much more than that. They aim to guide and evaluate students and help build students' personality and behaviour by forming a good relationship with them and to be a good role model for them. Their roles outside the classroom include leading other teachers in the school, developing their relationship with them, consulting with them, inspiring them, and influencing them by setting a good example for them.

" I disagree with you, my dear brother. They want calm with communicating the scientific material to the students. "[Participant 5: Silver]

" We are keen on the good relationship with the students, and this contradicts what the school administration wants... We develop our relationship also with the teachers in the school"[Participant 6: Silver]

" It is correct for you, but we are keen on going beyond that. We want to form a good relationship with them and set an example for them... Exactly even if there is calm... We strive to be a good example to have an impact on teachers and be a source of inspiration for them "[Participant 7: Silver]

" They are always interested in being strong and able to make the classes peaceful. They do not care about the amount of benefit to the students. .... Our goal is more than delivering information. We build the students' personality and correct their behaviour... We as a teacher leader always consult with them about their issues and the issues of the school, "[Participant 8: Silver]

The deputy principal confirmed that teacher leaders are given random names from the school administration, such as expert teachers, and they perform some administrative tasks, such as distributing classes to teachers.

" I see that teacher leaders are often called the ideal or old teacher by the school administration without any additional rewards, and he is empowered with some tasks such as monitoring teachers and raising any absences or mistakes that may occur from them, as well as distributing quotas among them fairly, and sometimes helping the administration to enter student grades in the Noor grading system." [Participant 3: Silver]

The student advisor reported that he was not familiar with the term, teacher leadership, although he noticed how the teachers were usually effective at leading students within a class and have a greater role in controlling discipline. He confirmed some terms used as an alternative to teacher leadership: for example, expert teacher.

'' For the first time, I hear the term teacher leadership despite its influence in the classroom. In addition, we often use terms such as the old teacher or the expert teacher. The first relates to his old age and the second relates to years of experience, which are often no less than a decade. " [Participant 4: Silver]

This comment suggests that administrators are ignorant of the term "teacher leader." This may be because of the impact of the centralized system. The prevailing system takes over; yet this

term has been modified for some teachers to include alternative connotations, including age and experience. Perhaps the reason is that these teacher leaders do not have a formally recognized position granted by the Ministry of Education. Therefore, they have been randomly named by school administrators.

In general, the administration in the second school differentiates between management and leadership because their focus is on accomplishing tasks and finding teachers to help them complete them as needed, such as distributing lessons. This is their conception of leadership but would more often be regarded as management. They may be transforming teachers from professionals to technicians because these administrators focus on their needs while asking these teachers to perform some administrative tasks, often nothing more. Administrators seem to emphasize that teacher leadership is mostly related to management and student discipline both inside and outside the classroom. The teachers see the teacher leader as aiming to help students rather than to control them, for example by providing advice and guidance.

The principal. Listens to the teacher leaders, and respects their opinions, but he mainly discusses decisions with the other administrators and assigns tasks to the teacher leaders.

> *"When I observed one of the meetings between the principal of the school and the teachers, I saw that the principal has a kind of uniqueness in the decision, and he is the one who dictates decisions to the teachers and asks them to implement them. His relationship with the teachers is somewhat formal, and I did not find there is harmony between him and the teachers, especially the leaders. He respects their point of view, but in the end, he shares the decision with one of the administrators (the deputy principal), and in this meeting, he asked one of the teachers' leaders to follow up and solve a group of students who have behavioural problems, as he explained that the student advisor was unable to solve them. [Silver School, field notes]*

Teacher leadership at the personal level

Two focus group participants claimed that teachers who can develop their leadership knowledge, skills, competence, and experience, as well as their ability to make decisions in difficult situations, may be regarded as teacher leaders.

> *"Teachers often do not develop their skills and knowledge nor develop their leadership competence, like what a teacher leader is keen on." [Participant 6: Silver]*

"By their ability, they (teacher leaders) have sufficient experience to qualify them to make decisions in the most difficult situations because they have professionalism."[Participant 9: Silver]

The next section discusses the attributes and skills of teacher leaders.

Attributes and Skills of Teacher Leaders

It is clear from the participants that teacher-leader attributes are perceived to be either ingrained or acquired. The next sub-section focuses on the perceived ingrained qualities of a teacher leader.

Ingrained attributes of a teacher leader

One participant claimed that teacher leaders learn and develop themselves and are inspired by senior leaders:

"The teacher leader is the teacher who can develop himself as well by simulating the leadership of other leaders in the school such as the principal or outside the school such as supervisors. This simulation helps him in managing his class or in ways of dealing with class problems." [Participant 11: Silver]

The student advisor mentioned that one of the ingrained features of a teacher is the ability to carry out leadership tasks. This is the result of his self-confidence and strong personality. These qualities are perceived to be ingrained characteristics of all leaders.

"How can a teacher become a leader if he does not have a strong personality so that he is firm with the students inside and outside the classroom?

Is this an innate trait or can a person develop it?

Certainly, it is an innate characteristic that he must have this strong personality in dealing with students, especially students with bad behaviour." [Participant 4: Silver]

There are mixed opinions from the focus group participants, where two believe that the teacher leader must have a unique personality that distinguishes him from others, as they have a long-term vision to make important decisions and have a strong influence on those around him, while the other three believe that the qualities are acquired, not ingrained.

"A leader, in my opinion, must have a comprehensive vision to be able to make the appropriate decision. "[Participant 5: Silver]

"I also add that he is an influential person, that is, he can influence those around him. "[Participant 6: Silver]

"I would also like to add that I read that 98% of people are capable of being leaders and 1% of people are born leaders. "[Participant 7: Silver]

"In fact, I disagree with you. I think every person can be a teacher leader as long as he desires to lead. "[Participant 8: Silver]

"I agree with you. How many leaders were able to be better than others by developing themselves in terms of leadership? "[Participant 9: Silver]

During my fieldwork, the students were interacting inside the classroom, and the teacher leader used various methods of teaching, such as teaching aids, despite the pressures from the school administration, that he had quick intuition in solving any problems he faced.

"The teacher leader in the class has a beautiful style of teaching. The students were interacting with the class and he used educational aids such as a projector and the use of learning by playing, but the interesting thing is that in the integration of the students in the class and the interaction, there were somewhat loud voices, which forced the deputy principal to open the class forcefully without permission and ask the teacher to control the students and reduce the sounds, so what was the teacher However, he took the students out to the school yard directly and completed his teaching to them, and the students continued with the same enthusiasm. The teacher in this scenario demonstrated adaptability and prioritized the learning environment over potential disruptions. Instead of succumbing to external pressure to quiet the class, the teacher took proactive measures by moving the lesson to the schoolyard, ensuring both engagement and discipline were maintained. The main leadership point is the teacher's ability to navigate unexpected challenges while keeping the focus on effective teaching and student involvement." [Silver School, Field Notes].

The next section discusses acquired skills.

Acquired skills of teacher leaders

Three participants believe that teachers who are leaders, like other leaders, may increase their learning and raise their level of leadership by learning new skills. The deputy principal stated that such teachers learn from him imitate his leadership method and apply it to their students.

"I see the teacher, like the rest of the people, who learn to drive through simulation. For example, one of the teachers imitates me in my way of dealing with students. I am firm with the students, so he improved his level of controlling the class..., I see all the skills that a person can learn and practice, and I am in fact against his idea of having innate qualities in a leader because I found many people with weak personality and developed themselves." [Participant 2: Silver]

Some teachers see leadership as a quality that develops over time, to focus on influence, rather than a strong personality:

"Every person can lead if he constantly develops himself... In my opinion, leadership is leadership by influence, not by strength and firmness in personality. When a leader has a strong relationship with everyone, you can influence them…I am in contrast to those who say leadership is innate because, in their opinion, this frustrates those who want to lead." [Participant 10: Silver]

All participants mentioned the importance of training, as they believe leadership skills need continuous training to develop. The Ministry provides these courses to the school's administrative staff because of their involvement in administration. The participants mentioned that the university provides teachers and trains them in methods of classroom control. The Ministry believes that this is what teachers need instead of leadership.

"The Ministry has not shortened its provision of courses for every person and what he needs. For example, it has provided teachers with what they need, such as what is related to teaching methods, and to managers what is related to leadership."
[Participant 1: Silver]

Similarly, three focus group participants stated that teacher leadership requires that the teacher develops the administrative aspect and that there is a clear gap, as the Ministry provides courses only about some purely educational aspects and ignores other aspects such as self-development and building self-confidence and effective communication. Two participants claimed that teachers do not need intervention from the Ministry and that they can develop their internal leadership abilities by relying on reading and shadowing successful leaders. Four participants confirmed that, during their university studies, they did not learn about leadership. There were no topics or methods related to developing leadership. However, one participant mentioned that the university has some lecturers who are keen to involve the learners and give them some leadership responsibilities.

"It is not correct to make the Ministry responsible for our development, as they did not fail in our development in terms of delivering the curriculum to students, but we have a great task in developing ourselves in terms of reading leadership books or accompanying successful leaders such as some educational supervisors... Frankly, in the university, some lecturers gave us some tasks and responsibilities that developed in us the character of leadership. "[Participant 5: Silver]

"I believe that the Ministry has nothing to do with our development. Every person bears the responsibility of developing himself through continuous reading and learning about how a teacher can become a leader... It is correct for you to study at a university that qualifies teachers in the classroom and does not qualify us as leaders." [Participant 11: Silver]

"The Ministry does not pay attention to teachers in terms of courses, as it focuses on school administrators, especially school principals and their deputies..., we did not learn any skills related to leadership..." [Participant 7: Silver]

"Yes, I agree with you. Their focus (the ministry) is on school management, and we only have what is related to the educational aspect...Our undergraduate level is only their focus on education in the traditional way." [Participant 8: Silver]

"We need to develop ourselves as leaders, and the officials should help us in that... . .Some of the lecturers understood the teaching process as one-way from the teacher to the learner, and this was what happened to us when we were students at the university..." [Participant 9: Silver]

The principal mentioned that teachers can obtain free leadership courses online. These courses include dealing with others while some relate to administrative tasks in the school.

"Teachers can attend some free online courses regarding interpersonal skills or how to deal with the absence system for employees or students or entering grades for students; I mean administrative tasks. In my opinion, there is no excuse for any teacher in terms of the lack of training." [Participant 1: Silver]

The principal's comments indicate a focus on developing the teacher's skill in administrative tasks such as dealing with the absence system. He did not mention the aspects that develop a teacher in terms of personality and leadership methods in his school. It appears that he is trying to find excuses for the weakness in providing official courses.

Three participants claim that teacher leaders may increase their learning and raise the level of their leadership by learning new skills. Such teachers learn from members of the school administration and imitate their leadership style before applying it to their students. This was confirmed by one of the teacher leaders who was developing himself while inspired by the formal leaders in the school (such as the principal and supervisor). One of the administrators [student advisor] mentioned ingrained qualities in teacher leaders, such as strong personality and firmness, while one of the teacher leaders opposed this stereotype, indicating that leadership comes from influence rather than a strong personality.

Although all the participants mentioned the importance of training for teachers, the school administration believes that the Ministry of Education has trained teachers primarily for the classroom, to diversify their teaching methods. As for assisting in accomplishing administrative tasks, some mentioned that teachers should search for courses that would help in that regard. Thus, shifting the responsibility away from the school leadership.

Effects of Teacher Leadership

The effects of teacher leadership mentioned by participants mainly focus on the benefits at the organizational and personal levels. The next sub-section discusses the benefits at the organizational level.

Benefits of teacher leadership at the organisation level

Participants seem to believe that the benefits of teacher leadership are primarily at the organizational level. Three participants focused on one benefit of teacher leadership: the ability to control students both inside and outside the classroom and to manage the class firmly. They control the students to achieve successful lessons.

> *"I often find their roles (teacher leaders) in the school setting... I don't think they have roles outside of it"* [Participant 1: Silver]

> *"Among the roles of these (the teacher leader) is the ability to manage and control the students in and outside the classroom with a kind of firmness with the students...so that the teacher makes sure that each student has fully comprehended the lesson."* [Participant 2: Silver]

The reflective writing participants say that their role goes beyond controlling the classroom firmly to include influencing students positively by assisting in their mental and emotional development.

"We try hard to influence them by improving our behaviour with them (the students) and to set a good example for them... We are keen to select activities and programmes that fit the growth requirements of their stage, including emotional and mental" [Participant 10: Silver]

Four focus group participants claimed that the benefits of teacher leadership about students include following them up academically and trying to guide them and modify their behaviour, if necessary, both inside and outside the classroom. One argued that the role of the teacher leader does not exceed the limits of the classroom.

"I think I disagree with you. Teacher leaders are responsible, like other teachers, for what happens in the classroom and has nothing to do with what happens outside." [Participant 5: Silver]

"But what differentiates them from the rest of the teachers? On the contrary, it is more influential than others. They direct students to scientific and practical excellence." [Participant 6: Silver]

"I believe that the teacher leader has a higher mission than other teachers, as he makes sure that the students achieve an excellent academic level." [Participant 7: Silver]

"Yes, I agree with you (to focus on achieving an excellent academic level for students), especially since his relationship with students is at its best level, and because of his experience." [Participant 8: Silver]

"I also think that it focuses on modifying their behaviours and morals, whether in the classroom or even outside the school." [Participant 9: Silver]

These comments all indicate a very restricted view of teacher leadership but see below for a broader view.

The administrators mentioned that a teacher leader can teach and guide new teachers in the school, helping them to benefit from their experience in controlling students.

" teacher leaders instruct the new teachers in the school and give the new teacher how to manage the class and control the bad behaviour of the students so that they keep the class quiet and thus increase the chance of the students to absorb the curriculum. [Participant 2: Silver]

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One reflective writing participant says that teacher leaders need to prepare themselves to become supportive of new teachers, including providing them with ways to deal with students in the classroom. It is not uncommon to invite a new teacher into their classroom to hear a model lesson they can later apply to their class.

> *"I am keen to be an effective teacher, so I try to help new teachers, especially about what he faces with his students in the classroom... I sometimes invite them to attend professional lessons for me in my class and with my students so that they can see and implement the ways I deal with students" [Participant 11: Silver]*

Two participants also reported that the benefits include helping the principal by assisting with administrative tasks, such as writing reports for the supervisory centre.

> *"Sometimes they are used by the principal to carry out some administrative tasks, such as reporting the mistakes that teachers and students may make to hold them accountable...and helping to enter the students' grades into the system and sometimes writing reports on the school that are sent to the supervision centre." [Participant 4: Silver]*

Three focus group participants added that their role went beyond the students to include other teachers in terms of supporting them. This involved joint thinking, improving their morale, and cooperating with them in what they needed, with respect to students or with other members of the school, and this cooperation helped them to break their sense of isolation. This is in addition to spreading the spirit of enthusiasm among their fellow teachers. However, the teacher leader claimed that his role with the teachers is not comparable to his role with the school principal, as the school principal entrusts him with certain tasks.

> *"About teachers, I think our impact on him is less than our support for the principal. For example, the principal of the school assigns me some tasks, such as supervising the receipt and distribution of books to students, in addition to the full supervision of the school's facilities and follow-up on their maintenance. This is considered a great support for the principal of the school." [Participant 5: Silver]*

> *"I believe that such cooperation from teacher leaders helps the rest of the teachers not to feel isolated from others and the school community and can contribute to teachers' enthusiasm and diligence in their work." [Participant 6: Silver]*

"We, the teacher leaders, try to enhance cooperation with other teachers, especially those with the same curriculum, so we share how to deliver information to students in the easiest way." [Participant 8: Silver]

"I would add that, sometimes, some teachers face difficulties, whether with students or teachers and love someone who shares their concerns and helps them solve them, so we give them advice and support." [Participant 9: Silver]

I observed that teacher leaders have a very strong relationship with other teachers, and they discuss some of the problems they face and seek to solve them collectively, such as with the administration, with some students, or even about understanding the curriculum and preparing lessons.

" It was noticed that some teachers always try to get angry with the school principal and administrators, but one of the teacher leaders always tries to solve the misunderstanding between them and the school administration, especially about preparing for lessons, as the principal every day asks some teachers to prepare lessons to make sure that they satisfactorily perform their role. Likewise, one of the new teachers complained about some of the student's behaviour and the difficulty of the curriculum, and one of the teacher leaders helped him with that and tried to explain to him what was difficult for him in the curriculum and guided him to the correct ways of dealing with these students" [Silver School, Field Notes]

Benefits of teacher leadership at the personal level

Two focus group participants mentioned, that among the benefits of teacher leadership, is that the teacher feels empowered, is more confident, and is professionally satisfied with their work as a teacher leader.

''We also improve as teacher leaders by being complacent about ourselves because we contribute to helping others'' [Participant 7: Silver]

''Our confidence increases day by day whenever we feel that we are empowered. This confidence increases whenever we give some powers in the school'' [Participant 9: Silver]

Overall, the participants – from the principal to the administrators – see the role of teacher leaders as wielding their influence in firmly controlling students inside and outside the classroom. They also help in the development of students in other ways, such as emotional

growth. The teacher leaders also focus on the new teachers who need guidance with controlling students; and learn by attending model lessons. At the school level, the focus is mostly on administrative tasks, including entering students' grades into the system.

Demotivators for Teachers to Become Teacher Leaders

Three types of demotivators were mentioned by the participants: political, organizational, and personal. Significantly, motivators were not stressed by the interviewees.

Demotivators of teacher leadership at the political level

The deputy principal mentioned that society's view of the teacher leader contributes to their demotivation, as parents usually consider that the principal is the only leader and the main driver of the school, regardless of teacher leaders' roles.

> *"The community's view of the teacher is an obstacle, as the community and parents see that the teacher is responsible for delivering information to the student only and that leadership and management are only the powers of the principal..." [Participant 3: Silver]*

The teachers participating in the reflective writing mentioned that training is among the teacher leader's demotivators because the Ministry does not provide courses related to leadership. The Ministry's dictates are limited to teaching.

> *"The Ministry does not provide any courses for us to develop our leadership practice. They provide courses related to classroom management methods and student control." [Participant 10: Silver]*

> *"We did not receive any materials in our undergraduate studies and are not provided with training to help us develop ourselves as leaders." [Participant 11: Silver]*

Three teacher leaders added that lack of recognition from the Ministry represents the biggest demotivators at the political level, as policies and systems make teacher leaders feel marginalized, as they are not involved in certain aspects, such as contributing to school curricula. This leads to frustration.

> *"The Ministry of Education is among the things that hinder the teacher leader, as there are no laws and regulations in the Ministry about the role of the teacher leader." [Participant 7: Silver]*

> *"I agree with you, these things make us kind of frustrated." [Participant 8: Silver]*

"It is true, so what is our role, at least in the development and writing of curricula, nothing, knowing that we find mistakes in writing curricula" [Participant 9: Silver]

These issues are disincentives for teachers at the political level. Society tends to view the school principal as the sole authority and decision-maker. The teacher is limited to education, such as providing student lessons. Consequently, teachers feel a sense of frustration, which weakens their confidence in their leadership abilities. In addition, they miss out on an opportunity to attend leadership courses as they suffer from the absence of a curriculum that would motivate them to practice their leadership skills following university.

Demotivators of teacher leadership at the organizational level

One participant mentioned that the principal may be an obstacle to teacher leadership, as the education system grants the principal almost full powers of decision-making. The teacher leader does not enjoy a share of these powers.

"The principal derives his strength, and the powers granted to him by the Ministry, and sometimes he does not share leadership with the teacher, as the teacher cannot lead." [Participant 4: Silver]

The participant teacher leaders confirm that the principal sometimes has an authoritarian management style, maintaining firmness with members of the school. Subordinates are assigned tasks, which may create difficulties between the leader and the subordinate.

"The principal is likely to support the teacher leader when they delegate certain powers for them, and conversely, they may feel disappointed if they don't empower the teacher in any way." [Participant 11: Silver]

"Relationships with the principal are an important factor, and poor relationships lead to hatred and poor communication and thus affect the success of the school" [Participant 10: Silver]

Three participants also state that the school principal is a major reason for some teacher leaders being discouraged. They also claim that some principals do not like anyone to participate in making decisions, and it is preferable for some principals that the final decision be made by them. When teacher-leaders take the initiative, and suggest school development plans, this may not be accepted by senior leaders The principal demands that teacher-leaders take care of the students inside the classrooms only, and not focus on what happens outside the classroom, leading to demotivation for teacher leaders. One teacher leader believes that the manager is the

biggest obstacle because the person's energy is limited, and he cannot perform his role well if he does not have enough free time to perform his required roles.

> *"I don't think that the principal is a hindrance, but not having enough time for the leader is the biggest hindrance, because they are human beings with limited energy." [Participant 5: Silver]*

> *"In my opinion, the biggest challenge is the school principal because he often frustrates the teacher without realizing it." [Participant 6: Silver]*

> *"And if some of us try to contribute to the development of the school in any way, he is only asking us to take care of the students inside the classroom." [Participant 7: Silver]*

> *"He likes to be alone in the decisions of the school and does not even share the administrative structure with him, let alone the participation of us, the leaders." [Participant 8: Silver]*

The principal is considered a key factor in the success of the school. The comments in this sub-section indicate that the principal is reluctant to share power, leading to frustration for teacher leaders.

Demotivators of teacher leadership at the personal level

At the personal level, the principal mentioned that some teachers do not have the enthusiasm to lead. They prefer to focus on their main task, which is to teach students.

> *"Sometimes the teacher does not want to take on leadership roles and does not have enthusiasm... the most important thing in my opinion is to focus on teaching the students" [Participant 1: Silver]*

One focus group teacher leader added that some personal demotivators prevent them from leading, the most important of which is the lack of leadership goals, and lack of clarity about what they aspire to achieve. Another participant added that some of these teachers do not have flexibility, or the ability to control their nerves, especially when making decisions and dealing with problems. One participant added that the teacher leader sometimes misses the formation of good relations with school members, so tension may occur, and he does not fulfil his role as a teacher leader.

"It might be nervous . . . [and this] is one of the impediments to leadership because leadership requires the ability to self-control." [Participant 6: Silver]

"I think that the leader's absence of goals makes him floundering and unachievable." [Participant 8: Silver]

"The teacher leader needs to form good relationships with students, teachers, administrators, and supervisors, as leadership is based on strong relationships with them. If this relationship becomes strained, there may be weakness in performing leadership roles." [Participant 9: Silver]

The deputy principal believes that, if a teacher took up leadership in the school, he might behave in an authoritarian way with his fellow teachers. Therefore, his colleagues may not want to cooperate out of jealousy. This may affect the teacher's desire to take on leadership tasks.

"Some teachers may imitate authoritarianism over their colleagues... Some of them may become jealous of him." [Participant 3: Silver]

Overall, it is clear that the principal expects the teacher's work to be confined to the classroom and teaching students. A lack of enthusiasm on the part of the classroom teacher may be caused by other factors such as work pressure or a lack of support from the school administration.

Overview

Centralization appears to be an essential feature of leadership in this school, while teacher leadership is not participatory or distributive. Teacher leaders often lack the freedom to participate in various leadership roles, such as supporting the principal, students, and their colleagues, although some were keen to do so. Most teacher leaders have a great awareness of the role of the teacher leader in improving the school as a whole, although participant administrators believe that leadership is confined to their limited role within the classroom, especially in controlling students. It seems that these teacher leaders claim to have the ability to take on leadership responsibilities, but they face some difficulties, mostly focusing on the manager's domination of decisions. The principal shares decisions with the administrative staff, but not with teacher leaders.

The next chapter provides a cross-case analysis, linked to the literature.

CHAPTER SEVEN: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents an analysis and discussion of the themes derived from the various data sets. The themes to be explored are:

- Understanding Teacher Leadership
- Attributes and Skills of Teacher Leaders
- Effects of Teacher Leadership
- Demotivators for Teachers to become Teacher Leaders

Understanding Teacher Leadership

This theme encompasses two sub-themes related to the organisational and personal aspects of teacher leadership.

Teacher leadership at the organisational level

Participants' perspectives on the meaning of teacher leadership at the organisational level differed across the various data sets.

Working with colleagues

Teacher leaders at the Gold School agreed that the role of teacher leaders includes supporting and cooperating with their colleagues. The administrators noted that the teacher leaders typically exhibit more enthusiasm and a greater sense of responsibility for the improvement of the school when compared to other teachers. Although administrators in the Silver school neglect the importance These findings are consistent with those from the Silver school, where teacher leaders pointed out that their role is to develop relationships with other teachers. This includes providing them with the necessary information, including modern teaching methods, while also serving as a source of inspiration and setting a positive example for their colleagues. They claim to offer an example for others to follow and actively contribute to the development of students' personalities and behaviour by modelling the values of successful teaching. Developing working relationships with other teachers is the second level in the Grant (2006) teacher leadership model, where teacher leaders form close relationships and connections with teachers to contribute to a community of teacher learners and leaders and to influence others towards improved educational practice. This is consistent with other literature on effective teacher leaders in education. For example, Shen et al. (2020), and Pardini, Jaya, Ihsanudin & Luthfi (2022), stress the importance of collaborative connections between teachers and leaders in establishing a positive educational culture. A teacher leader inspiring another teacher also

helps to pave the way to motivate and encourage teachers and to create a positive teaching environment (Fairman and Mackenzie, 2014). This may also contribute to students' overall development, encompassing not only academic skills but also shaping their social and emotional learning (Smith, 2020). It underscores the significant role educators play in shaping students holistically (Jakavonytė-Staškuvienė, 2023).

Four supervisors mentioned that teacher leaders could play a significant role also in promoting a 'community of practice' through the transfer and exchange of educational and leadership experiences. The community of practice can be a powerful resource for teacher leaders, in offering learning, support, and collaboration, and simultaneously for developing their own skills, sharing knowledge, and making a positive impact on their students and the broader community (Wenner & Campbell, 2018. Hutchinson & Schaefer& Criswell 2022). The findings of the current study are supported by the literature. For example, Derrington & Anderson (2020), and Wang & Wong (2021), show that teacher leaders have vital roles in fostering relationships with fellow teachers, offering guidance and support, and serving as a source of inspiration and positive influence, contributing to obtaining a positive work environment by improving professional development and school outcomes. This appears to match the notion of a community of practice (CoP). This is defined by Lave & Wenger (1991) as a group of people who share similar professional interests and who gather together to exchange experiences, learn from one another, and improve their combined knowledge and abilities. The authors emphasise how teacher leaders may facilitate the transfer and sharing of leadership and educational experiences, so playing a major role in fostering a community of practice.

Most participants showed their awareness of the importance of the teacher leader role, through relationship-building, promoting 'communities of practice,' offering current teaching techniques, serving as sources of inspiration, and actively contributing to students' personality development.

Working with students

Although four administrators in the Silver Schools neglected the important role of teacher leaders in supporting their fellow teachers, they claimed that the roles of teacher leaders are restricted to leading students. They state that teacher leadership is limited to the role that the school administration assigns to them about students. This primarily involves control and firm management of the classroom, and communication of information to the students, neglecting the students' needs, skills, and behaviours, both inside and outside the classroom. However,

their perspective showed that they do not differentiate between the teacher leaders and the rest of the teachers. The literature (e.g. Nissim and Simon, 2019, Smith, 2019) suggests that teacher leaders' roles differ from other teachers in that teacher leaders have additional responsibilities such as supporting students with different levels of needs and abilities, being a positive role model and mentor, and practicing innovative teaching methods for student success. Whether inside or outside the classroom. Untari and Hasanah (2018) assert that students have different skills and behaviours, and it is important that teacher leaders be aware of their abilities and offer them good support so that discipline improves. Moreover, if teacher leaders only pay attention to what happens during class, they might overlook opportunities to connect with students outside the classroom. That connection is important for establishing a nurturing and encouraging learning atmosphere that motivates students to thrive both academically and personally (Roby, 2012).

However, most participants (including the four supervisors and ten teachers and administrators from the Gold School as well as all the teacher leaders in the Silver School), emphasized that the role of teacher leaders includes providing full support for students inside and outside the classroom. This can be achieved by helping them to solve their problems and to meet their needs, by forming good relationships with them. Auslander et al (2022) argue that, when there is a good relationship between teacher leaders and students, this helps students to overcome obstacles. And contributes to better behavioural, social, and academic outcomes. These participants have an awareness of the concept of teacher leadership, and its role at the student level, as they emphasized that the roles of teacher leaders go beyond focusing on the classroom, to include contributing to solving students' problems, which may lead to students' success in both education and behaviour. Similarly, Cohron (2009), and Soares (2020), claim that, when teachers assume leadership positions, it leads to school reform and is greatly beneficial for student achievement. This is because teacher leadership is based on values that enable teachers to make informed choices and advocate for the changes required to enhance the teaching and learning process (Soares, 2020).

Relationships with colleagues
Teacher leaders at the Silver School consistently mentioned that they serve as a source of inspiration and set a positive example for their colleagues. Supervisors confirmed that teacher leaders play a crucial role in strengthening the 'community of practice' by transferring and exchanging educational and leadership skills. They also serve as a significant source of support and collaboration, both inside and outside the classroom, as emphasised by most participants,

including four supervisors and ten teacher leaders and administrators from the Gold School, along with all teacher leaders in the Silver School. These leaders claim to be dedicated to providing full support to students, helping them to solve problems, and ensuring their academic and practical success. The definition and roles of teacher leaders, as revealed by the views of most participants, partly correspond to those identified by Nguyen, Harris, and Ng (2020), who identified four common attributes of teacher leadership. These are exerting influence, mutual trust, and cooperation, which is not limited to the classroom, enhancing pupil learning and school effectiveness, as well as the quality of teaching (Nguyen et al, 2020). The inconsistencies between the participants' opinions and the four aspects identified by Nguyen et al. (2020) reveal discrepancies in how teacher leadership is understood and practised. Nguyen et al. (2020) highlight certain fundamental aspects such as exerting influence, mutual trust, cooperation, and enhancing pupil learning and school effectiveness, as integral to teacher leadership. However, participants' views, particularly at the Silver School, do not align with all these aspects. For example, while these authors emphasize the importance of mutual trust and collaboration among colleagues, some participants at the Silver School have a narrower view of teacher leaders' roles, focusing solely on classroom management and student leadership. Additionally, while Nguyen et al. underscore the significance of teacher leaders in enhancing teaching quality and fostering innovative practices, participants' perspectives vary, with some overlooking these broader implications. These inconsistencies suggest that there are different interpretations of how teacher leadership is perceived and enacted within different educational contexts, reflecting the diverse perspectives and priorities of participants.

Teacher leaders' ability to enhance the school's overall quality aligns with the perspective of participants in the Gold School, who note that teacher leaders typically exhibit more enthusiasm and a stronger sense of responsibility for school improvement compared to other teachers. This sentiment is echoed by teacher leaders in the Silver School, who see their role as leaders not only in providing essential information, such as modern teaching methods for colleagues but actively contributing to developing students' personalities and behaviour by embodying the values of successful teaching.

Awareness of the concept and practice of teacher leadership is important because it can lead to improved outcomes and changes in educational environments. Hart (2021) shows that lack of awareness of the concept of the teacher leader, and the roles of administrators. This may lead to weakness and failure to implement the roles of a teacher leader. Most participants, (including the majority of supervisors and participants from the Gold School, as well as all the teacher

leaders in the Silver School, demonstrate an awareness of the concepts and roles of teacher leaders at the organizational level, acknowledging their support for students both inside and outside the classroom. They also recognize their contribution to enhancing teaching and learning experiences, fostering collaboration, and contributing to the overall improvement of the school. In contrast, Silver school administrators view leadership in a more limited way, primarily as a means of regulating students within the classroom, indicating a lack of recognition of the wider role of teacher leader.

The next sub-section discusses teacher leadership at the personal level.

Teacher leadership at the personal level

Professional growth and self-reflection

The concept of teacher leadership has personal as well as organizational dimensions, notably concerning professional growth and reflection. Two teacher leaders in the focus group at Silver School stressed that the teacher leaders' concept includes the active participation of teacher leaders and their commitment to continuing professional development, thereby strengthening, and refining their leadership skills in educational settings. This aligns with the views of two administrators (the principal and his deputy) at the Gold School who stated that the most important skills that need to be improved, such as communication and self-assessment, are key components of professional development. This view is consistent with the insights of York-Barr-Duke (2004), who argues that continued participation in professional development helps teacher leaders enhance their leadership abilities and skills.

Continuous professional development at the individual level is a way for teachers to align their knowledge and skills with the demands of their role as teacher leaders (Frost, 2012). Harrison and Killian (2007) add that self-assessment and reflective practice are important for teacher leaders to progress. Self-assessment and reflective practices can help teacher leaders approach their role with a high level of self-awareness and consideration, through a deep exploration of their professional skills and their abilities (Jackson et al, 2010).

The importance of teacher leaders' professional development, and their self-awareness, seem to be integral components of comprehending the notion of teacher leadership on a personal level (Wang and Ho, 2019). Supervisors, and most participants in the Silver School, may have neglected the importance of teacher leadership at a personal level as they stated that the teacher leader role is restricted to the organizational level, specifically to improve the school environment and student outcomes. This may be due to viewing teaching in Saudi Arabia

primarily as a job rather than a profession that requires continuous professional development for teachers to be qualified leaders (Shah, 2019).

Professional growth and self-efficacy

Four teacher leaders at the Gold School claim that teacher leadership encompasses personal and professional development. They see this as a means to boost their self-esteem and self-efficacy, while also fostering increased awareness of areas requiring attention and development. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to perform a specific task or to achieve a particular goal. A recent study conducted on inclusive education teacher leaders in China, exploring the relationships between distributed leadership, teacher leadership, and self-efficacy, revealed that both principal-distributed leadership and teacher leadership had a positive impact on teacher self-efficacy (Wang et al, 2022). Another study examined the relationship between teacher leadership capacity at school, teacher professional learning, and teacher self-efficacy, finding a positive and statistically significant correlation (Gümüş et al, 2022). Oppi and Eisenschmidt (2020) asserted that teacher leadership, in terms of personal development, involves teacher leaders becoming more confident and self-aware, developing professional and leadership skills, and working to develop their critical thinking. Reid et al (2022) mention that the teacher's leadership empowers people, gives them independence, and raises their professional competence. Such personal development enhances their effectiveness and improves their agency in teaching and vocational education, according to Muijs and Harris (2006), and Moller and Pankake (2013).

While some participants from the Gold School, including administrators and teacher leaders, along with a few teacher leaders from the Silver School, demonstrate a general comprehension of the concept of teacher leadership at the personal level, there are also misunderstandings regarding the significance of cultivating knowledge, skills, and experiences on a personal level. The supervisors, and some participants in both schools, appear to downplay the importance of teacher leaders' roles at the personal level. They perceive these roles to be confined to organisational boundaries, overlooking the broader impact of personal development on effective teacher leadership.

The current challenge appears to stem from a combination of insufficient awareness, and a disregard for the roles of teacher leaders among stakeholders. This disregard may be attributed to the adoption of a centralized management style that influences how participants perceive these roles (Meemar, Poppink, and Palmer, 2018; Lau, Vähäsantanen, and Collin, 2022). To refine these understandings and ensure the efficient implementation of teacher leader roles, it

would be useful to raise awareness about these roles and to provide more opportunities for professional development.

Attributes and Skills of Teacher Leaders

The analysis and discussion of this topic have three sub-themes related to the habitual traits and acquired skills of teacher leaders, and the Ministry's role in teacher leadership development:

Habitual traits of teacher leadership

When examining the habitual traits and acquired skills of teacher leaders, participants confirmed there are notable distinctions. In terms of habitual attributes, teacher leaders are expected to possess certain qualities. The three administrators (principal, his deputy, and student advisor) in the Gold School assert that the teacher leaders demonstrate a strong desire, enthusiasm, vitality, and an active approach in assuming leadership roles. This behaviour may reflect these habitual qualities, affirming their commitment to effective leadership as confirmed by these participating administrators. All Gold school teacher leaders underscore the significance of specific traits conducive to effective leadership. They believed that these teacher leaders exemplify qualities such as patience, flexibility, and excellent ethical conduct when interacting with others. In doing so, they not only articulate the expected qualities of teacher leaders but also actively embody them, serving as positive role models within the school community, as perceived by these leaders.

These habitual features are essential for enhancing the instructional quality of educators both inside and outside the classroom. Research suggests that teacher leaders who embody these qualities are more capable of positively and significantly influencing students' academic progress and their overall personal growth, thus teacher leaders are expected to create a positive and effective learning environment inside and outside the classroom.(Langdon Warren, 2021; Hj Ali Mashod *et al.*, 2022) .

Conversely, in the Silver School, four participants, consisting of three teacher leaders and a student advisor, argued that effective teacher leaders draw inspiration from accomplished leaders such as the principal and maintain a clear long-term vision to make important decisions and exert a strong influence on those around them. However, some supervisors emphasized that charisma, physical attributes, self-confidence, honesty, and commitment are essential qualities for aspiring teacher leaders.

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Research indicates that charismatic teacher leaders have the potential to inspire and influence their students, foster a conducive learning environment, and improve the efficiency of the teaching-learning process. (Gunasekare, 2019). While charisma can be advantageous, it is not the sole determinant of their success. Effective teaching leadership also necessitates the development of emotional intelligence, empathy, and strong communication skills. (Zydziunaite *et al.*, 2020).

In the Gold school, participants discussed more comprehensive typical characteristics of teacher leaders such as a strong desire, patience, and flexibility. These characteristics are essential for effectively managing a classroom and fostering a positive learning environment (Nissim &Simon, 2019). Teacher leaders in this school claimed a deep understanding of the teaching and learning process, enabling them to adapt their teaching methods to the diverse needs of their students. In the Silver School, participants discussed characteristics tied to authority figures due to the influence of the school's principal and the administration's authoritarianism in Saudi. This authoritarian approach to leadership can have negative effects on the school environment. It can create a culture of fear and uncertainty, which can negatively impact teacher motivation and student performance, especially in the Saudi context (Alsalahi, 2014). The supervisors emphasized the significance of body language and charisma. An active approach to assuming leadership roles, as well as excellent ethical conduct when interacting with others, is recommended by Nissim &Simon (2019).

Additionally, all data sets highlight a general lack of comprehensive awareness regarding the attributes of teacher leaders. This is crucial because these qualities might highlight the inclination of teacher leaders to be actively involved in improving teaching practices, addressing problems in the learning community, motivating students to learn, and having a positive impact on the overall educational context (Langdon Warren, 2021).

Acquired skills of teacher leadership

Three teacher leaders in the Silver School emphasized the significance of ongoing training to enhance leadership abilities. They also stressed that teacher leadership entails personal development in administrative aspects, including self-improvement, self-confidence building, and effective interpersonal communication. These skills are expected to enhance their overall managerial competence, ensuring a comprehensive and competent approach to leadership in education. However, four administrators in this school believe that the role of teacher leaders is limited to the classroom, adding that the training courses related to classroom management

techniques, such as classroom observation, are the most important for developing teacher leaders' skills.

Previous research also indicates that teacher leaders can enhance their knowledge, skills, and effectiveness by actively engaging in self-reflection, learning, and growth. This continuous involvement can boost their confidence in communicating effectively, listening actively, and improving their communication style when interacting with others (Moore and Lang, 2023; W. Md Rasidi, Mydin and Ismail, 2021; Meirink et al. 2019) Three administrators at the Gold School, and four supervisors, pointed out that teacher leaders primarily seek self-improvement through participating in various leadership-related courses and workshops. They add that some educators enhance their skills by exchanging experiences with fellow leaders within and outside the school. They also engage in online courses, and some teachers voluntarily conduct workshops at the supervision centre to benefit their peers, driven by a desire for spiritual rewards. The literature also stresses that teacher leaders might find that joining classes, going to seminars, and swapping stories with fellow leaders, can be helpful avenues for personal growth (Swars Auslander *et al.*, 2022; Makuachukwu, 2023) However, it appears that some participants have not prioritised professional development which is essential for teacher leaders to enhance their teaching abilities, adapt to the evolving educational landscape, support colleagues, strengthen leadership capabilities, and increase their impact on students' learning (Taylor *et al.*, 2018; Hite and Milbourne, 2021). Engagement in professional development is crucial for teacher leaders to cultivate essential leadership skills. According to Alnasser (2022), these developmental activities play a vital role in improving communication abilities and facilitating meaningful interactions among colleagues, students, and stakeholders. Additionally, Shah (2020) emphasizes the importance of professional development in refining collaboration skills, allowing teacher leaders to work effectively within teams to achieve common goals. Taylor et al. (2018) further highlight the significance of emotional intelligence development through such initiatives, enabling educators to navigate interpersonal interactions and tackle challenges with empathy and resilience. Furthermore, Shamir-Inbal and Blau (2020) stress the need for teacher leaders to stay updated on the latest educational trends to maintain relevance and effectiveness in their roles. By actively participating in continuous learning opportunities provided by professional development, educators can adapt to evolving pedagogical methods, technological advancements, and policy changes, thereby fostering an environment conducive to ongoing growth and innovation.

The Ministry's role in teacher leadership development

In respect of the Ministry's responsibility for developing teacher leaders, a majority (21) of the participants emphasized a significant absence of training courses, both during their pre-service university education and through the Ministry's current initiatives. Administrators at the Silver School mentioned that training in classroom management techniques takes precedence, as it addresses teacher leaders' immediate needs.

Supervisors believe that the Ministry's lack of leadership training for teachers stems from two factors: It arises primarily from a severe teacher shortage, which is partly caused by the Ministry's budget constraints, which limit the number of teachers employed each year. The second factor is the effective sidelining of teacher leaders, reinforcing their perception as simply instructors rather than teacher leaders, which may result from undervaluing their long-term impact as catalysts for educational improvement. The undervaluing of teacher leaders is compounded by the Ministry of Education's prioritization of immediate classroom needs, as supervisors claim. This detracts from recognizing their wider long-term impact on school improvement.

Most participants (21) from all three groups expressed concerns over the lack of teacher-leader training programmes and argued that the Ministry of Education should provide training for educators at all levels. Research conducted in Saudi Arabia has shown that teacher-leader training is lacking across all educational levels. (Dhamiri, 2022). This underscores the need for training programmes that might aid teacher leaders in managing teams and overcoming administrative difficulties.

Silver School administrators believe that teacher leaders need leadership training rather than instruction in classroom management techniques. They argue that, while classroom control techniques are essential for preserving discipline and order, teacher leaders also need to possess strong leadership qualities to become successful leaders. (Soheili *et al.*, 2016). They argue that it is essential to provide training programmes that address both leadership and classroom control techniques, to enhance teacher leaders' effectiveness.

As previously indicated, supervisors link the absence of training programs for teacher leaders in Saudi Arabia to two main factors. Firstly, the significant shortage of teachers is due to budget constraints, hindering the Ministry of Education's ability to recruit adequately. Secondly, there is concern that the Ministry may prioritize developing teacher leaders over overall teacher development, potentially neglecting the broader professional needs of teachers as leaders. The

government may face budgetary constraints that hinder the provision of training programmes for teacher leaders, compounded by critical shortages of teachers. The budgetary constraints faced by the government may lead to teacher shortages, thereby hindering the provision of training programs for teacher leaders. These factors highlight some of the challenges faced in the training and development of teacher leaders in Saudi Arabia (Al Shanawani, 2023). Furthermore, there may be an undervaluing of the long-term impact of investing in teacher leaders as catalysts for educational improvement. This prioritizes immediate needs and individual classrooms, effectively sidelining teacher leaders and reinforcing the perception of them as mere instructors rather than key players in building a stronger education system as supervisors claim. To address these challenges, many participants (17) from all three groups emphasise the need for comprehensive training programmes that encompass both pedagogical techniques and leadership skills under the purview of the Saudi Ministry of Education (Khasawneh, 2020).

In essence, In Saudi Arabia, exploring teacher leadership reveals a landscape with unique qualities, skills, and challenges. The distinctions between Gold and Silver Schools highlight varying views on what makes a great teacher leader. A common theme emphasizes the significance of training and professional development, showcasing the changing nature of educational leadership. Despite recognizing the importance of training programmes, there are inhibitors such as a shortage of teachers, as noted earlier.

Benefits of Teacher Leadership

This theme encompasses three sub-themes related to the benefits of teacher leadership at political, organisational, and personal levels.

Benefits of teacher leadership at the organisational level

Participants' perspectives on the potential benefits of teacher leadership at the organisational level differed across the various data sets.

Role of teacher leaders in supporting students

All participants at the Gold School (administrators and the six teacher leaders), and all supervisors, unanimously agreed that one of the most significant benefits of teacher leaders is the improvement and development of students academically and behaviourally, both inside and outside the classroom. Although administrators in the Silver School do not explicitly recognize the benefits of teacher leaders in student development, these findings are supported by the

teacher leaders, who claim that they play a pivotal role in positively influencing students' mental and emotional development.

There is near consensus among the participants that teacher leaders are recognised for their positive influence on students' academic understanding. The emphasis is on continuous monitoring of student progress, adherence to the curriculum, and setting goals. This is consistent with scholarly research, which has discussed teacher leadership's benefits in increasing student achievement and improving student outcomes. Shen's (2020) meta-analysis, which included 21 studies, revealed that teacher leadership was positively related to the achievement of students of different ages and subjects.

The positive impact of teacher leaders extends beyond academic outcomes, contributing to the development of students' character, and behaviour inside and outside the classroom, through a positive relationship with students. Most participants at the Gold school, and the supervisors, emphasised strong relationships between teacher leaders and students as a significant factor contributing to positive effects on student personality and behaviour. Administrators at Gold School expressed that strong relationships lead students to learn and listen with enthusiasm and love, contributing to gaining not only essential knowledge but also soft skills. It is consistent with some research which shows that this relationship may contribute to a positive impact on students in the cognitive, emotional, social, and behavioural aspects (ERDEL and TAKKAÇ, 2020). These relationships also help to reinforce some important values among their students, such as responsibility and teamwork, because teacher leaders are considered influential role models who actively promote and embody these values—a sentiment confirmed by all participants at Gold School. Teacher leaders in Silver School also play a role in guiding and modifying their students' behaviours, indicating a similar commitment to shaping the ethical aspects of their students' development. This is consistent with research suggesting that individuals learn from observing and modelling the behaviour of others. The idea that teacher leaders embody and promote positive values is likely to have a lasting impact on students (Norwani et al., 2016).

In addition, the participation of teacher leaders in extracurricular activities with students, as explained and confirmed by the director of the Gold School, his deputy, and four supervisors, contributes to the development of students cognitively, as well as positively affecting their behaviour. This is consistent with the research of Don et al (2016), which confirmed that extracurricular activities that take place outside the classroom contribute to the availability of

knowledge, skills, experience, and values, as well as help to develop student's skills and improve their behaviour (Don et al. 2016).

Although participants agreed that teacher leaders have a positive impact on both student's behaviour and academic outcomes, three administrators at the Silver School stressed that their role is restricted only to maintaining control and discipline of students. They claim that assertive management is crucial for effective teaching and is the primary means of achieving academic success. In contrast, six teacher leaders at the same school provide a broader perspective, with individuals indicating that teacher leaders go beyond mere control, playing a pivotal role in positively influencing students' mental and emotional development.

However, the perspective provided by the six teacher leaders at Silver School expands the conversation beyond mere control. Their assertion that teacher leaders are pivotal in positively influencing students' mental and emotional development aligns with contemporary educational theories. Durlak et al. (2011), for example, argue that social-emotional learning is integral to academic success, and teachers, as influencers, can contribute significantly to students' emotional well-being.

Supporting teachers

Nine participants in the Gold School, eight participants in the Silver School, and three supervisors emphasised the vital role of teacher leaders in supporting and guiding their fellow teachers. In the Gold School, the participants highlight their crucial function in offering courses and mentoring and guiding new teachers through the intricacies of the school environment, including instruction, curriculum, and school politics. Five teacher leaders at this school also emphasized that they actively work to enhance cooperation between teachers of different subjects and ages by meeting in their free time to address issues and create a collaborative learning environment. This collaborative approach is similar to the second level of the teacher leadership model emphasised by Grant (2006), which fosters a supportive and enriching atmosphere for both new and experienced teachers by helping them to navigate the challenges of the teaching profession and improve their skills and knowledge. By working together, and sharing experiences, these teacher leaders contribute to the development and retention of novice teachers, to impact student achievement and educational improvement (Kutsyuruba and Walker, 2015).

Similarly, in the Silver School, administrators and four teacher leaders emphasize the crucial role of teacher leaders in guiding and supporting new teachers. All administrators claimed that

teacher leaders can only contribute by sharing valuable experience in disciplining and controlling students in the classroom and providing proactive support to new teachers with practical classroom management strategies. This might help teachers create an effective school environment, prevent students' behavioural issues within classrooms, and improve learning outcomes. However, three teacher leaders seem to have a broader outlook on the role of teacher leader than administrators in the same school, as they believe that collaboration on problem-solving, boosting morale, and fostering cooperation among teachers on various school-related issues, are crucial elements for a healthy and effective educational environment for both teacher and students. This collective effort reduces teacher isolation and cultivates enthusiasm, fostering a cohesive and supportive school environment. Fairman and Mackenzie (2014) suggest that a positive and supportive teacher community can significantly impact student outcomes. They highlight the importance of teacher collaboration and a collective focus on student learning. When teachers work together, share strategies, and support each other, it creates a more enriching educational experience for both educators and students (Fairman and Mackenzie, 2014).

In the Silver School, teacher leaders demonstrate and seem to embody the characteristics outlined by York-Barr and Duke (2004) regarding teacher leadership. These individuals extend their influence outside their classroom boundaries to positively impact their colleagues and the broader school community. By assuming responsibilities outside their traditional teaching roles, such as mentoring new teachers, fostering collaboration among colleagues, and addressing school-wide issues, these teacher leaders exemplify the concept of teacher leadership as defined by York-Barr and Duke. Their proactive involvement and dedication contribute to creating a supportive and effective educational environment.

Three supervisors also highlighted that teacher leaders play a distinctive and vital role within schools as they support their colleagues, a responsibility that differs significantly from the formal evaluations and teacher accountability conducted by school principals and supervisors. Teacher leaders assume an informal supervisory role, offering valuable advice and guidance to their colleagues. These teacher leaders also claim to exhibit enthusiasm in managing classrooms and engaging with students sharing these insights and strategies with their colleagues, often acting as counsellors and advisors for their colleagues during challenging situations and school-related issues leading to positive relationships with their colleagues. The informal nature of these interactions fosters a sense of camaraderie and mutual support among educators, as suggested by Oracion (2014).

The role of teacher leaders is important in fostering a collaborative and supportive educational environment, particularly beneficial in addressing the diverse needs of educators and enhancing overall teaching effectiveness. Nguyen, Harris, and Ng (2020) show that effective teacher leadership involves managing classrooms, engaging with students, and serving as mentors and counsellors for colleagues. This mentoring aspect can create a supportive network within the school, where teachers can seek guidance and share experiences during challenging situations. Research by Cheng, Chen, and Bryant, (2021) highlights the impact of collegiality on teacher morale. Through their supportive and collaborative approach, teacher leaders contribute to building a positive school culture that values teamwork, and shared learning and shaping a positive and collaborative educational community.

The supervisors also asserted that teacher leaders may offer tailored courses to promote teaching and development skills among teachers and inspire their colleagues to actively engage in professional development opportunities This aligns with the findings of Mertkan (2011), who emphasises the importance of ongoing professional development for teachers to enhance teaching skills and improve students' learning outcomes.

Supporting principals
All administrators, five teacher leaders in the Gold School, two administrators in the Silver School, and three supervisors, acknowledged the pivotal role of teachers in contributing to school reform and supporting school principals. However, there are differences in how teacher leaders are involved in administrative processes in the two schools.

In the Gold School, the principal claims to actively foster trust, recognising teacher leaders' roles as crucial bridges and connectors between students, teachers, and administration. These teacher leaders undertake a range of responsibilities, from general administrative tasks to active participation in educational preparation. Their collaboration extends to conflict resolution, where teacher leaders, alongside school principals, work towards building understanding and trust with parents. The collaborative relationship between administrators and teacher leaders in the Gold School is stronger than in the Silver School, where teacher leaders are mainly confined to the classroom. This approach seems to align with the idea that involving teacher leaders in decision-making can lead to better outcomes for the school (Sebastian, Allensworth, and Huang, 2016).

Teacher leaders in Gold School are involved in several ways, from administrative tasks to educational process preparation, reflecting a distributed leadership model. This model

emphasises shared decision-making and leadership responsibilities among different school community members (Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004). The inclusion of teacher leaders in conflict resolution, working alongside school principals to build understanding with parents, suggests a commitment to creating a positive school environment (Schott, van Roekel and Tummers, 2020).

However, in the Silver School, the deputy principal stated that they support the involvement of teacher leaders in only specific administrative duties, such as the distribution of teaching loads among teachers, and addressing behavioural issues within student groups, particularly when the student advisor faces challenges. It seems that teacher leaders are involved in more limited administrative tasks compared with teacher leaders in the Gold School. Although the principal of the Silver School claims to value the opinions of teacher leaders, key decision-making predominantly involves administrators but not teacher leaders. This is not consistent with the research of Woo et al (2022), who argue that effective school leadership involves collaboration and participation in decision-making, which can positively impact teacher morale and student achievement.

Three supervisors also stressed the importance of teacher leaders supporting principals, for example in navigating challenges with difficult teachers, parents, or students. This collaborative ethos between these teacher leaders and new principals extends to participating in decision-making processes and support in achieving administrative tasks, highlighting a potentially symbiotic relationship between teacher leaders and administrators in shaping the school's ethos and functionality. The Gold school reflects this type of relationship better than the Silver School. This reflects a mentoring or induction process that can benefit new administrators (Fairman and Mackenzie, 2014). Utilising the expertise of teacher leaders to tackle challenges with difficult teachers, parents, or students is a practical use of their skills. Therefore, the collaborative spirit between teacher leaders and administrators in shaping the school's ethos and functionality is evident in Gold School but less so in Sliver School.

Benefits of teacher leadership at the political level

Participants' perspectives on the potential benefits of teacher leadership at the political level (beyond the school), including strengthening community life (e.g., school-parent links) and cross-school networking, differed across various data sets. Participants in the Gold School (two school administrators, five teacher leaders), and three supervisors highlight the positive multifaceted impact of teacher leadership outside their school. As affirmed by the three

supervisors, teacher leaders play a pivotal role in fostering positive parent-teacher relationships and effective communication, by addressing educational or behavioural concerns of students directly with parents. This aligns with research suggesting that strong teacher-parent partnerships contribute to student success (e.g., York-Barr and Duke, 2004).

Some teacher leaders extend their influence beyond the school, by forming groups and engaging in collaborative efforts to tackle common issues and pursue shared goals by supporting supervisors and the supervisory centres. They also provide advice on finding informal solutions to challenges faced by teachers in various schools. This influence resonates within the educational community and transcends to other schools and the local community, as reported by two administrators at the Gold School. This extension aligns with level four of the Grant model, emphasizing the crucial role of teacher leaders in extending their influence beyond the confines of their schools. It also highlights the importance of educators engaging with their wider community and fostering connections with colleagues across different schools to enrich educational practices (Grant, 2006). By actively participating in district-level committees and networking across schools and communities, teacher leaders can significantly enhance educational initiatives and outcomes beyond the boundaries of their immediate school environment (Grant, 2006). Extending teacher leaders' influence beyond their school is a noteworthy aspect. Collaborative efforts resonate with the idea of professional learning communities (PLCs), where teacher leaders collaborate with educators to improve teaching practices (Grimm, 2023). The emphasis on informal solutions aligns with adaptive leadership in education (e.g., Boylan, 2016).

The administrators emphasized the support provided by teacher leaders through development and training courses, extracurricular activities, and problem-solving initiatives with other schools or the local community. This aligns with literature highlighting the importance of teacher leadership in driving school improvement and fostering community engagement (e.g., York-Barr & Duke, 2004).

This sentiment is echoed by five teacher leaders in the Gold School, who emphasise that their roles extend beyond the school district. They involve engagement at the supervision centre, other schools, and the neighbourhood level, addressing issues affecting students' families. The involvement of teacher leaders in problem-solving initiatives for other schools and the local community reflects the broader impact of their leadership. The engagement of teacher leaders at the supervision centre and neighbourhood level suggests systemic and community-wide

influence. Research on distributed leadership supports the idea that leadership is not confined to a single individual but is shared across various stakeholders (Muijs and Harris, 2006; Grant, 2006).

Despite the potential positive impact of teacher leadership across various educational and community contexts, the participants in the Silver School neglect this aspect of the teacher leader role. They claimed that the benefits of teacher leadership are restricted within the school environment. This is a restricted view of the teacher leader role. As other participants mentioned, the positive influence of teacher leadership extends beyond the school setting. This aligns with literature emphasizing the diverse roles of teacher leaders in educational and community contexts (Grant 2006).

Benefits of teacher leadership at the personal level

The impact of teacher leadership at the personal level was stressed by supervisors, teacher leaders, and administrators at both the Silver and Gold Schools. Two supervisors highlighted the profound effects on teachers themselves, emphasising both personal and professional development. They noted that teacher leaders often experience stability and comfort, fostering loyalty and increasing school staff retention, because they actively contribute to programme development. Teacher leaders often experienced increased stability and comfort, resonating with the findings of Hulpia, Devos and Rosseel (2009), who highlight the positive links between teacher leadership and job satisfaction, potentially fostering loyalty and contributing to enhanced school retention.

In parallel, the personal narratives of two teacher leaders at Silver School underscored a sense of empowerment, heightened confidence, and increased professional satisfaction, arising from their leadership roles. These sentiments align with the research of York-Barr and Duke (2004), who assert that teacher leadership impacts on job satisfaction and contributes to personal empowerment and confidence. These positive outcomes are crucial elements that can lead to a more engaged and committed teaching force.

Meanwhile, three administrators at the Gold School emphasised the crucial personal-level impact of teacher leadership, facilitating skills and leadership development among peers. They argued that teacher leaders inspire continuous professional improvement, gaining respect and empowerment for positive changes. This resonates with the findings of Oppi, Eisenschmidt and Stingu (2020), who argue that teacher leaders play a pivotal role in fostering professional growth and development within their school communities. The administrators at the Gold

School contend that teacher leaders inspire continuous professional improvement, garnering respect, and empowerment for positive changes. This aligns with the idea that teacher leaders serve as catalysts for a culture of continuous improvement (Poekert, Alexandrou and Shannon, 2016).

Four teacher leaders at the Gold School expressed how their leadership roles fuelled a desire for holistic development, providing an active and influential role within their school community. These perspectives add another layer to the discussion by expressing how their leadership roles fuelled a desire for holistic development, providing them with an active and influential role within their school community. These experiences echo the findings of Taylor et al. (2011), who argue that teacher leadership extends beyond the individual, contributing to the broader school environment aligning with level three of the Grant (2006) model.

The desire for holistic development among teacher leaders aligns with the idea that effective leadership involves professional growth and a commitment to the overall well-being of the educational community (Ghamrawi, Naccache and Shal, 2023). Most participants from the Silver School, Gold School and supervisors collectively underscored the transformative influence of teacher leadership on teachers themselves. At the Silver School, teacher leaders highlighted how empowerment to lead bolstered their confidence and efficacy in leadership roles, a sentiment echoed by two supervisors in the Office of Supervision who emphasized its role in fostering stability and loyalty within the school community. Moreover, two other supervisors noted the profound satisfaction and pride experienced by teachers as they witnessed the enduring impact of their efforts on students, even after graduation. Conversely, three administrators (two deputy head teachers and the student advisor) at the Gold School emphasized the pivotal role of teacher leadership in facilitating skills development and nurturing a culture of continuous improvement. They highlighted how empowering teacher leaders to contribute to the ongoing development of the school community fosters a sense of respect and fulfilment, ultimately enhancing their confidence and satisfaction. Similarly, teacher leaders at the Gold School expressed how assuming leadership roles encouraged their personal growth and decision-making abilities, thereby amplifying their confidence and overall satisfaction within the teaching profession.

In contrast, Silver School participants highlighted how the empowerment of teacher leaders bolsters confidence and efficacy, fostering a cohesive environment. This suggests a different emphasis, with participants at the Silver School focusing on stability and confidence-building,

while those at the Gold School emphasize skills development and continuous improvement. These differing views reflect distinct approaches to fostering teacher leadership and enhancing overall educational quality.

Overall, both the Silver and Gold Schools highlight a common theme of empowerment and fulfilment stemming from teacher leadership. They acknowledge the profound impact of empowering teachers to lead on their confidence and satisfaction. Participants in the Silver School want the opportunity to be empowered to lead, fostering stability within the community while boosting their confidence. Conversely, at the Gold School, teacher leaders not only take on leadership roles but also recognize the personal benefits, experiencing fulfilment and empowerment as they contribute to skills development and continuous improvement.

Demotivators of Teacher Leadership

This theme encompasses three sub-themes related to the demotivators of teacher leadership at political, organisational, and personal aspects.

Demotivators of teacher leadership at the political level

Participants' perspectives on the demotivators of teacher leadership at the political level differed across the various data sets.

Demotivating factors for teacher leadership at the Ministry level

The insights from supervisors, administrators, and teacher leaders across Gold and Silver Schools in Saudi Arabia reveal significant obstacles to teacher leadership at the Ministry level. The hierarchical and centralised policies of the Ministry, as highlighted by three supervisors, concentrate absolute authority at the top, relegating education centre staff and school principals to minor roles. This centralised structure poses a challenge for teacher leaders to assume meaningful responsibilities within their schools, as also noted by Ho and Tikly (2012). Despite the Ministry's substantial budget, financial constraints, as noted by two supervisors, do not appear to translate into incentives for teacher leaders, hindering their motivation and professional development (Al-Taneiji and Ibrahim, 2017; York-Barr and Duke, 2004).

In Silver School, the alignment of views among administrators and teacher leaders, on the restricted power granted to teachers for leadership roles reflects the impact of Ministry policies. Teachers are confined solely to classroom management, limiting their involvement in decision-making and eroding autonomy and trust. This limitation has broader consequences, as the Ministry's strict control over student interactions strains the teacher-ministry relationship, leading to diminished perceived prestige and power associated with the teaching profession.

This resonates with research by Anderson (2004), who emphasised the pivotal role of school climate and teacher commitment.

Insights from three teacher leaders in Silver School highlight the Ministry's lack of recognition of teacher leadership as a demotivator. Policies and systems marginalise teacher leaders, preventing their engagement in critical areas, such as contributing to school curricula. This exclusion leads to frustration and a prevailing sense of marginalisation, aligning with the findings of Singh (2011) regarding the importance of distributed leadership for effective school improvement. In addition, two teacher leaders from Silver School stress the demotivating impact of the absence of leadership-related training. The Ministry's failure to offer courses in leadership confines teacher leaders to a narrow focus on teaching, impeding their professional growth. This emphasises the importance of ongoing professional development, as also noted by Mangin (2007).

Demotivating factors for teacher leadership at the community level
The discouraging elements affecting teacher leadership within the community result from a widespread lack of understanding and acknowledgement of the varied roles teachers can fulfil beyond the classroom setting. As highlighted by the deputy principal, societal perceptions tend to centralise leadership around the principal, diminishing the potential for shared leadership responsibilities among teachers. Barriers to teacher leadership within the community stem from a pervasive lack of understanding and recognition of the diverse roles' teachers can play beyond the conventional classroom.

The views expressed by two supervisors, and the deputy principal of Silver School, highlight a prevalent perception that confines teachers to a narrow educational role, exacerbated by the absence of official positions or titles for teacher leaders. This reinforces the belief that their contributions are solely centred on student education. Research indicates that such limited recognition hampers the development of teachers' roles (Bryant and Rao, 2019; York-Barr & Duke, 2004).

Societal attitudes, as perceived by the deputy principal, tend to concentrate leadership around the principal, undermining the potential for shared leadership responsibilities among teachers. This hierarchical outlook not only limits the influence of teachers but also underpins a systemic disregard for their capacity to lead beyond the traditional classroom (Wenner and Campbell, 2016; Wieczorek and Lear, 2018). The absence of formal positions or titles for teacher leaders contributes to the prevailing notion that teachers are primarily responsible for student

education. This lack of formal acknowledgement may discourage educators from actively pursuing leadership roles, impeding the development of a more collaborative and inclusive educational environment (York-Barr & Duke, 2004). A holistic approach is necessary to overcome these challenges, involving professional development programmes, highlighting the multifaceted contributions teachers can make, community engagement initiatives displaying these contributions, and advocacy for establishing formalised teacher leadership roles (Hopkins and Schutz, 2019). By addressing these issues, the education system can create a more inclusive and empowering environment for teacher leadership to flourish.

The three supervisors perceive themselves as positive and supportive contributors to teacher leadership. They emphasise providing guidance, encouragement, and a focus on spiritual rewards as motivating factors. However, it is noteworthy that other participants, including those from the Gold and Silver schools, do not acknowledge the role of supervisors as significant motivators or demotivators for teacher leadership. This aligns with research linking supportive leadership to increased teacher job satisfaction (Hulpia, Devos and Rosseel, 2009). The supervisors also stress the importance of clear direction and encouragement, factors known to contribute to a positive work environment (Birky, Shelton and Headley, 2006). Their commitment to following up on teachers' progress and development aligns with research highlighting the role of ongoing support and feedback in the effectiveness of teacher leaders (Harris, 2003). The unique perspective is introduced when the supervisors underscore the significance of seeking rewards from God as a motivator for teacher leadership, connecting spirituality with professional motivation (Ian P. De Vera, 2019),

However, other participants do not mention the supportive role of supervisors, raising questions about their influence on motivating or demotivating teacher leadership. This discrepancy shows a lack of consensus or awareness regarding the supervisors' impact. If supervisors are not recognised as influential in this regard, it may contribute to a misalignment of expectations and perceptions within the educational community (Mangin, 2007).

Demotivators of teacher leadership at the personal level
The reluctance of teachers to assume leadership roles involves a diverse set of factors observed from the perspectives of different participants in both Gold and Silver School and by the supervisors. Three supervisors claimed a prevalent hesitation among teachers to take leadership roles, attributing it to perceived limited ability or a tendency to adhere strictly to their official duties. These teachers are busy performing their primary formal roles, such as teaching (Wan

et al., 2018). This sentiment was echoed by two administrators in Gold School who believe that teachers lose enthusiasm for leadership due to a perceived lack of influence or a limited awareness of spiritual rewards.

Five teacher leaders in Gold School pointed out that a lack of experience is a pivotal factor causing teachers to shy away from leadership roles. This is consistent with some literature that acknowledges that lack of experience is among the challenges teacher leaders face (Al-Taneiji and Ibrahim, 2017). This lack of experience stems from either not practising leadership or being new to teaching, resulting in a dearth of leadership skills. Moreover, in Silver School, as observed by the principal, some teachers simply prefer to focus on their primary responsibility of teaching students, lacking the enthusiasm to take on additional leadership duties.

The reluctance of teachers to assume leadership roles, for example by teacher leaders in Silver School, stems from various personal demotivators. These include the absence of clear leadership goals and a lack of clarity about teachers' aspirations, emphasising the importance of well-defined objectives for effective leadership, as mentioned by Fairman and Mackenzie, (2014). The perceived inflexibility and difficulty in decision-making also contribute to hesitancy, reflecting the challenges teachers face when transitioning to leadership roles and the need for adaptability (Lau, Vähäsantanen and Collin, 2022). The third demotivator involves failing to build positive relationships with school members, hindering effective leadership and emphasising the significance of relational trust in successful school environments. Glab (2018) highlighted that teacher leaders exhibit greater effectiveness in carrying out their leadership roles when they succeed in cultivating a trusting relationship. Addressing these demotivators requires tailored interventions and support structures to empower teachers and foster their preparedness for leadership responsibilities. The deputy principal of Silver School also raised a unique concern, suggesting that teachers may fear assuming leadership roles due to the potential for behaving authoritatively, leading to colleagues' reluctance to cooperate out of jealousy (Kasapoğlu and Karaca, 2021).

In synthesising these perspectives, it is evident that a combination of factors, identified by a total of fifteen participants, contributes to teachers' reluctance to embrace leadership roles. These include perceived limitations in ability, lack of experience, a preference for teaching, unclear goals, emotional challenges, and concerns about potential authoritarian behaviour. Addressing these multifaceted issues may require a comprehensive approach that combines

professional development, mentorship, and fostering a positive school culture that values and supports teacher leadership (Mangin, 2007; Muijs and Harris, 2007).

Demotivators of teacher leadership at the organisational level

Impact of leadership styles on teacher leadership

The diverse perspectives on school leadership shared by participants highlight the intricate nature of educational environments. Three supervisors observe a prevalence of authoritarian leadership styles among principals, emphasising a top-down decision-making approach that limits teacher involvement (Sebastian, Allensworth, and Huang, 2016). In contrast, two supervisors commend principals who actively engage teachers in decision-making processes, aligning with research emphasising the positive impact of distributed leadership on productivity and school effectiveness (Glab, 2018). This dichotomy in leadership styles underscores the multifaceted challenges schools face in cultivating effective leadership structures.

At Silver School, an administrator notes that principals wield extensive decision-making powers, potentially creating barriers to teacher leadership. This resonates with literature suggesting that participative leadership contributes to a positive school climate (e.g. Harris, 2003). The intricate relationship between decision-making powers and teacher leadership underscores the need to carefully examine structural factors influencing leadership approaches within educational institutions.

The participants in Gold school do not highlight the principal as an obstacle. This may indicate a leadership style aligned with collaboration or a distinct school culture that fosters teacher leadership (Grant, 2006). The comparison between the Gold and Silver Schools introduces complexity to the conversation, highlighting the specific school-level factors affecting the enactment of teacher leadership.

A teacher leader at the Silver School believes that the challenges for teacher leaders do not arise from having an authoritarian principal or strict management in schools. Instead, they come from personal factors, such as having limited time for leadership and from lacking energy. The challenges teacher leaders face, as identified at the Silver School, appear to be complex and multifaceted, including time constraints and energy depletion.

Research supports the notion that the interplay of individual and organisational factors is crucial in determining the success of teacher leaders. York-Barr and Duke (2004) underscore the critical role of addressing both organisational issues and individual challenges to support

educational leadership. Organisational issues, including decision-making structures, can either facilitate or impede the work of teacher leaders. Simultaneously, individual challenges, such as time constraints and energy depletion, can impact their ability to lead effectively within the educational environment (Wenner and Campbell, 2016).

Overall, participants' varied perspectives on school leadership highlight the complex nature of educational environments and the challenges in cultivating effective leadership. Differences in authoritarian and participative leadership styles at Silver and Gold Schools underscore the impact of decision-making approaches and collaborative cultures on teacher leadership. The contrast between concerns at Silver School, relating to top-down management, and the more collaborative atmosphere at Gold School, emphasises the role of school culture in shaping leadership approaches. Acknowledging the interplay between individual and organisational factors is crucial for supporting educational leadership effectively. Despite diverse experiences, a common theme emerges—addressing both organisational issues and individual challenges is essential for fostering effective teacher leadership in diverse educational settings.

Impact of teacher-student interactions on teacher leaders

Teacher leadership demotivators may include interactions between teachers and students, as well as interactions within the professional community. Two supervisors suggest that professional jealousy among educators could hinder the progression of their colleagues into leadership roles. This resistance may stem from a fear of being overshadowed by a peer, leading to a lack of collaboration and respect within the professional community. Additionally, the deputy principal at Silver School claims that assuming leadership roles could potentially lead to authoritarian behaviour towards fellow teachers, further exacerbating tensions and reluctance to cooperate due to jealousy. These interactions align with Thornton's (2010) view that such interpersonal interactions may be obstacles to effective teacher leadership. Weiner and Woulfin (2018) also discuss professional rivalry and competition among teachers as factors impeding collaboration and the development of a positive professional community.

Two other supervisors highlight instances of positive camaraderie and cooperation among teachers in certain schools. This collaborative atmosphere acts as a motivating factor, inspiring teachers to enthusiastically take on leadership roles. At Silver School, three teacher leaders emphasize the importance of cooperation among themselves and their colleagues, leading to joint thinking, improved morale, and enhanced support for students and other school members. This collaboration helps alleviate feelings of isolation and fosters enthusiasm among the teachers. However, a teacher leader at Gold school suggests that enthusiasm may fluctuate or

diminish when some teachers are unwilling to cooperate with them. The importance of collaborative school culture in promoting teacher leadership is supported by Hairon, Goh and Chua (2015). Similarly, Kilinc (2014) argues that a positive school climate encourages teachers to engage in leadership roles with eagerness, feeling supported and valued by their colleagues.

Teacher leaders face numerous challenges when dealing with difficult students, two supervisors noted a teacher leader's frustration with disruptive students who resisted various teaching methods and extracurricular activities, leading to the teacher experiencing exhaustion. Conversely, two administrators at Silver School emphasized the importance of teacher leaders in controlling student behaviour, suggesting that this responsibility might deter teacher leaders from assuming more significant roles. This contrasts with the perspective at Gold School, where participants did not discuss students' behaviour as a demotivating factor for teacher leaders. This discrepancy could stem from the differing perceptions of the role of teacher leaders; in Silver School, managing difficult students is seen as a primary task, while in Gold School, it may not be as prominent. Additionally, the teacher leaders at Gold School did not view students as significant obstacles, unlike the situation at Silver School.

Despite employing diverse teaching methods and incorporating extracurricular activities, student unresponsiveness is claimed to be a persistent issue, leading to exhaustion, fatigue, and frustration for the teacher leader (Öqvist & Malmström, 2018). This aligns with the views of Cheng, Chen, and Bryant (2021), who emphasise the emotional toll leadership roles can exact on teachers. Their research underscores the necessity for resilience and adaptability in these positions, as teacher leaders may need to continuously assess and adjust their strategies to meet the evolving needs of both students and the educational environment. Effectively addressing student behaviour challenges requires a multifaceted approach. Collaborative efforts with colleagues, seeking support, and continuous professional development are crucial to navigating these difficulties (Cheng et al., 2021). The significance of a student-centred focus, fostering a positive learning environment, and understanding the psychological aspects of behaviour is highlighted in the literature, emphasising the complexity of these challenges (Öqvist & Malmström, 2018).

The ability of teacher leaders to adopt student-centred approaches. How often do I have to say this?], Engaging in effective collaboration, and prioritising ongoing professional growth is essential for managing the complexities of challenging student behaviours. However, variations across different school contexts, exemplified by Silver and Gold schools, influence how these

principles are perceived and practised. In Silver School, where student behaviour management takes precedence, teacher leaders focus on implementing student-centred strategies tailored to individual needs, fostering collaboration among colleagues to develop intervention plans, and prioritizing continuous professional development in behaviour management techniques. Conversely, in Gold School, where student behaviour management may be less prominent, teacher leaders still emphasize student-centred approaches but allocate more time to other aspects of their role, such as instructional leadership. These variations underscore the importance of adapting approaches to meet the specific needs of teacher leaders and students, ensuring effective management of challenging behaviours while maximizing student learning and well-being.

Impact of the school environment on teacher leaders

There are some demotivating factors at the school environment level where there is unease among participants, including two supervisors, two administrators (a deputy principal and a student advisor), and two teacher leaders at Gold School, about the informal nature of teacher leader roles. The concern revolves around the potential consequences, such as losing titles and job positions, due to the absence of formal recognition from the Ministry. The lack of clarity regarding responsibilities is creating challenges for teacher leaders, impacting their job security, and hindering career advancement. Anderson (2018) expresses similar concerns, emphasising the significance of clear expectations for career growth.

There is consensus among both supervisors and teacher leaders at Gold School regarding the challenges associated with workload. Four supervisors and two teacher leaders highlight the substantial pressure and fatigue arising from their combined responsibilities, including teaching duties, homework correction, and lesson preparation. This underscores a widespread issue in educational institutions where workload distribution and support mechanisms may require attention to prevent burnout and maintain effectiveness among teacher leaders (Wenner and Campbell, 2016).

The divergent opinions among participants, regarding rewards and incentives, reflect the intricate landscape explored by Al-Taneiji and Ibrahim (2017) in their examination of the impact of rewards on teacher leaders within educational environments. While participants at the Silver School may have overlooked the significance of rewards, as a result of focusing on obstacles at higher levels, such as poor leadership empowerment and authoritarian management. The dissatisfaction expressed by supervisors at the main office, and teacher leaders at the Gold School, regarding the absence of tangible and intangible rewards, signals a

recognition of their importance. Al-Taneiji and Ibrahim's research underscores the pivotal role that rewards, both tangible and intangible, play in shaping the motivation and job satisfaction of teacher leaders, aligning with participants' concerns. Moreover, the finding that some supervisors and teacher leaders' resort to seeking spiritual rewards, due to budget constraints, adds depth to the discussion, illustrating how external factors can significantly impact the types of rewards available within educational settings.

This suggests that there is a distinct contrast between how issues related to job titles, work pressure, rewards, and incentives for teacher leaders, are addressed at the two schools. The Gold School participants are depicted as actively articulating concerns about these specific matters, indicating a heightened awareness of the challenges and shortcomings within their organizational structure. In contrast, participants from the Silver School rarely mention these concerns, suggesting a different approach or possibly a lower level of priority assigned to these particular issues. This discrepancy underscores the importance of considering the unique aspects and priorities of each school's organizational culture when assessing and addressing challenges faced by teacher leaders.

Therefore, it appears that the Silver School's organizational culture may prioritize overcoming barriers at other levels rather than focusing on issues related to job titles, work pressure, rewards, and incentives for teacher leaders. This assumption is based on the contrast in the concerns expressed by participants from the Gold School and the apparent absence of such concerns in the Silver School.

Overview

Exploring teacher leadership within selected Saudi Arabian schools reflects a nuanced understanding, encompassing organisational, personal, and broader societal dimensions, as illustrated by the Grant model (2006). The model's first and second levels emphasise teachers' roles as leaders both within and outside the classroom, aligning with the role teacher leaders play in supporting colleagues, fostering collaborative communities, and positively influencing student development. The Gold school exhibits practices in line with higher levels of the Grant model - showcasing a broader understanding of teacher leadership that extends beyond classroom management to include collaborative decision-making and engagement in district-level initiatives. Conversely, Silver School aligns with the first level of the model, focusing narrowly on classroom management, and facing challenges related to hierarchical policies and societal perceptions.

The attributes, and skills of teacher leaders within Saudi Arabian schools align with various levels of the Grant model. In Gold school, participants may perceive teacher leaders as embodying traits such as patience, flexibility, and ethical conduct. These perceived qualities contribute to fostering what participants believe to be positive learning environments and engaging in what they perceive as ongoing professional development activities, reflective of the higher levels of the model. Conversely, participants at the Silver school perceive these characteristics to be more aligned with lower levels of the model, prioritising classroom management techniques due to challenges such as teacher shortages and budget constraints.

Teacher leaders may extend their roles beyond individual schools to encompass broader educational and community contexts. In Gold School, teacher leaders are actively involved in decision-making processes and collaborative efforts beyond the classroom, fostering a culture of shared leadership and continuous improvement. This collaborative approach extends beyond the school to district-level initiatives and community contexts, benefiting students and educators across schools, consistent with level four of the Grant (2006) model. Administrators at Silver School, however, have a narrower view of teacher leadership, and there is little engagement with other schools and the local community.

Demotivators impeding teacher leadership in Saudi Arabian schools are deeply rooted across political, organizational, and personal domains. The Ministry of Education's centralized authority limits autonomy at the school level, hindering innovation and teacher leadership opportunities. Societal perceptions of teaching as incompatible with leadership further discourage aspiring teacher leaders, due to a lack of recognition and support. Heavy workloads, especially in resource-constrained "Silver" schools, leave little time for teacher leadership activities. Furthermore, teachers' reluctance to take on leadership roles, due to concerns about added responsibilities, fear of failure, or lack of confidence, exacerbates these challenges. Addressing these issues requires a comprehensive approach involving policy reforms, professional development initiatives, and organizational changes, to promote distributed leadership. While acknowledging the absence of evidence regarding all school types, tailored interventions, aligned with the principles of the Grant model, are necessary to foster teacher leadership effectively in Saudi Arabia, considering the unique educational landscape. This approach can establish a culture of teacher leadership driving continuous improvement and innovation in Saudi Arabian schools.

Overall, the findings highlight different approaches to teacher leadership in Gold and Silver schools. Gold school appears to have a more comprehensive understanding of teacher leadership, emphasising collaboration and engagement at multiple levels. Silver School, in contrast, seems to focus narrowly on classroom management. Despite these differences, both recognise the importance of teacher leadership in supporting colleagues and enhancing student development. The next chapter will show how the research questions have been addressed and discuss the significance of the research.

The next and final chapter is the conclusion.

CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION

Introduction

The chapter is structured into three main sections. It commences by addressing the research questions, showing how they have been answered through the study's findings. This is followed by outlining the study's contributions to knowledge across contextual, empirical, and theoretical dimensions. Lastly, it underscores the implications of the research, culminating in actionable recommendations.

Answering the Research Questions

This section outlines how the four research questions have been answered.

RQ 1. What perceptions do supervisors in Riyadh, and principals and teachers in selected Riyadh schools, have of teacher leaders and teacher leadership?

RQ 2. How is teacher leadership promoted or supported in Riyadh's schools?

RQ3. How does the professional development of teachers relate to teacher leadership in selected Riyadh schools?

RQ 4. What are the perspectives of supervisors, principals, and teacher leaders in Riyadh about whether and how teachers are empowered to be teacher leaders?

Research Question 1: What perceptions do supervisors in Riyadh, and principals and teachers in selected Riyadh schools, have of teacher leaders and teacher leadership?

The perceptions of supervisors, and teacher leaders and administrators at both Gold and Silver schools, reveal a multifaceted understanding of teacher leadership, shaped by organizational culture, individual experiences, and educational priorities. Supervisors offer overarching guidance on teacher leadership, but their interpretations vary. Some supervisors emphasize the significance of teacher leadership at both organizational and personal levels, while others prioritize narrow organizational objectives and outcomes. This diversity in perspectives underscores different expectations about the roles and responsibilities of teacher leaders,

Within Gold and Silver schools, teacher leaders and administrators exhibit distinct perspectives on teacher leadership. At Gold school, there is a strong emphasis on fostering a collaborative culture where teacher leaders actively support their colleagues and contribute to overall school improvement. This collaborative ethos influences perceptions of teacher leadership, with participants recognizing the importance of both organizational and personal dimensions. In

contrast, the culture at Silver school is more variable, with some participants embracing a collaborative approach similar to Gold school, while others, including some administrators, prioritize more traditional views of teacher leadership focused solely on classroom management.

Despite differences in perspectives, there is a shared recognition among many participants, especially teacher leaders, of the importance of student support both inside and outside the classroom. This student-centred focus underscores the broader impact of teacher leadership on academic achievement and socio-emotional development. While some administrators at Silver school overlook this aspect, ongoing dialogue and collaboration with teacher leaders who prioritize student well-being facilitates a shift towards a shared understanding of teacher leadership.

Research Question 2: How is teacher leadership promoted or supported in Riyadh's schools?

Supervisors hold a systemic view of teacher leadership, considering its implications across multiple schools in Riyadh. Moreover, their perception of teacher leadership is influenced by national or regional educational priorities, which shape the emphasis on specific aspects of leadership, such as instructional practices or collaborative decision-making.

Participants at the Gold School exhibit a holistic approach to teacher leadership, emphasizing both inherent qualities and specific skills related to teaching and learning processes. They prioritize traits like patience, flexibility, and ethical conduct alongside the acquisition of leadership skills through professional development activities. Within this school culture, teacher leaders actively engage in self-improvement through participation in leadership courses, workshops, and peer exchange programmes. The promotion of teacher leadership in the Gold School involves creating a supportive environment that encourages continuous learning and growth, where teacher leaders feel empowered to take on leadership roles beyond the classroom. The culture of collaboration and knowledge-sharing among educators further reinforces the ethos of teacher leadership within the Gold School community.

Conversely, participants at the Silver School associate teacher leadership more closely with administrative aspects and classroom management techniques, reflecting a top-down approach influenced by the school's principal and administration. While some teacher leaders recognize the importance of ongoing training and personal development, others perceive their role as primarily confined to the classroom, with limited opportunities for broader leadership involvement. The perception of teacher leadership in the Silver School may be shaped by the

hierarchical structure and authoritarian culture within the institution, where leadership is predominantly associated with authority figures rather than distributed among educators. Promoting teacher leadership in the Silver School requires challenges to existing norms and fostering a more inclusive and collaborative approach to leadership that recognizes the diverse skills and contributions of all educators.

The perception that the Ministry of Education's support is inadequate in fostering teacher leadership development is evident among supervisors at the main office, as well as participants at both the Gold School and the Silver School. Supervisors at the main office attribute responsibility to the Ministry for setting national priorities and allocating resources, yet they face challenges like budget constraints and teacher shortages, limiting their capacity to offer sufficient support. At the Gold School, participants feel the impact of this deficiency, noting the absence of training opportunities for teacher leaders despite recognizing their importance. Similarly, participants at the Silver School express frustration with the Ministry's failure to prioritize comprehensive training programmes, instead emphasizing classroom management techniques. Despite these hurdles, all stakeholders share a common concern about the Ministry's lack of support for teacher leadership development, underscoring the necessity for systemic changes to empower educators and enhance educational outcomes nationwide.

Research Question 3: How does the professional development of teachers relate to teacher leadership in selected Riyadh schools?

The professional development of teachers stands as a cornerstone for fostering effective teacher leadership within educational institutions. In the main office, supervisors primarily emphasize addressing immediate classroom needs and instructional techniques, particularly centred on classroom management. This focus stems from the perceived urgency of maintaining discipline and order, which is viewed as fundamental for facilitating effective teaching and learning experiences. However, while this emphasis on immediate needs is understandable, given the day-to-day challenges educators face, it also risks overshadowing the broader leadership skills essential for enacting systemic change and driving long-term educational improvement. These supervisors prioritize creating opportunities for teacher leaders to engage in professional development activities such as workshops, seminars, and courses, allocating resources and funding to facilitate such initiatives.

Supervisors at the main office also monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of teacher leadership programmes or initiatives implemented in different schools, providing feedback and guidance

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for improvement. These supervisors' express concerns about budget constraints and teacher shortages, which they see as hindrances to providing adequate training programmes for teacher leaders. These challenges underscore the complex landscape within which educational leadership operates, where resource limitations can significantly impact on the ability to invest in comprehensive professional development initiatives. Despite these challenges, there remains a recognition among these supervisors of the importance of teacher leaders, although they underestimate their potential long-term impact on educational enhancement.

Similarly, participants at the Gold School exhibit a distinct perspective that emphasizes the importance of comprehensive training programmes encompassing not only pedagogical techniques but also leadership skills. Their commitment to professional development is evident through their active engagement in various forms of training, including leadership-related courses, workshops, and online learning opportunities. This proactive approach reflects their dedication to cultivating the qualities and skills necessary for effective teacher leadership. Moreover, participants at the Gold School perceive teacher leadership as embodying a wide array of activities essential for fostering a positive learning environment and addressing challenges. Beyond technical skills, they recognize the importance of qualities such as patience, flexibility, and ethical conduct for effective leadership. These attributes are seen as fundamental, not only for promoting student success but also for nurturing a collaborative and supportive school culture conducive to continuous improvement. Furthermore, the emphasis on comprehensive professional development at the Gold School extends beyond individual skill-building to encompass a broader vision of systemic change and educational improvement. Participants understand that effective teacher leadership requires not only personal growth but also a commitment to change at the organizational level. By developing both their own capacities, and collective leadership within the school community, participants at the Gold School are better equipped than those at the Silver School to address complex challenges and drive positive outcomes for students and educators alike.

In contrast, participants at the Silver School tend to prioritize immediate instructional concerns within the confines of the classroom environment. Their focus on addressing day-to-day operational aspects of teaching suggests a perspective that prioritizes the practical aspects of instruction over broader leadership skills and qualities. Unlike their counterparts at the Gold School, participants at the Silver School do not place as much emphasis on the need for ongoing training to enhance leadership abilities alongside personal development in administrative aspects. However, despite this divergence in emphasis, there is still a recognition by some

teacher leaders at the Silver School of the broader importance of leadership qualities and skills. Participants at Silver School indicate that effective teacher leaders draw inspiration from accomplished leaders, maintain clear long-term visions, and exert influence on those around them. These are crucial not only for fostering a positive learning environment but also for addressing challenges within the educational community and driving systemic improvements over time.

Overall, the distinction between the Gold and Silver Schools highlights varying perceptions of effective teacher leadership and professional development. While the Gold School advocates a holistic approach, that encompasses a broad range of skills and qualities, the Silver School tends to prioritize technical skills related to classroom management. Despite these differences, both schools recognize the importance of professional development for teacher leaders, albeit with distinct approaches and priorities. Thus, efforts to cultivate teacher leadership should consider these varying perspectives and tailor professional development initiatives to address the specific needs and priorities of each school community.

Research Question 4: What are the perspectives of supervisors, principals, and teacher leaders in Riyadh about whether and how teachers are empowered to be teacher leaders?

The factors influencing whether teachers in Saudi Arabia are empowered to be teacher leaders are multifaceted, as perceived by the different stakeholders. At the organizational level, the prevalent leadership styles within schools play a significant role. While supervisors at the main office often observe authoritarian leadership styles among principals, participants at Gold School commend collaborative and inclusive approaches that actively engage teachers in decision-making processes. Participants at Silver School, including teacher leaders, and the deputy principal, highlight the demotivating impact of authoritarian leadership, which may hinder teacher involvement in decision-making and limit their ability to take on leadership roles.

Positive interactions and collaborative relationships among colleagues are also essential in fostering teacher-leader empowerment. Both supervisors at the main office, and participants at Gold School, recognize the value of creating a supportive and collaborative school culture, where teachers feel empowered to take on leadership roles. However, challenges, such as professional jealousy and resistance to collaboration, are identified as potential obstacles that may hinder teachers' progression into leadership roles. Overcoming these barriers requires strategies to promote a culture of trust and cooperation among educators. Furthermore, the

informal nature of teacher leader roles, and the lack of formal recognition, emerge as shared concerns among participants at Gold and Silver Schools. This lack of clarity regarding responsibilities, and the absence of tangible and intangible rewards for teacher leaders. Impact on job security and hinder career advancement, underscoring the importance of providing adequate support and recognition for teacher leadership efforts. Additionally, addressing perceived workload challenges, such as pressure and fatigue, is crucial to supporting teachers in effectively balancing their leadership responsibilities with teaching duties.

At the political level, Ministry policies exert a significant influence on teacher leadership empowerment. Both supervisors at the main office and the participants at Gold and Silver Schools acknowledge the hierarchical and centralized nature of these policies, which restricts the potential for teachers to exercise leadership roles and limits their autonomy and involvement in decision-making. Moreover, the lack of recognition of teacher leadership by the Ministry is a demotivating factor highlighted by participants, indicating frustration over the marginalization of teacher leaders within the educational system. In Silver School, in particular, the absence of leadership-related training further impedes the professional growth of teacher leaders, confining them to a narrow focus on teaching and hindering their potential contributions beyond the classroom.

Finally, at the personal level, the perceptions of supervisors and participants at Gold and Silver School, regarding the empowerment of teachers as leaders, exhibit nuanced differences. Participants at Gold School, particularly teacher leaders, focus more on individual factors, such as lack of experience and unclear leadership goals, highlighting the need for personal capacity-building and professional development. Meanwhile, participants at Silver School, including the principal and teacher leaders, report a mix of personal and interpersonal challenges, discussing preferences for teaching, concerns about relational interactions, and fears of authoritarian behaviour and jealousy among colleagues. These varied perspectives underscore the complex interplay of personal, systemic, and interpersonal factors shaping the empowerment of teachers as leaders in Saudi Arabian schools.

Significance of the Study

This case study makes a significant contribution to our understanding of teacher leadership, by offering insights in respect of context and method.

In Saudi Arabia's educational landscape, the Ministry of Education (MoE) holds centralized authority, following a top-down approach, whereby officials at the Ministry make decisions and teachers passively implement these rulings (Shah, 2020). This top-down approach, while recognizing principals as agents of change, often sidelines teacher contributions, impeding the development of a collaborative and participatory environment necessary for sustainable educational reform (Shah, 2020). Despite increasing awareness of the need for inclusivity in shaping educational transformation, the entrenched model persists, presenting challenges to the empowerment and professional growth of educators within the system.

Gold School administrators, and supervisors, emerge as pivotal figures in fostering effective educational leadership by providing support, resources, and a modest degree of autonomy to teachers, thereby facilitating their meaningful engagement in decision-making processes, and cultivating collaborative leadership cultures (Alkrdem, 2011; Hammad et al., 2023). Globally, research also has not widely explored the opinions of supervisors regarding teacher leadership due to decentralisation in some global northern countries. It is important to recognize the differences between Western and Saudi environments. In Saudi Arabia, cultural disparities run deep, with religion playing a major role in influencing societal norms, including the adoption of single-sex schools in line with cultural values. Moreover, an autocratic approach to leadership, and the centralized nature of governance, further promote a standardized approach, leaving little scope for flexibility. Teachers consequently face challenges such as low status and limited opportunities for their professional growth developing their practices or even supporting their colleagues. Despite the critical role that supervisors and managers play in shaping educational practices, empirical literature in the Saudi context largely overlooks their insights. This gap underscores the need for research to explore and understand the diverse perspectives that influence teacher leadership in Saudi Arabia. Additionally, research on teacher leadership in Arab and Gulf countries is limited, often focusing primarily on teachers' opinions (Alsalahi, 2016; Shah, 2019; Alnasser, 2023). Only a few studies have included principals' perspectives, neglecting other viewpoints, such as those of supervisors, which are crucial for a comprehensive understanding of teacher leadership (Hammad, 2016; Sawalhi and Chaaban, 2023; Chaaban, Sawalhi, and Du, 2022). Supervisors and managers significantly impact educational policies and practices, offering support and professional development to teachers. Their insights are vital for identifying challenges and opportunities in fostering teacher leadership. By expanding research to include these stakeholders' perspectives, we can

develop a more nuanced and effective approach to teacher leadership. This broader focus will help to fill existing gaps in the literature and contribute to more sustainable educational strategies in the Saudi context and the wider Gulf region.

There is a distinct paucity of empirical research in Arab countries. Research on teacher leadership in the Arab region and Gulf countries is limited and mostly focuses on teachers' perspectives while not considering other stakeholders' perceptions such as supervisors (Hammad et al., 2024). In Saudi Arabia, despite its distinct cultural context, empirical studies on teacher leadership are very limited. Existing research has primarily centred on teachers' perspectives, overlooking valuable insights from other stakeholders including supervisors and principals (Alsalahi, 2015; Shah, 2020; Alnasser, 2023). There is only one study incorporating principals' perspectives, without considering supervisors' views (Hammad, 2016).

Moreover, Saudi research on teacher leadership is limited, making this study a pioneering effort in Saudi Arabia, particularly in Riyadh. While previous studies have explored teacher leadership in other cities within the kingdom (Alsalahi, 2015; Shah, 2020; Hammad, 2016), none have specifically concentrated on Riyadh. This unique focus on Riyadh is significant because it is the capital city and a central hub for educational development and innovation. The emphasis on Riyadh not only fills a gap in the existing literature but also provides valuable insights that can influence educational policies and practices in the region. This research, therefore, is significant for Riyadh in particular.

The current study assumes pivotal importance as the first research exploring supervisors', managers', and teachers' insights about teacher leadership within the Saudi educational landscape. This research connects to the Saudi Vision 2030, which aims to understand and improve teacher leadership (Saudi Vision, 2030, 2021; Alazzam & Mohammad,2022). By incorporating the perspectives of these key stakeholders, the study aims to offer a more holistic understanding of teacher-leadership interactions and their impact on educational policies and practices in Saudi Arabia. This comprehensive understanding can inform strategies and initiatives that support the goals of Saudi Vision 2030, thereby contributing to the achievement of its educational objectives. The study endeavours to address the imbalance present in the current literature and contribute to a deeper comprehension of effective leadership practices within Saudi schools. This approach is essential for developing evidence-based strategies tailored to the specific cultural and institutional nuances of the Saudi educational system. By amplifying the voices of supervisors, managers and teacher leaders, policymakers can gain

invaluable insights to inform strategic interventions aimed at nurturing teacher leadership capacities and fostering collaborative and innovative educational environments. Additionally, given the centralized nature of the Saudi educational system, understanding the perspectives of these stakeholders is crucial for implementing top-down reforms that are effective and culturally relevant. By recognizing the hierarchical structure and the pivotal role of central authorities, this study can help ensure that teacher leadership initiatives are aligned with national policies and educational goals, facilitating smoother and more impactful implementation.

Methodological significance

This study is methodologically significant for its comprehensive qualitative approach to examining teacher leadership in Saudi Arabian schools. This contrasts with much of the existing research on teacher leadership in Gulf countries, including Saudi Arabia, which often relies on a single qualitative method such as interviews (Shah, 2020; Shah, 2019; Alnasser, 2023; Alsalahi, 2014). Only one study has used three methods for data collection, and this focuses only on teacher-leader perceptions, without considering stakeholders' and principals' opinions (Alsalahi, 2016). Only three studies involved principals' perceptions without incorporating insights from a broader range of stakeholders (Hammad, 2016; Sawalhi and Chaaban, 2023; Chaaban, Sawalhi, and Du, 2022).

The present study is distinctive by employing a combination of five qualitative techniques: interviews, focus groups, reflective essays, field observations, and document analysis, with diverse participant groups. This multi-methods approach enhances the credibility, reliability, and trustworthiness of the findings. By integrating and comparing data from these various sources, the study offers a comprehensive understanding of teacher leadership in Riyadh. It identifies convergent patterns, divergent perspectives, and emergent themes, thus enriching the analysis's depth and breadth and highlighting the significance of this research.

The methodological significance of this research lies in employing a case study methodology, which allows for consideration of the context, programmes, and individuals within the particular 'case,' and provides valuable insights into teacher leadership in Riyadh. This study aimed to achieve an in-depth understanding of the participants' views regarding teacher leadership and the factors that affect teacher empowerment and their professional development in two different schools (the highest and lowest ranked schools in terms of leadership practices, according to annual evaluation criteria). This is the first research to explore teacher leadership

across two Riyadh schools, filling a notable gap in the existing literature (Alsalahi, 2015; Shah, 2020; Alnasser, 2023).

Limitations of the Study

While this study provides valuable insights into teacher leadership in high schools in Saudi Arabia, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, female teacher leaders were not included despite efforts to do so. The research initially aimed to incorporate perspectives from both boys' and girls' high schools; however, female teacher leaders expressed discomfort in participating and declined to take part in the study. Their decision was fully respected following ethical research practices. Various factors may have contributed to their reluctance, including cultural considerations, privacy concerns, or institutional restrictions. As a result, this study does not capture the experiences of teacher leaders in girls' schools, where leadership dynamics may differ due to administrative structures and gender-specific challenges. Future research should explore alternative approaches, such as anonymous surveys or interviews conducted by female researchers, to facilitate female participation and ensure a more inclusive representation of teacher leadership in Saudi Arabia.

Another limitation concerns the geographical and methodological scope of the study, which was influenced by constraints such as time, resources, and logistical challenges. The study focuses on one region (Riyadh) of Saudi Arabia, which may not fully reflect the diversity of teacher leadership experiences across the country. Regional educational policies, school cultures, and socioeconomic conditions could impact leadership practices differently. Additionally, due to limited funding and time constraints, the study relies on qualitative methods, which, while providing rich insights, may not be widely generalizable. Conducting a large-scale survey would require significant resources but could offer broader, quantitative insights into teacher leadership trends nationwide. Moreover, this study captures teacher leadership at a single point, making it difficult to assess how leadership evolves in response to policy changes and educational reforms. A longitudinal study, though requiring extended commitment and funding, would be helpful for tracking changes in teacher leadership practices and their long-term impact.

Implications for Policy, Practice and Research

Drawing on the data presented and discussed in Chapters 4, 5, and 6, this section discusses the implications of the research for policy, practice, and research.

Policy implications

The research offers actionable strategies for policymakers aiming to enhance teacher leadership in Saudi Arabia. Firstly, decentralizing decision-making processes away from the Ministry level is crucial. Empowering school principals and education centre staff with greater autonomy allows educators to play more significant roles in shaping school policies and initiatives. This shift towards decentralization would foster a culture of distributed leadership, enabling teacher leaders to contribute to decision-making processes and drive positive change within their schools. This aligns with the research of Harris (2013) and Spillane (2006), who emphasize that distributed leadership enhances school effectiveness by allowing multiple stakeholders to share leadership responsibilities. Similarly, Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond (2004) highlight that decentralization fosters school improvement by increasing teacher agency and professional ownership. To achieve this, reforms should streamline bureaucratic processes and provide schools with greater flexibility in resource allocation and curriculum development. Additionally, establishing mechanisms for meaningful teacher input into policy formulation and implementation can further democratize decision-making and ensure educators' voices are heard at all levels of the education system. Although the Saudi education system is well-established and not easily changed, these strategies can pave the way for a more progressive and inclusive educational environment (Sebastian, Allensworth, & Huang (2016); Leithwood & Jantzi, 2009).

Secondly, prioritizing investment in leadership training programmes for school leaders and teachers would help enhance educational outcomes. These programmes should focus on equipping educators with the necessary skills and competencies to lead and collaborate effectively within their schools. Professional development initiatives could include workshops, seminars, and mentoring programmes designed to enhance leadership capabilities, foster collaboration, and promote innovative practices in education. This recommendation aligns with Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), who argue that leadership development programmes significantly impact teacher effectiveness and student learning. Additionally, Muijs & Harris (2006) emphasize that investing in leadership training improves teacher engagement and enhances their ability to lead instructional improvements. By providing ongoing support and opportunities for skills development, policymakers can cultivate a cadre of skilled teacher leaders capable of driving school improvement efforts and adapting to the evolving needs of the education sector. Targeted professional development programmes, tailored to enhance teachers' leadership skills, would be helpful. These programmes should encompass workshops,

seminars, and mentoring opportunities aimed at developing competencies such as decision-making, communication, conflict resolution, and instructional leadership, as suggested by Leithwood et al. (2020). Moreover, incentivizing participation in leadership training programmes through grants, scholarships, or professional recognition can encourage educators to invest in their professional growth and take on leadership roles within their schools. Investing in the professional growth of teacher leaders ensures they are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively lead their peers and contribute to school improvement efforts (; Frost, 2012).

Furthermore, policymakers should advocate for a broader understanding of leadership within the education system. This understanding should recognize and value the diverse leadership contributions that teachers can make. By promoting an inclusive culture of leadership, policymakers can create conditions that encourage teachers from diverse backgrounds and experiences to step into leadership roles and contribute to school improvement efforts. This supports the findings of Katzenmeyer and Moller (2013), who highlight the need for recognizing informal leadership contributions among teachers. Additionally, establishing formalized processes for identifying and acknowledging teacher leaders, such as performance evaluations, leadership awards, or leadership pathways, can help motivate educators to actively engage in leadership roles and drive positive change within their schools. Crowther, Ferguson, & Hann (2009) emphasize that recognition mechanisms play a crucial role in sustaining teacher leadership over time. Moreover, fostering collaborative networks and communities of practice, where teacher leaders can share experiences, resources, and best practices, can further support their professional growth and development. Wenger (1998) argues that such communities of practice are essential for sustained professional learning and leadership development. Research by Fullan (2014) also suggests that collaborative professional learning environments contribute significantly to leadership capacity building in schools.

Finally, providing formal recognition and incentives for teacher leaders within organizational structures would be valuable. Creating designated leadership positions, such as department chairs or instructional coaches, and implementing reward systems like bonuses, professional development opportunities, or public recognition can acknowledge and incentivize teacher leadership contributions. Valuing and celebrating the work of teacher leaders can attract and retain talented educators committed to driving school improvement efforts. This recommendation is consistent with York-Barr and Duke (2004), who assert that recognition and structured career pathways enhance teacher leadership sustainability. Moreover,

Hargreaves & Fullan (2012) argue that effective recognition strategies bolster professional motivation and long-term commitment to leadership roles. Overall, these policy implications underscore the importance of creating enabling environments that support and promote teacher leadership within Saudi schools, ultimately contributing to the enhancement of educational outcomes and the overall quality of education in the country (Sebastian & Allensworth, 2019).

Implications for practice

Several practical implications emerge from this study regarding the implementation of teacher leadership, which are consistent with existing research on collaborative and distributed leadership models. The study underscores the significance of fostering collaborative leadership styles among principals, administrators, and teachers to effectively implement teacher leadership initiatives. This aligns with Harris and Spillane's (2008) argument that distributed leadership enhances organizational capacity by leveraging the expertise of multiple stakeholders.

One key implication is the promotion of inclusive leadership, which entails valuing input from all stakeholders, including teachers. This finding is supported by Smylie and Eckert (2018), who argue that inclusive leadership fosters a culture of trust and mutual respect, which is essential for sustainable teacher leadership. Schools can achieve this by creating platforms for open dialogue and decision-making processes where teachers' voices are not only heard but also respected. Inclusive leadership sets the tone for a collaborative culture, which research indicates is a critical factor in effective school improvement (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2009).

A related practical implication is an emphasis on shared decision-making. Principals and administrators should involve teacher leaders in significant decision-making processes related to curriculum development, instructional strategies, and school policies. As highlighted by York-Barr and Duke (2004), shared decision-making enhances teacher agency and commitment, ultimately leading to improved instructional quality. By engaging teacher leaders in these processes, schools tap into their expertise and insights, fostering a sense of ownership and accountability among staff.

Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of distributing leadership responsibilities among teachers. This approach cultivates a culture of collaboration and collective responsibility, consistent with Spillane's (2005) distributed leadership framework. Teacher leaders can take on various roles, such as instructional coaches, curriculum coordinators, or mentors, based on their expertise and interests. Distributing leadership responsibilities not only

empowers teachers but also contributes to the overall effectiveness of school leadership (Wenner & Campbell, 2017).

Establishing robust support systems for teacher leaders is also important. Principals should provide access to professional development opportunities, mentorship programs, and peer learning communities. As Stoelinga and Mangin (2010) emphasize, professional development tailored for teacher leaders enhances their capacity to influence instructional improvement. Schools should also allocate resources to support teacher leadership initiatives, including funding for workshops, collaborative planning time, and instructional materials. Adequate resource allocation signals a school's commitment to teacher leadership and provides the necessary infrastructure for its success.

Recognition and acknowledgement of teacher leaders' contributions are equally essential. Danielson (2006) stresses that recognizing teacher leaders enhances their motivation and commitment to sustaining positive change. Schools can implement formal recognition programs, awards, or simple expressions of appreciation to reinforce the significance of teacher leadership in fostering positive school change.

Finally, continuous evaluation and feedback mechanisms ensure the effectiveness of teacher leadership programmes. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) argue that ongoing assessment and feedback help to refine leadership initiatives and sustain their impact. Principals should regularly evaluate these initiatives' impact, solicit feedback from stakeholders, and make necessary adjustments. This iterative process ensures that teacher leadership initiatives remain responsive to the evolving needs of the school community, ultimately improving student outcomes and overall school effectiveness.

Research implications

The findings of this study on teacher leadership in Riyadh have significant implications for future research. To deepen our understanding, it would be helpful to explore several key areas. Firstly, while this study focused exclusively on male teachers, due to cultural norms in Saudi Arabia, future research should broaden the scope to include girls' schools in Riyadh. Cultural and societal norms have traditionally emphasized gender segregation, influencing the structure and operation of educational institutions. Investigating teacher leadership within girls' schools could reveal gender-specific challenges and strategies, providing a more comprehensive understanding of how leadership practices manifest and differ between male and female educators. This expansion would ensure that the findings are more representative of the

educational landscape in Riyadh. Understanding the leadership experiences of female teachers could shed light on potential barriers they face and inform policies that support gender equity in educational leadership. In addition, comparing leadership styles and effectiveness across genders could offer valuable insights into how teacher leadership can be nurtured and sustained in different contexts. This would align with findings from Leithwood et al. (2004), who emphasized the importance of exploring how leadership roles are shaped by contextual factors, including gender. Additionally, Crowther et al. (2009) discuss how leadership roles can be influenced by the structural and cultural norms within a given educational setting, further supporting the need to study leadership practices in both male and female schools to gain a holistic view of the educational leadership landscape.

Secondly, this research focused on Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia, due to its large and multinational nature. However, expanding the study to other regions, such as Eastern Province, Makkah, Asir, and Al-Qassim, would be beneficial, as Saudi Arabia's regional diversity in culture, economy, and education presents different challenges and opportunities for teacher leadership. Rural areas may face limited professional development resources and smaller school sizes, while urban areas may contend with larger school populations and diverse student needs. Socio-economic status influences leadership practices, with wealthier regions accessing advanced training and support, whereas less affluent areas struggle with basic resources. Cultural norms also shape leadership practices, with conservative regions differing from more liberal ones. Understanding these regional differences can help in developing tailored strategies and enable a comparative analysis to highlight different practices and solutions nationwide. This approach resonates with the literature that highlights the significance of regional diversity in educational leadership (Barber & Mourshed, 2007; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006), suggesting that regional contexts impact leadership practices and professional growth opportunities.

Thirdly, while this research employs qualitative data through interviews, focus groups, observations, and reflective essays, developing a large-scale survey would complement these findings. Qualitative methods provide detailed insights into teacher leadership experiences in specific settings, while a survey could capture broader trends and patterns across a wider sample of teachers and schools. The survey could include questions on leadership roles, professional development opportunities, support systems, and perceived barriers, capturing a wide range of perspectives and experiences. Open-ended questions can provide detailed qualitative responses, which could be analysed alongside the quantitative data for nuanced findings. Distributing the survey to a diverse sample of schools across various regions would

ensure representation from different cultural, socio-economic, and educational contexts. The findings could inform policymakers, school administrators, and educators, helping them to design more effective leadership programmes and support structures. This suggestion aligns with existing literature on the benefits of mixed methods approaches, which combine qualitative insights with quantitative data to provide a more comprehensive understanding of educational leadership (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Lastly, a longitudinal study would be useful for understanding how teacher leadership evolves over time, tracking the same group of teachers and schools over several years to observe changes in leadership practices and their long-term impact on school performance and student outcomes. This snapshot study, using qualitative data through interviews, focus groups, observations, and reflective essays, can serve as a foundation for such research. Repeated data collection from the same participants would allow monitoring of teacher leadership progression, identification of emerging trends, and assessment of the long-term effects of leadership practices. Longitudinal data can reveal the impact of external factors such as policy changes, economic shifts, and societal developments on teacher leadership and help to understand the career trajectories, professional growth, and challenges faced by teacher leaders. This aligns with the literature on the evolving nature of teacher leadership and the importance of longitudinal studies to assess its sustainability and long-term impact on educational outcomes (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009; Leith wood & Jantzi, 2005).

In conclusion, expanding research on teacher leadership by including girls' schools for gender inclusivity, extending to different regions for diverse educational contexts, conducting a large-scale survey for comprehensive data, and implementing a longitudinal study to track evolution over time would significantly enhance understanding and provide valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and researchers. This would be a substantial research agenda that could contribute to greater understanding of the nature of effective teacher leadership in Saudi Arabia, potentially contributing to improved educational outcomes. This research trajectory complements and extends existing scholarship on teacher leadership, ensuring that future studies address the multifaceted and dynamic nature of leadership practices in diverse educational settings.

Overview

This concluding chapter addresses three key aspects of teacher leadership in Riyadh schools. It begins by addressing the research questions, outlining how the study's findings contribute to

our understanding of teacher leadership perceptions, strategies, professional development relationships, and empowerment dynamics within the Saudi educational context. The significance of this research lies in its comprehensive exploration of often overlooked perspectives such as those of supervisors and managers, providing a holistic view crucial for informed policy and practice. The study's methodological approach, integrating multiple qualitative techniques, enhances the credibility of findings and contributes to a deeper understanding of teacher leadership dynamics. The chapter also offers actionable strategies for policymakers and practitioners to foster collaborative leadership cultures and support teacher leaders effectively. Moving forward, it suggests avenues for future research, notably to include longitudinal studies, large-scale surveys, and to integrate diverse perspectives, including those of female participants, for a more inclusive understanding of teacher leadership in Saudi Arabia.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Focus group discussion protocol

Focus Group Discussion Plan	Concept of Teacher Leadership/ Teacher leadership challenges/ Evaluation Policy / Professional Development/ Teacher leadership needs /Teacher leadership advantages
Setting	Teachers will be identified from selected high schools as well as both focus groups are to be held in a school classroom at a time that the participants find convenient.
Number of participants	8-10 teachers or teacher leaders will be involved overall into two focus groups.
Eligibility criteria	1) each of the participants will have a minimum of two years' experience in their current role. 2) the teachers will have been identified by their supervisors as being among the most committed to the teaching profession as well as the development of their school. 3)They will be identified because they have previously worked or are currently working as teacher leaders.
Moderator role	Moderator will have a limited role as they will record the session and make some notes as necessary and that entails making interventions when necessary, to suggest topics and ask questions of a non-directive nature
Duration of study	The study's overall duration for focus groups will be approximately 2 months. Each group will run a maximum of 2 hours, including breaks for refreshments.
Data analysis methods	Because this is a qualitative study, the recording will be transcribed, and themes will be coded. NVivo software will be used to store and handle c oded data.

Appendix B: Focus Group Questions

1. **Can you share a little about your teaching experience and background?**
   - How long have you worked as a teacher or in a school leadership role?

2. **Let's talk about your current role.**
   - Do you see yourself as a leader or a manager in any way?
   - In what ways do you take on leadership or management responsibilities in your school?

3. **What does the term 'leadership' mean to you?**
   - How, if at all, does leadership differ from management in a school setting?

4. **Who do you consider to be the leaders in schools?**
   - How do these individuals become leaders?
   - What do you understand by the term 'teacher leader' or 'teacher leadership'?

5. **What role can teachers play in leadership?**
   - Within their own schools?
   - Between different schools?
   - Across the teaching profession?

6. **How do you perceive teacher leadership?**
   - In what ways can teachers act as leaders?
   - How do these leadership roles relate to formal or informal positions?
   - Do you think there are different types of teacher leadership?

7. **From your experience, do teachers generally want to take on leadership roles?**
   - If yes, what motivates them?
   - If not, what do you think holds them back?

8. **In the context of high schools in Saudi Arabia, how do supervisors and school managers perceive teacher leadership?**
   - Have these perceptions changed over time? Why or why not?
   - To what extent is teacher leadership discussed and encouraged among school leaders?
   - What role do school supervisors and managers play in developing teacher leadership?

9. **How can the role of the teacher as a leader be further developed?**
   - Do teacher education programs provide enough knowledge and training on teacher leadership? Can you share any examples?
   - What factors help teachers to take on leadership roles?
   - What barriers might prevent teachers from becoming leaders?

10. **What do you think are the impacts of teacher leadership both inside and outside the classroom?**
    - How does teacher leadership affect teaching and learning?
    - What influence can teacher leaders have beyond their own classrooms or schools?

Appendix C: Interview Protocol for Supervisors and Principals

Section	Details
Study Duration	The study involved 13 semi-structured interviews conducted over a period of 3 months.
Participants	5 supervisors from the supervision office and 4 principals and administrators from each of the schools.
Interview Length	Each interview lasted between 60 and 90 minutes, allowing participants to fully share their insights.
Data Analysis Method	Data was analyzed using NVivo software to identify themes and patterns related to teacher leadership.
Setting	Interviews were scheduled to accommodate participants' availability and were conducted in private, quiet locations within schools and supervision offices in Riyadh to ensure confidentiality and comfort.
Eligibility Criteria	Participants must be supervisors, principals, or administrators with at least two years of experience in Riyadh schools.
Participant Briefing	Participants were briefed about the purpose of the study, the nature of teacher leadership research, and the specific focus of the research questions. Consent was obtained prior to the interviews.
Focus of Interviews	- Exploring perceptions of teacher leaders and leadership to understand how it is defined and the roles they play. - Investigating the strategies, policies, and practices used to promote and support teacher leadership in Riyadh schools. - Examining the relationship between professional development and teacher leadership to identify its impact on teacher growth and leadership roles. - Assessing the empowerment of teacher leaders, including challenges faced and strategies for improvement.

Appendix D: Interview Protocol for Supervisors and Principals

1. **Could you tell me a little about yourself and your background?**

a. How long did you work as a teacher/school manager?

2. **Please tell me about your current job.**

a. Do you see yourself as a leader and/or manager?

b. In what way do you lead and/or manage?

3. **What do you think the term leadership means?**

a. Does this differ from management?

4. **Who do you think are leaders in schools?**

a. How do they become leaders?

b. What do you understand by the term 'teacher leader' or 'teacher leadership'?

5. **What part teachers can play in leadership?**

a. In schools?

b. Between schools?

c. Across the profession?

6. **What do the terms teacher leader and teacher leadership mean to you?**

a. In what ways can teachers be leaders?

b. How do these concepts relate to roles or positions?

c. Do you think there are different kinds of teacher leadership practices?

7. **In your experience do teachers want to take on the roles of teacher leaders?**

a. If so, why?

b. If they do not want to, then why?

8. **To what extent do supervisors and managers in high schools in Saudi Arabia perceive teachers as leaders and how are they aware about teacher leadership?**

a. Have their perceptions changed? why/why not?

b. To what extent is teacher leadership discussed and developed among them?

c. What contribution might they make to the teacher's leadership?

9. **How might the role of the teacher as a leader be developed in your view?**

a. How do teacher education programs provide teachers with knowledge in the area of teacher leadership? To what extent? Can you give some examples?

b. What factors can enable teachers to practice teacher leadership in their profession in your view?

c. What factors might disempower teachers from being teacher leaders in their profession in your view?

10. **What are the perceived impacts of teacher leadership on issues related to inside and outside the classroom?**

Appendix E: Participant Information Sheet for Managers and Supervisors

Manager and Supervisor Information Sheet

Researcher: Musaad Alhumaid, PhD Candidate, School of Education University of Nottingham, Nottingham, UK, +447599008755, musaad.alhumaid@nottingham.ac.uk

This information sheet is only part of the process of informed consent. If you would like more details about this project, feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

Purpose of the Study:
In this project I will be investigating what enable teachers to be leaders. I am interested in what teachers, leaders and supervisors in schools in Saudi Arabia think about this topic. This study fits well with the developments underway in schools in Saudi Arabia and would very much like you to participate in this project so I can learn from your views.

I am also writing to you to request support in getting permission to carry out my research in your school and to get help in recruiting volunteer participants including you. In addition, so that we can gain a better understanding of the schools' teacher leadership process, we need to obtain documents from you that provide details of participants' job descriptions, pupil development, the policies of the schools, school culture, and the development initiatives available to the teachers and pupils.

What Will You Be Asked To Do?

As a participant, you will be asked if you are willing to:

- Read and review the instruction sheet and consent form with the researcher and sign it.

- Participate in an interview to discuss your role and explore issues of teacher leadership in your schools. This will last for approximately one hour and, will be audio recorded. The audio recorded will only be used for transcribing and will be deleted afterwards.

- Participate in observations of the work of the school. observation. During these observations I will shadow staff in their work. All notes will be handwritten, and I will not record any

discussion. But during the observations, you might be asked to ask for further depth about what had been observed. These discussions will only take place following an event, lesson, meeting etc. These observations will advance the researcher's understanding of the teacher leadership process.

Your participation in any of the above is voluntary, and you may refuse to participate or may choose to withdraw from the study at any time. Any data collected will be used only for this study and your privacy and confidentiality will be respected throughout. For example, pseudonyms will be used in the final thesis and in any other writing resulting from this project. I will also give you opportunities to provide feedback or follow-up questions. I will send all participants transcripts of individual interviews to check and approve.

What Type of Personal Information Will Be Collected?

Personal information (including age, year of experience, educational level ..etc) will only be collected in this study for the purposes of data analysis only. It will be kept confidential and will be only accessible by me and my supervisors. You will not be able to be identified in any report or publication. You will be identified by a code rather than a name. Any audio recordings, group/joining conversations and transcripts and accompanying notes will be stored securely and used by me and my supervisors. We will not also use a transcription service. All participants' anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained, and data will not be accessible to any other individuals.

What Happens to the Information I Provide?

All data (including transcripts) will be identified by a code and will be kept securely on the researcher's hard drive and encrypted University of Nottingham account. It will be accessed only by me and my supervisors and will be kept anonymous. Participants will not be able to be identified in any report or publication.

Audio recordings will be deleted after transcription and the completion of data analysis. Anonymous transcripts will be kept for a duration of seven years, after which all data will be destroyed.

The results of this study, including a lay summary, will be published in the report. The results might

also be used for other academic outputs, such as conference presentations and journal articles. It will not be possible to identify participants in any results that are published.

If you have any further questions or want clarification regarding this research and/or the nature of participation, please contact:

Researcher:
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Supervisors:
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Supervisor: Dr. Phil Taylor
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If you have any concerns about the way you've been treated as a participant, please contact School of Education Research Ethics Coordinator:
School of Education Research Ethics Coordinator: educationresearchethics@nottingham.ac.uk

Appendix F: Participant Information Sheet for Teacher Leaders

Teacher Information Sheet

Researcher: Musaad Alhumaid, PhD Candidate, School of Education University of Nottingham, Nottingham, UK, +447599008755, musaad.alhumaid@nottingham.ac.uk

This information sheet is only part of the process of informed consent. If you would like more details about this project feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

Purpose of the Study:

In this project I will be investigating what enable teachers to be leaders. I am interested in what teachers, leaders and supervisors in schools in Saudi Arabia think about this topic. This study fits well with the developments underway in schools in Saudi Arabia and would very much like you to participate in this project so I can learn from your views.

What Will You Be Asked To Do?

As a participant, you will be asked if you are willing to:

- Read and review the instruction sheet and consent form with the researcher and sign it.

- Participate in a focus group to discuss your current leadership practices. This will last for approximately one hour and will be audio recorded. The audio recorded will only be used for transcribing and will be deleted afterwards.

- Write a short reflection based on a series of key questions. This will concern your views of teacher leadership and the potential you feel teachers have to lead.

- Participate in observations of the work of the school. During these observations I will shadow staff in their work. All notes will be handwritten, and I will not record any discussion. But during the observations, you might be asked to ask for further depth about what had been observed. These discussions will only take place following an event, lesson, meeting etc. These observations will advance the researcher's understanding of the teacher leadership process.

Your participation in any of the above is voluntary, and you may refuse to participate or may choose to withdraw from the study at any time. Any data collected will be used only for this study and your privacy and confidentiality will be respected throughout. For example, pseudonyms will

be used in the final thesis and in any other writing resulting from this project. I will also give you opportunities to provide feedback or follow-up questions. I will send all participants transcripts of individual interviews to check and approve.

What Type of Personal Information Will Be Collected?

Personal information (including age, year of experience, educational level ..etc) will only be collected in this study for the purposes of data analysis only. It will be kept confidential and will be only accessible by me and my supervisors. You will not be able to be identified in any report or publication. You will be identified by a code rather than a name. Any audio recordings, group/joining conversations and transcripts and accompanying notes will be stored securely and used by me and my supervisors. We will not also use a transcription service. All participants' anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained, and data will not be accessible to any other individuals.

What Happens to the Information I Provide?

All data (including transcripts) will be identified by a code and will be kept securely on the researcher's hard drive and encrypted University of Nottingham account. It will be accessed only by me and my supervisors and will be kept anonymous. Participants will not be able to be identified in any report or publication.

Audio recordings will be deleted after transcription and the completion of data analysis. Anonymous transcripts will be kept for a duration of seven years, after which all data will be destroyed.

The results of this study, including a lay summary, will be published in the report. The results might also be used for other academic outputs, such as conference presentations and journal articles. It will not be possible to identify participants in any results that are published.

If you have any further questions or want clarification regarding this research and/or the nature of participation, please contact:

Researcher:

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If you have any concerns about the way you've been treated as a participant, please contact School of Education Research Ethics Coordinator:

School of Education Research Ethics Coordinator: educationresearchethics@nottingham.ac.uk

Appendix G: Consent Form from Participants

GENERIC PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Project title Perceptions and reported practices of teacher leadership by Saudi teachers, principals, and supervisors.

Researcher's name: Musaad Alhumaid

Supervisor's name: Prof. Tony Bush & Dr. Phil Taylor

- I have read the Participant Information Sheet and the nature and purpose of the research project has been explained to me. I understand and agree to take part.

- I understand the purpose of the research project and my involvement in it.

- I understand that I may withdraw from the research project at any stage and that this will not affect my status now or in the future.

- I understand that while information gained during the study may be published, I will not be identified, and my personal details will remain confidential.

- I understand that I will be audio recorded during the interview and/or focus group.

- I understand that data in all forms (audio-recordings, notes, transcripts) will be kept securely on the researcher's hard drive and encrypted University of Nottingham account. I understand that data will be deleted in accordance with University of Nottingham regulations on data storage.

- I understand that I may contact the researcher or supervisor if I require further information about the research, and that I may contact the Research Ethics Coordinator of the School of Education, University of Nottingham, if I wish to make a complaint relating to my involvement in the research.

Signed .... (Research participant)

Print name .... **Date** ....

If you have any further questions or want clarification regarding this research and/or your participation, please contact:

Contact details

Researcher: *Musaad Alhumaid,*
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If you have any concerns about the way you've been treated as a participant, please contact School of Education Research Ethics Coordinator:
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educationresearchethics@nottingham.ac.uk

Appendix H: Reflective Essay Protocol

Instructions for reflective account

Please reflect on …

• Your actual roles as a teacher leader, giving examples.

• Your preferred roles as a teacher leader, and how these differ from your actual roles.

• How your roles as a teacher leader build on your professional capacity, with students, colleagues and the school community.

• How your roles develop your pedagogical and professional knowledge.

• Challenges you have faced in your roles as a teacher leader, and how you overcame them, giving examples.

Introduction:

As part of my doctoral research, I am exploring teacher leadership and would love to hear your reflections. You may structure your response in any format that feels natural to you. Please submit your reflection via email by the deadline. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out. To support your reflection, I've included some prompts below.

Prompts for reflection:

1. Think about an occasion when you have experienced an example of leadership in school. Write about that example and explain what makes is a good example of leadership.
2. Write about a time you have been influenced by another teacher. Explain how they influenced you and what difference it made to you.
3. I am interested in what you understand by teacher leadership. Please consider and reflect on the following questions:
   a. Do you believe teachers can be leaders?
   b. Can you explain why you hold this view?
   c. If you believe teachers can be leaders, could you give some examples?
4. Teacher leadership is not always easy to develop. I am interested in your experience of this, could you consider the following:
   a. What kinds of challenges are there to teacher leadership?
   b. Has this changed at all?
   c. How might this be overcome?

Appendix I: List of Documents

Document Title	Description
School Leadership Policy	A document outlining the roles and responsibilities of school leaders, focusing on the development of teacher leadership.
Teacher Program Guide	A guide detailing the structure, objectives, and outcomes of teacher development programs in the school.
Professional Development Plan	A plan that describes the school's approach to professional development, with a specific focus on leadership training for teachers.
Teacher Evaluation Form	A form used to assess teachers' performance, including leadership abilities and contributions to school initiatives.
Faculty Meeting Minutes	Records of discussions and decisions made during faculty meetings, with a focus on teacher leadership topics.
Annual Teacher Report	A report summarizing the outcomes of the teacher leadership programs, including feedback and performance data from the previous year.
Student Achievement Reports	Documents that track and report on student academic performance, particularly in areas impacted by teacher leadership.
Parent and Community Feedback Surveys	Surveys collecting opinions and feedback from parents and the community regarding teacher leadership and its influence.
School Improvement Plan	A document outlining the school's strategic goals for improvement, with emphasis on teacher leadership in achieving these goals.

Appendix J: an example of coding interviews with supervisors

Code	Category	Reference Number	Coded By Initials	Example from Data
Leadership Skills	Teacher Leadership	Ref-003	MUSAAD	"I see the teacher leaders always take charge of team meetings".
Willingness to Lead	Character Strength	Ref-001	MUSAAD	"God bless them they (teacher leaders) always volunteer to lead new projects in their school".
Student Support	Student Achievement	Ref-005	MUSAAD	"I hear some of them (teacher leaders) provide extra tutoring sessions after school".
Teacher as Counselor	Supervising Teacher	Ref-004	MUSAAD	"Sometimes, I see students come to him (teacher leader) with personal issues".
Inner Enthusiasm	Character Strength	Ref-005	MUSAAD	"They (teacher leaders) find joy in helping others succeed".
Honest and Confident	Character Strength	Ref-001	MUSAAD	"When I visit the school, I feel they (teacher leaders) talk clearly and confidently with their colleagues".
Teacher Support	Supervising Teacher	Ref-003	MUSAAD	"They (teacher leaders) mentor new teachers on classroom management techniques".
To Influence	Supervising Teacher	Ref-002	MUSAAD	"Also they (teacher leaders) encourage my peers to adopt new teaching strategies".
Mentoring Students	Teacher Leadership	Ref-004	MUSAAD	"I found them (teacher leaders) regularly mentor students to help them to solve any problem".
Hierarchical Structure	Organizational Culture	Ref-001	MUSAAD	"Their decisions (teacher leaders) for them must go through several layers of approval, as do ours".
Impression	Organizational Culture	Ref-002	MUSAAD	"Sometimes the teachers feel undervalued by the principals".
Lack of Financial Support	Organizational Barriers	Ref-005	MUSAAD	"We don't have enough budget to implement the new initiative of them (teacher leaders)".

Appendix K: Ethical Approval

University of Nottingham
UK | CHINA | MALAYSIA

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educationresearchethics@nottingham.ac.uk

25th November 2021

Our Ref: MA 2021.30
Cc: Prof. Andrew Townsend & Dr. Phil Taylor

Dear Musaad Alhumaid,

Thank you for submitting a revised research ethics application for your project:

Perceptions and reported practices of teacher leadership by Saudi teachers, principals, and supervisor.

Thank you for confirming the minor points we raised in a letter to you dated 17 November 2021.

Following receipt of your response to these, we are pleased to confirm that your research is now:

- **Approved**

We wish you well with your research.

This research is approved provided it is completed by September 2022.
If your research overruns this date, please contact the Ethics Team to arrange an extension and update on any additions/changes to your work.

Please note that from September 2021 applications given a favourable ethical opinion will be subject to an annual audit in line with the *Code of Practice for Research Ethics Committees* (2021).

For a discussion of issues involved in conducting research interviews securely online, see
https://blogs.nottingham.ac.uk/digitalresearch/2021/02/25/conducting-research-interviews-online/

Prof John Holford
On behalf of the Ethics Committee

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educationadmin@nottingham.ac.uk
nottingham.ac.uk/education

Appendix L: General Administration of Education in Riyadh Region Permission Letter

المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التعليم
٢٨٠
الإدارة العامة للتعليم بمنطقة الرياض
إدارة التخطيط و المعلومات

تسهيل مهمة باحث

السجل المدني	الاسم	
١٠٩١٤٣٨٨٩٣	مساعد بن عبدالرحمن الحميد	
الجامعة	الدرجة العلمية	العام الدراسي
Nottingham	الدكتوراه	١٤٤١/١٤٤٢هـ
عنوان الدراسة: قائد المعلم ودوره في التطوير المهني		
عينة الدراسة : قائد المعلم	مدة الدراسة : 2021/12/01 حتى 2022/08/01	

المكرم   وفقه الله

السـلام عليكـم ورحمـة اللـه وبركـاتـه ، وبعد:

إشارة إلى قرار معالي وزير التعليم رقم ٣٨٧١٧٠٨٠ وتاريخ ١٤٣٨/٥/١٢هـ بشـأن تفويض الصـلاحيات لمـديري التعليم ، وبنـاءً علـى قرارسـعادة مـدير عـام التعليم بمنطقة الرياض رقم ٣٨٩٢٠٧٩٣ وتاريخ ١٤٣٨/٦/٢٣هـ بشـأن تفويض الصلاحية لإدارة التخطيط والمعلومات لتسهيل مهمة الباحثين والباحثات ، وحيث تقدم إلينا الباحث (الموضحة بياناته أعلاه) بطلب إجراء دراسته، ونظراً لاكتمال الأوراق المطلوبة ، نأمل تسهيل مهمته .

مع ملاحظة أن الباحث يتحمل كامل المسؤولية المتعلقة بمختلف جوانب البحث ، ولا يعني سماح الإدارة العامة للتعليم موافقتها بالضرورة على مشكلة البحث أو على الطرق والأساليب المستخدمة في دراستها ومعالجتها.

شاكرين لكم وتقبلوا تحياتي..

مدير إدارة التخطيط والتطوير المكلف

د. خالد بن إبراهيم السعيد