

The Impact of School Leaders' Feedback in Enhancing Teachers' Performance towards School Improvement: A Single Case Study among Teachers in a Private School in Dubai

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Abstract

The constructive feedback provided by school leaders is considered a powerful tool that enhances teachers' motivation, engagement, and performance towards school improvement. This study aims to understand the influence of feedback provided by school leaders on teachers' professional growth and overall performance within the context of school improvement. The research is a single case study allowing an in-depth understanding of the participants' perspectives and experiences. It involved two sets of qualitative questionnaires to collect data from school leaders and subject teachers respectively. The data was then analysed to identify the influence of school leaders' feedback on teachers' performance towards school improvement. The main addressed research question is 'What is the influence of school leaders' feedback in shaping teachers' job towards school improvement?'. The findings of the current study prove that school leaders' feedback improves the quality of teaching instructions, fosters a loyal culture among staff members, develops teachers as leaders in their positions, and enhances school performance through better students' academic achievements. The implications of this study would offer educational leaders' and practitioners' valuable insights for improving feedback practices and promoting continuous professional growth among teachers. The foremost limitation of the current study is the inability to generalize the research outcomes being a single case study with a limited sample size and research time framework. Therefore, for future studies it is recommended that the investigation could be implemented in different settings to compare findings and generalize suggestions. It has been concluded that effective feedback imparted by school leaders upon teachers' observation is a critical factor in school improvement process.

Keywords: school leadership, leader feedback, teacher, teacher performance, school improvement

1. Introduction

Establishing collaborative learning cultures and inspiring teachers with guided feedback proved to enhance teachers' academic performance and school engagement (Al-Taneiji and Ibrahim 2017). Worldwide research in school leadership has revealed that school leaders have pivotal impact on teachers, students, and school success (David & Abukari 2019). Ladd & Sorenson (2017) demonstrated that successful schools achieve optimum professional development for teachers when they can motivate them to excel continuously. This explains the proper insights that teacher observation and evaluation have gained since 21st century aiming to enhance teaching quality (Tuytens, M. & Devos, G. 2017). Nevertheless, when examining literature on teacher evaluation, research reveals significant concerns regarding the impact of feedback provided by school leaders on teachers and school improvement. Therefore, this study will analyse the effect of school leaders' feedback on teachers' performance and its contribution in the overall school progress.

Knowing that school leaders are responsible for school improvement, it is crucial to develop their teachers' performance because the employed teaching approaches have direct correlation with students' academic success contributing to school improvement. The essence of any adopted leadership style is to ameliorate the educational services quality and encourage staff members to rely on innovative teaching pedagogies (Nyenyenbe et al. 2016). Two of the leadership models that have received the most extensive research attention and have been recognized as leading to positive outcomes are

‘instructional’ and ‘transformational’ (Day, C., Gu, Q. & Sammons, P. 2016). Instructional leadership highlights the significance of setting clear objectives, planning educational curriculum, and evaluating teachers. Whereas, transformational leadership emphasizes vision, inspiration, developing employees as leaders and fostering culture that enhances teaching quality.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) National Agenda aims to elevate the existing education system to a ‘First-Rate’ level (Gallagher 2019). Knowing that change is inevitable, school leaders’ responsibility was not to transform their schools only, but they also had to align student preparation with certain standards while empowering teachers and making effective decisions (Gallagher 2019). A key objective of the UAE National Agenda is to guarantee that all schools have qualified teachers (Al Samkari and David 2019). Consequently, school leaders are prioritizing the development of teachers through different initiatives and requirements (Jackson 2023). And since the teaching workforce in the UAE is characterized by greater diversity and mobility, enhancing teacher development through providing personalized feedback has become an urge endeavour for school leaders (Jackson 2023).

In parallel, Plaatjies (2019) encouraged studying feedback of school leaders as an aspect of supportive leadership justifying that the success or failure of teachers in delivering quality education is linked to effective leadership. The main objective of leadership is to facilitate quality education through training programs, direct interaction, and effective

feedback (Taddese & Rao 2021). Hence, examining the impact of such feedback has the potential to improve the implementation of educational standards, school programs and functions. Additionally, implementing these successful leadership behaviours within a school can serve as a guide or, ideally, as an example for other schools to adopt a similar approach. Further, such study offers school leaders, policymakers, and educational practitioners' valuable insights for improving feedback practices towards overall school improvement.

Thus, this paper will analyse the impact of feedback provided by school leaders on teachers' professional growth and overall performance within the context of school improvement efforts. Accordingly, the following main and sub-research questions are formulated:

- What is the effect of school leaders' feedback in shaping teachers' job towards school improvement?
- What is the relationship between the employed leadership theory and school improvement?
- How does the feedback provided by school leaders contribute to shaping teachers' job and facilitating school improvement?
- What recommendations can be made for future investigations and enhancing schools?

2. Literature Review

The effectiveness of feedback practice towards school improvement depends on the ability of school leaders to engage teachers in a practice of reflection that recognizes weaknesses and facilitates change. Thus, this literature will define school leadership, interpret feedback concept and its impact on teachers' performance, and differentiate between instructional and transformational leadership theories for school improvement.

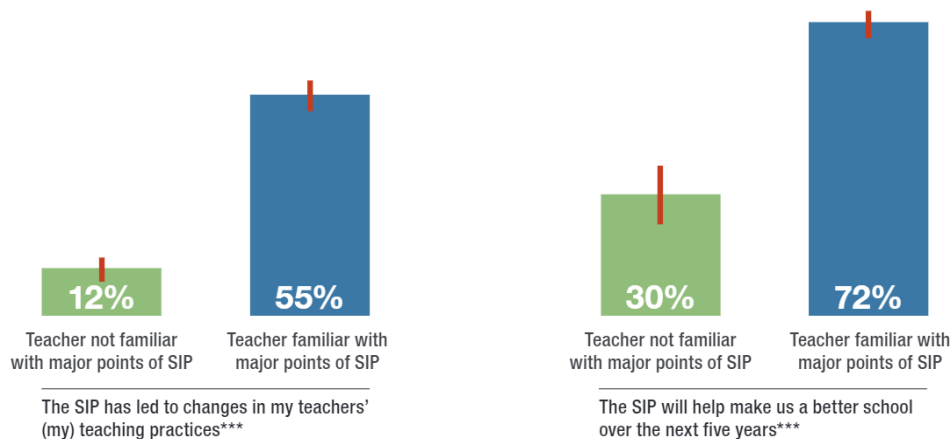
2.1 Conceptual Framework

2.1.1 School Leadership

Leadership in the education field refers to school administrators' emphasis on teachers conduct, as their teaching styles and attitudes significantly influence student development (Ismail et al. 2018; Cansoy & Parlar 2018). Leithwood et al. (2020) demarcated that school leadership involves precise and clear communication as well as deep understanding of the qualities and actions that define a leader. He explained that leaders should support and guide their staff to venture informed risks with courage. An effective leadership style can be established by altering the instructions according to changes in the educational system (Ladd and Sorenson 2017). According to Caldwell's (2014) research, there is a direct correlation between innovative leadership and successful reforms in education. It has been concluded that teachers' and students' attainment levels towards improvement get higher when they are provided support, training, and feedback by school leaders (Ladd and Sorenson 2017).

Nowadays, school leaders are portrayed as instructional pioneers enhancing the

educational process. Angelle and Teague (2014) state that it is the school leaders' responsibility to enhance school performance by offering learning prospects to educators and involving them in facing challenges and resolving conflicts. Additionally, Wolters and Hussain (2015) argued that leaders should provide teachers continuous learning opportunities and engage instructors in improving the instructional platform. Figure 1 shows that when teachers are familiar with the key points of the school improvement plan (SIP), the latter will lead to changes in teaching practices and improve the overall vision towards school improvement much more than the case of not familiar teachers (55% > 12%, 72% > 30%).



NOTE: Vertical bars represent weighted 95-percent confidence intervals. Asterisks indicate results of a linear probability model used to estimate differences among teachers and school leaders: *** $p < 0.001$.

Figure 1: Effect of Teachers' Familiarity with SIP on Teaching Practices and School Improvement (Doss, Akkiniranye & Tosh 2019, p. 3)

Research in efficient leadership style has revealed that the employed leadership style directly affects teacher attitudes, student achievements, and school improvement (Shava, Heystek, & Chasara 2021).

According to Ronfeldt et al. (2015), effective school leadership can be accomplished by regularly

coordinating with teachers and understanding the challenges they face. Mahdy (2016) has provided empirical evidence suggesting that leaders can enhance the school environment by training teachers to garner their support. Furthermore, scholars argue that when teachers are highly motivated, they demonstrate greater dedication and exert more effort in the classroom compared to those who lack motivation (Dabash 2018). Hence, employing a successful leadership should inspire, motivate, guide, recognize personnel diversity, and ensure efficient communication among school community.

2.1.2 Feedback on Teachers' Performance

Motivated teachers demonstrate outstanding performance in their work when they are aware that the principal will reward them for their accomplishments (Don et al. 2016). Conteh's (2015) research discovered that when teachers lack academic support, it becomes increasingly challenging for them to outperform due to demotivation over time. This relationship is demonstrated in figure 2 which shows that school leaders' feedback upon teacher's observation would develop teacher's professional learning enhancing the implemented teaching practices. Consequently, students' cognitive abilities, critical thinking skills and academic accomplishments would improve. From this perspective, school leaders are responsible for improving schools having the privilege of owning the unique ability of providing initiatives (Shaturaev and Bekimbetova, 2021).

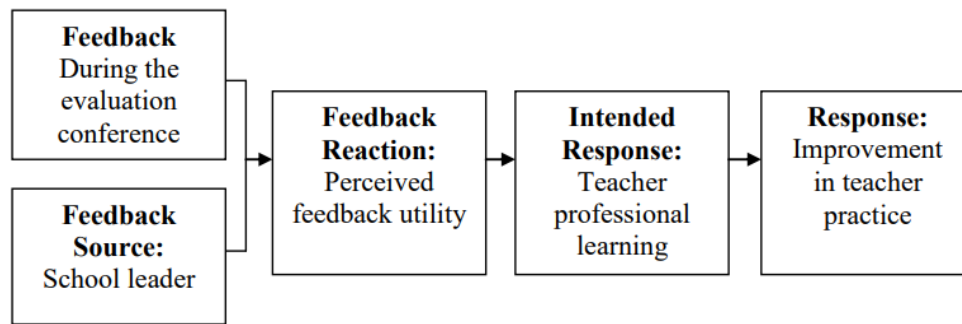


Figure 2: Impact of Leader's Feedback on Teacher's Performance (Benton 2019, p. 24)

Research of Institute of Education Sciences (2017) pointed out that when feedback is frequently and systematically delivered, educators would adjust according to the feedback dimensions. Yet, the research concluded that teachers are taking the feedback suggestions as the sole elements to focus on. To elaborate, teachers are concentrating on applying the recommendations presented in the feedback form ignoring professional development in other areas. Therefore, setting a consistent feedback routine that expounds teacher's current attainment, the anticipated modifications and a personalized plan for improvement would enhance the education process. Furthermore, school leaders have significant impact on enhancing the quality of education and ensuring accountability in implementing educational programs within their schools (Pardois & Utari 2022). When school leaders establish a well-defined feedback criterion, set high expectations, identify measures of promoting and demoting and follow up throughout implementation, staff will improve according to the determined guidelines.

On the other side, Benton (2019) explicated that there are some obstacles hindering the feedback efficient implementation. These barriers incorporate leaders' shallow knowledge

of the explained topic and the dual mission of leaders as instructional leaders and evaluators. Besides, teachers' awareness of the observation and feedback processes as collaborative and reflective operations between school leaders and teachers modulates the efficiency of feedback practice. Lochmiller & Acker-Hocevar (2016) supported such norm by advocating the distributed leadership where educational parties act as the key instructional leaders to schoolteachers. In brief, efficient feedback is a basic pillar to build educational systems that provide continuous support and learning experimentation to help teachers implement suggested recommendations (Tomlinson & Murphy 2015).

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Instructional Leadership Theory for School Improvement

The role of instructional leaders is crucial in leading the whole organization and ensuring the quality of learning. To be effective, these leaders need to prioritize academics by setting advanced standards for educators and students (Goodwin et al. 2019; McGhee and Stark 2021). Additionally, they enhance instructional practices through continuous professional development, teacher reflection, class observation and feedback routine. Besides, they hire experienced educators to foster student educational growth (Tulu, 2019). Kwan (2020) highlighted the importance of effective communication and vision creation as key characteristics of instructional leaders.

Proponents of instructional learning argued that if schools' foremost mission was teaching and learning, then school leaders' major role is the same. Education and

instructional leadership are similar in sharing the importance of enhancing teaching environments to boost students' learning. Moreover, empirical observations inferred that behaviours of instructional leaders positively impact the teaching-learning process, school culture and school community performance (Shava & Heystek, 2018). This would explain the role of instructional leaders in planning, supervising, and developing instruction and curriculum towards school improvement. Tai and Abdull Kareem (2020) have figured out that effective principals were expert instructional leaders who consistently offered prompt and constructive feedback to experienced and novice teachers to improve their instructional practices.

Nevertheless, if schools' principals are commendable, yet the teachers are not, it becomes unattainable to accomplish business success (Imig et al. 2014). The progress of the staff is greatly influenced by the leader being a role model and offering support to instructors (Wahyuddin 2017). When instructional leaders critique teacher's performance aiming at highlighting strengths and guiding for better practices, teacher's performance will be improved affecting students' achievement and the overall school improvement. To sum up, instructional school leaders are supposed to demonstrate a diverse set of technical and adaptive leadership characteristics to sustain teaching-learning process towards school improvement (Shava, Heystek, & Chasara 2021).

2.2.2 Transformational Leadership Theory for School Improvement

Transformational leadership theory aims to modify the qualities and beliefs of leaders to

enable them to achieve higher levels of performance (Nyenembe et al. 2016). A transformational leader assumes the responsibility of being a role model and making independent decisions to enhance academic performance. Research showed that teachers nowadays are required to engage in additional tasks beyond education and instruction (Kwan, 2020). These responsibilities include taking charge of the classroom, providing guidance to other teachers, and maintaining differentiated strategies etc. The diversity of students and the need to differentiate necessitate a broader range of teaching approaches to accommodate individual needs. Consequently, attracting, cultivating, and retaining educators throughout their entire professional careers has emerged as a policy focus in numerous countries (Fusarelli et al., 2018).

Transformational school leaders rely on action research approaches to engage teachers in the process of investigating and solving raised issues. This process of reflection and research enables teachers to enhance their work confidence levels. Similar research conducted by Wei et al. (2021) revealed that action research projects influenced communicating and sharing processes, attitudes towards the change process, and self-satisfaction. Through utilizing action research, school professionals gain insights into themselves, their colleagues, and their students.

For the past decade, the prevailing norms within schools tend to promote isolation and secrecy, as teachers primarily spend their time confined to their individual classrooms. Hence, opportunities for teachers to collaborate and share best practices through

collective lesson planning were rarely provided (Phogat 2022). Conversely, other studies demonstrated that when policymakers allocated dedicated time for teacher collaboration within different departments, it yielded several benefits. This allowed sharing of ideas, enhancing achievement, and addressing dispute issues (Ifenthaler et al. 2021; Gaikhorst et al. 2019). Therefore, collaborative transformational leaders prioritize teacher's individual development for school enhancement purposes.

To conclude, the school's needs and improvement plan impose employing a particular leadership theory along with a feedback routine that would develop teachers' performance, enhance students learning and promote school's improvement.

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

The participants involved in the research were two school leaders and twenty subject teachers working for a private American curriculum school in Dubai. The participants were chosen using the purposive sampling approach as follows:

- The selected school leaders are the head of curriculum and head of department, each having four or more years of experience working within the same school. They were those leaders who participated in the teacher evaluation process and provided feedback to the corresponding teacher.
- The designated teachers were chosen as five teachers from each main subject:

Mathematics, Science, English and Arabic. Each having at least three years of experience within the studied school. Also, each teacher had one classroom observation from the school leaders and received feedback upon this observation. The school principal signed a consent form (Appendix 1) averring the research main aims, methodology employed, and ethical concerns. Later, each participant accepted an individual consent (Appendix 2) stating the research targets, data collection method, and confidentiality. Further, participants were reassured that their participation is a voluntary supportive work that would not harm their personal or professional lives. Additionally, their responses will be kept secured and used anonymously for research targets.

3.2 Research Design

The main objective of the conducted research is to establish the causality relation between the cause ‘feedback of school leaders’ and the effect ‘school improvement’ through ‘enhancing teachers’ performance’. To achieve this objective, the research espouses a qualitative research design of interpretivism paradigm to interpret meanings out of findings (Mwita 2022). Qualitative research is defined as an iterative process where data and proofs are collected to establish interrelations (Aspers & Corte 2021). It includes explaining, clarifying, exploring attitudes, and discovering experiences of research participants. Qualitative research was precisely described as “enlarging knowledge and understanding” (Cropley 2023). This description relies on the foundation that “reality” is personalized and correspondingly the research outcomes would vary

according to the participants' individual characteristics, research settings, and variable context.

The research employed a single case study incorporating two cases: school leaders and school. The purpose of this methodology is to comprehend the impact of feedback given by school leaders (first case) on the improvement of the school (second case) through augmenting teachers' performance. Yin (2009), a prominent advocate of the case study methodology, defined it as “an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context”. Through this method the targeted cases will undergo an intensive investigation to gain a depth understanding of the cause-effect relationship between leaders' feedback and school improvement.

3.3 Procedure

The research fieldwork was conducted in the second term of the academic year 2022–2023. The researcher acted as the data collector and data scientist. To collect data, two forms of open-ended qualitative questionnaires were inspired from Phogat (2022) research and modified to attain the research targets. An open-ended questionnaire is composed of questions that allow respondents flexibility to write open answers and express opinions on an addressed issue (Mwita 2022). The questionnaires were shared with the participants via email with a brief description of the research topic, methodology used, the importance of their participation and the expected responding time within one week.

Each questionnaire is composed of ten questions focusing on four major themes as follows:

- Identifying participants' perspectives on the three main aspects of effective school leadership.
- Understanding participants' beliefs regarding how school leaders' feedback on teachers' observations promotes their professional growth and performance improvement.
- Exploring the connection between constructive feedback and student outcomes.
- Identifying the key elements of effective feedback that contribute to meaningful school development.

Questionnaire A (Appendix 3) was shared with the participating school leaders while questionnaire B (Appendix 4) was shared with the involved teachers. The slight difference between both questionnaires lies in the approach of the questions whether about the feedback elements and follow up of the implementation (Questionnaire A) or the feedback response and its implementation (Questionnaire B).

Later, the responses were collected and exported in excel sheets. For readability and easiness of analysis, the generated transcript was professionally edited to omit spelling or grammatical errors maintaining the essence of the answer (Walker 2018). The edited transcription was then analysed using thematic analysis method. This method is beneficial

for understanding the overall process and patterns in qualitative data such as open-ended questionnaires (Peraza 2019). It is an active procedure in which major themes relevant to research questions are identified. Thematic analysis is considered the most convenient choice when categorising a wide range of data based on personal experience (Braun & Clarke 2021).

4. Findings

The data collected through responding to questionnaires A and B was assessed qualitatively using thematic analysis method. First, the researcher got acquainted with the gathered data since it is necessary that the researcher gain the knowledge before analysis. Second, the researcher started comprehending and grouping similar answers in clusters to create major themes. Third, themes were defined to include most of the answers within the same group. Lastly, observations and keynotes were erected to infer conclusions that would answer the proposed research questions.

Leaders' and teachers' responses showed similar answers that allowed generating a corresponding theme. In table 1, repeated responses were shared as one from the leaders' side (L) and the other from the teachers' side (T) to be grouped in themes. Accordingly, the first generated theme was titled 'Aspects of school leadership' based on the participants' responses describing the main attributes of school leadership. Similarly, responses in table 1 show that respondents focused on the influence of feedback on

teachers' performance and students' achievements. As well, essential feedback elements for school improvement were listed. These four sections formed the four main themes.

Table 1: Sample Responses for Generating Themes

<u>Responses</u>	<u>Themes</u>
L: "Collaboration, transparency, and consistency" T: "Integrity, responsibility, and dedication"	Aspects of school leadership
L: "Identifying strengths and areas for improvement, guiding instructional strategies, fostering reflection, and promoting continuous". T: "It helps to become more reflective and knows what he is doing correct and what incorrect".	Feedback impact on teacher professional growth
L: "Improve instructional strategies, leading to enhanced student engagement, personalized learning, and ultimately improved academic achievement". T: "Teachers can refine their teaching methods, adjust their lesson plans, and implement effective strategies that directly impact student learning".	Feedback impact on student achievement
L: "Timely, specific, and actionable feedback". T: "Specific and actionable, providing teachers with clear guidance on what they are doing well and areas where they can improve".	Elements of effective feedback for school improvement

These four themes prove that the influence of a school leader feedback could be positive or negative in shaping teacher's responsibilities in enhancing students' performance

towards school improvement. To demonstrate, the main leadership aspects were viewed differently between leaders and teachers. Leaders focused on “communication” whereas teachers shared a common thought of maintaining a “supportive and positive” school culture. When justifying this notion, the replies shed light on the positive influence of a leader’s feedback such as enhancing their well-being, letting them feel safe in their positions, encouraging them to work better and engaging them in the overall school improvement. Additionally, leaders considered feedback as a tool for guidance and instructional enhancement. They described it as an open conversation “guiding instructional strategies, fostering reflection, and promoting continuous development”. Whilst teachers believed that feedback is just an “evaluation tool” used to assess their performance.

On the contrary, both leaders and teachers shared similar perspectives on the positive impact of leaders’ feedback on teachers through emphasizing “strengths and weaknesses, suggesting recommendations and providing support”. Likewise, leaders and teachers assured that teachers development based on feedback provided would have its reflection in students’ academic achievement through the applied instructional and teaching pedagogies. Besides, words like “specific” and “actionable” were repeated in leaders’ and teachers’ replies identifying the elements of effective feedback towards school improvement.

Further, it is important to highlight the recommendations given by some teachers on the negative influence of the feedback represented by feedback tone. Phrases like “feedback should present positives before negatives”, “encouragement and motivation should accompany providing feedback” emphasize the importance of the approach of giving feedback specifically and communication generally. Furthermore, a negative influence was shared by one leader when differentiating between “supportive feedback” resulting in “productive change and increased motivation” while “toxic feedback” causing “misleading and low motivation”. Such views confirm the significance of clear, well-stated and practical feedback to facilitate teachers’ development for school progress.

5. Discussion

The research findings confirm the fundamental ability of leaders’ feedback to enhance teachers’ performance and pave for school improvement. The difference between leaders’ and teachers’ perceptions of school leadership characteristics affirms the need to adopt different leadership styles and theories that are tailored to school’s context and needs. The answers of teachers and leaders to same questions in both questionnaires prove that the nature of the job affects the mentality of perceiving questions, beliefs, and critiques. Leaders used the term “collaboration” for school leadership success whereas teachers assured the importance of being “responsible” when being a leader. They affirmed that it

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is the responsibility of school leaders to cultivate a convenient learning environment in the school (Vanblaere and Devos 2016).

Besides, fostering and maintaining a positive school environment would enhance the school's image in teachers' mentality, motivate them for continuous development and let them value the feedback delivered by leaders as development tool. When teachers are receiving feedback as a learning and developing tool for the whole school, this would let them appreciate and implement its recommendations. Firestone (2014) deduced that teachers' well-being and performance improvement contribute to better retention rates and increasing loyalty towards the school. Thus, when teachers are achieving safely and enthusiastically, the overall school will show progress.

Moreover, the perception of feedback as an instructional and developmental tool assures the significance of employing instructional and transformational leadership theories. Instructional theory prioritizes improving teaching and learning quality, developing curriculum, and enhancing teaching strategies. Whereas transformational leaders motivate school community members, raise the expectations, and build commitment towards school improvement (Anderson 2017). Therefore, an efficient leadership would be a combination of transformational and instructional leadership (Day, Gu, & Sammons 2016).

The respondents agreed that feedback always leads to improvements for teachers, students, and school. It was explained that a school's success is measured in terms of students', teachers', and leaders' accomplishments (Thapa et.al., 2013). Figure 3 manifests this relationship showing that the feedback given by school leaders would improve teachers professionally. Then, when teachers integrate feedback recommendations into the teaching process, improved instructional strategies, enhanced learning quality, and rigorous activities would be implemented. This leads to boosted student engagement, personalized learning, and ultimately improved academic achievement. Thus, the overall school performance will improve when teachers and students are developing. Comparable outcomes were reached with Dimmock and O'Donoghue (2014) explaining that teachers' contribution might affect students only, while leaders' contribution would impact students and school as well.

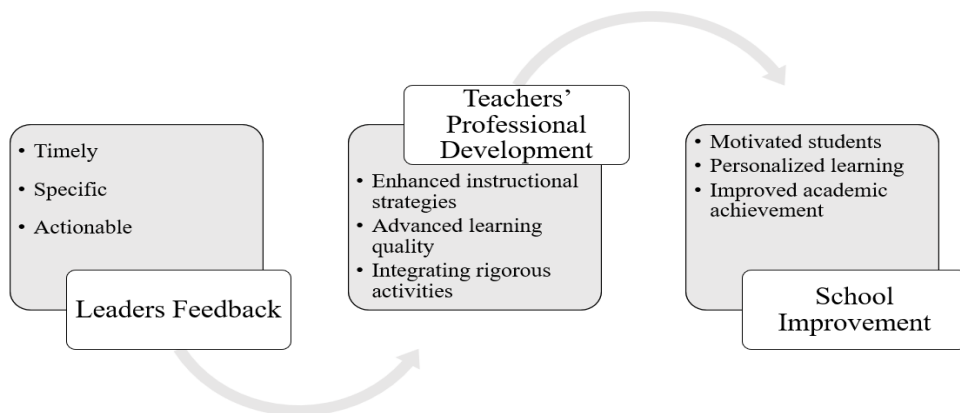


Figure 3: The Relation between Leaders' Feedback, Teachers' Professional Development and School Improvement

Furthermore, concerns were raised by teachers regarding the time and tone of the given feedback. It has been implied that to establish effective feedback that promotes school improvement, it should be timely, defined, constructive, and actionable. When feedback is given during reasonable time after the observation, teachers can relate the suggestions to classroom practices (Al-Bashir, Kabir & Rahman 2016). To add, the feedback approach being focused on the improvement plan will direct teachers towards success, whereas criticizing feedback would demote their interests. In addition, participants' replies foreground the practicality of the feedback taking into consideration the available resources, students' knowledge and abilities, and the required time to attain progress.

As a result, the efficiency of the school learning environment depends on the evaluation and feedback of school leaders that furnish better opportunities for teachers improved performance. This feedback should be accompanied by a supportive leadership of instructional and transformational features that praise strength, guide for instructional enhancements, and motivate continuous development.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

School leadership has a fundamental influence on teachers' development and school improvement. The focus of this research was to determine the impact of feedback provided by school leaders to enhance teachers' performance contributing to school improvement. Interpreting the findings of the research implied that school leaders'

feedback is considered a development tool that promotes teaching and learning processes, fosters well-being among school community and stimulates continuous growth leading to school progress. This feedback provides the best leverage when escorted with transformational and instructional supervision.

The results of the conducted research match with the outcomes of Benton's (2019) research regarding the effectiveness of school leaders' feedback. He concluded that effective feedback is a clear plan that guides teachers with examples and suggested pedagogies which augment teachers' performance. Additionally, the research results coincide with Abouelanein & Hossni (2023) findings that successful school leadership practices including feedback and school development are in enduring relationship. To add, Day, Gu & Sammons (2016) derived that from the schools involved in their research, those who were implementing instructional and transformational leadership theories improved the best.

The study offers educational leaders', school principals', teaching staff and policymakers' evidence for the significance of evolving feedback routines to endorse teachers' continuous professional growth which improves the functioning of school programs. Nevertheless, limitations must be deemed for further investigations. The foremost limitation of the current study is the inability to generalize the research outcomes being a single case study research with a limited sample size and restricted time framework. Additionally, employing a mixed research design, generates reasonable and diverse

evidence findings rather than adopting a single quantitative or qualitative lens (Day, Gu & Sammons 2016).

Therefore, the following recommendations could be planned:

- Communication is the key for healthy and developing school environment. School leaders should possess effective communication skills that ensure open conversations, loyal emotions, and the acceptance of others feedback as developmental means. Thus, leaders should preserve a balance of instructional and visionary characteristics (Whitehead and Greenier 2019).
- School leaders should devise a feedback routine that evaluates teacher's performance specifying the merits and demerits observed, suggesting an improvement plan, and following up on the implementation.
- School leaders should supply teachers with needed materials that facilitate teachers' explanation and provoke students' critical thinking. Besides, convenient time should be given to ensure productive implementation of the feedback content. When emerging a new strategy, both teachers and students need time to grasp the concept and get familiar with.
- To ensure objectivity and credibility, future research would expand the study's scope to conduct both quantitative and qualitative research methods (Day, Gu & Sammons 2016). Moreover, the sample size could be enlarged since research population is a

prominent factor affecting the research reliability (Mackey and Gass, 2015).

- For future studies, the investigation can be implemented in private and public schools within different settings to compare findings and generalize suggestions for school improvement. This would include major and elective subjects, as well as new and experienced teachers within varied grade levels.

Lastly, the current study reveals that constructive feedback presented by school leaders has an explicit impact on teachers' instructional practices, professional development, and overall performance. It has been determined that effective feedback conveyed by school leaders upon teachers' observation is a critical factor in school improvement process taking into consideration the school leadership framework. To perfect the leadership skills and application, a leader should consider himself the first learner. The uttermost leaders are those connecting the school's vision to their teachers' and students' dreams. In such a community, growth is the everlasting research and school improvement is the axiomatic outcome.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: School Consent Form



Third party consent form

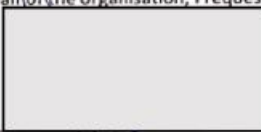
The British University in Dubai

Academic City
20000993@buid.ac.ae

By signing this consent form, I understand that Zeina Zrien (the researcher) is a candidate for a postgraduate degree, or a faculty member of The British University in Dubai (BUID). I understand that the researcher is conducting a study titled The Impact of School Leaders' Feedback Enhancing Teachers' Performance towards School Improvement: A Single Case Study among Teachers in a Private School in Dubai. The purpose of this research is to analyse the impact of feedback provided by school leaders on teachers' professional growth and overall performance within the context of school improvement efforts (Al Mawakeb Garhoud).

I understand the findings of this research study are solely the responsibility of the researcher. It is understood that any and all information/data the researcher collects from contacts within and/or about our organisation outside the research protocol will not be part of the research findings. I understand the researcher may publish findings following completion of this study. Any information published will be limited to the findings of the research. No research participants will participate in this study without the knowledge and approval of this organisation and BUID's Research Ethics Committee.

- I grant the researcher permission to contact members of the organisation for the purpose of requesting their participation in the study as required by the research proposal.
- I grant the researcher permission to use organisational premises as necessary to conduct the research.
- I grant the researcher permission to collect, use, and store organisational documentation related to the project. I understand that in granting permission to access organisational documentation, the researcher will store copies outside of the organisation in a secure manner as approved by BUID's Research Ethics Committee.
- The researcher will maintain all documentation and findings regarding this organisation in confidence and confine its use to this research study.
- On behalf of the organisation, I request a final copy of this research report.


Organisation Representative's Signature

29/05/2023
Date



Name of Director of Studies: Prof. Solomon David
Contact information: Solomon.david@buid.ac.ae

Appendix 2: Participant Consent Form

Dear [redacted],

I am a postgraduate student undertaking a master's program at The British University in Dubai and I am conducting research for my module assignment. Here is a brief introduction to my research:

In the realm of education, the role of school leaders is paramount in driving school improvement and enhancing the overall performance of teachers. One essential aspect of this leadership is the provision of effective feedback to teachers. Feedback serves as a catalyst for growth and improvement, enabling teachers to refine their instructional practices, foster student learning, and contribute to the overall advancement of the school. By exploring the dynamics of feedback this study aims to shed light on the significance of feedback as a powerful tool for school improvement and teacher development. The findings will not only contribute to the existing body of research on feedback in educational settings but also offer insights into the practices and strategies that can be adopted by school leaders to foster a culture of continuous improvement and excellence among teachers.

The research adopted a single case study within one private school in Dubai. The primary objective is to obtain a rich and in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. To collect data, a qualitative questionnaire composed of ten questions will be shared via participants email within school timing. The questions are open-ended to allow comprehensive analysis of the examined topic. Ethical considerations are prioritized during the data collection process in terms of privacy, confidentiality, and signed consent forms that expound the main research aim and methodology. The collected data will be analyzed to reveal the impact of school leaders' feedback and the role it takes in the school improvement process.

Please complete the questionnaire and submit it. If you would like to receive more information about the study, please contact me at 20000993@buid.ac.ae.

Thank you,

Zeina Zrien
Master of Education in Management, Leadership and Policy
The British University in Dubai

<----->

CONSENT FORM	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student/child's name/grade/section :
<input type="checkbox"/>	University/school:
I give permission for my child/student(s) to participate in the research being carried out by [insert name] at The British University in Dubai.	
I do NOT give permission for my child/student(s) to participate in the research being carried out by [insert name] at The British University in Dubai.	
Signature(s) of parent(s)/guardian(s)/teacher	[redacted] Date: 30.5.23
PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO YOUR CHILD'S CLASS TEACHER OR DIRECTLY TO THE RESEARCHER	

Appendix 3: Questionnaire A

1	What do you consider as the three main aspects of school leadership?
2	How do you believe school leaders' feedback upon teachers' observations contributes to their professional growth and performance improvement?
3	How does a school leader constructive feedback to a teacher influence students' achievement?
4	What are the key elements of effective feedback provided to teachers that would insure meaningful development towards school improvement?
5	Can you share an example of feedback that had a positive impact on the teaching process? How did it influence the school improvement?
6	How does feedback from school leaders affect teachers' motivation and commitment to continuous improvement?
7	What criteria do you consider when providing feedback to teachers, and how do you ensure its alignment with the school objectives and instructional expectations?
8	What barriers might hinder the effective implementation of school leaders' feedback?
9	What strategies do you employ to assure the implementation of your feedback in the teaching practice?
10	Do you have any other thoughts related to leaders' feedback towards school improvement?

Appendix 4: Questionnaire B

1	What do you consider as the three main aspects of school leadership?
2	How do you believe school leaders' feedback upon teachers' observations contributes to their professional growth and performance improvement?
3	How does a school leader constructive feedback to a teacher influence students' achievement?
4	What are the key elements of effective feedback provided to teachers that would insure meaningful development towards school improvement?
5	Can you share an example of feedback that had a positive impact on the teaching process? How did it influence the school improvement?
6	How does feedback from school leaders affect teachers' motivation and commitment to continuous improvement?
7	What strategies or practices do you find most helpful in implementing the feedback received from school leaders into your teaching practice?
8	What barriers might hinder the effective implementation of leaders' feedback?
9	How would you suggest school leaders approach the feedback process to optimize its impact on school improvement?
10	Do you have any other thoughts related to leaders' feedback towards school improvement?

Appendix 5: Sample of Questionnaire A Responses

1. What do you consider as the three main aspects of school leadership?

*

Collaboration, transparency and consistency

2. How do you believe school leaders' feedback upon teachers' observations contributes to their professional growth and performance improvement? *

School leaders' feedback on teachers' observations enhances professional growth by identifying strengths and areas for improvement, guiding instructional strategies, fostering reflection, and promoting continuous development for enhanced classroom performance.

3. How does a school leader constructive feedback to a teacher influence students' achievement?

*

Constructive feedback from a school leader helps teachers improve instructional strategies, leading to enhanced student engagement, personalized learning, and ultimately improved academic achievement.

4. What are the key elements of effective feedback provided to teachers that would insure meaningful development towards school improvement?

*

Timely, specific, and actionable feedback that focuses on instructional practices, classroom management, and student outcomes promotes meaningful teacher development and contributes to school improvement.

5. Can you share an example of feedback that had a positive impact on the teaching process? How did it influence the school improvement?

*

Clear, direct, and specific feedback on an acceptable teacher's instructional strategies, which neglected to address the differentiated needs of all learners (giving in a performance improvement plan, with a timeline), led to a better understanding by the teacher of what differentiation means. Through follow-up and continuous support, this teacher ultimately increased student engagement and the overall performance level of the students. This teacher became a model for other teachers in the phase.

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6. How does feedback from school leaders affect teachers' motivation and commitment to continuous improvement?

*

Feedback can support motivation when the feedback is specific enough to be actionable. Furthermore, when feedback is given with the intent of supporting productive change, and is received with an open mind by the teacher, increased motivation will be the outcome. Toxic feedback, without accompanying actionable advice and follow-up, will result in low motivation.

7. What criteria do you consider when providing feedback to teachers, and how do you ensure its alignment with the school objectives and instructional expectations?

*

Fundamentally, I only consider what is best for the students and for the overall learning process. This method always aligns with the instructional expectations and school objectives.

8. What barriers might hinder the effective implementation of school leaders' feedback?

*

There are innumerable possibilities including a lack of clarity in understanding the feedback, the teacher's workload, and the desire of the teacher to make a change.

9. What strategies do you employ to assure the implementation of your feedback in the teaching practice?

*

Follow-up during classroom implementation is the only way to ensure positive growth and change.

10. Do you have any other thoughts related to leaders' feedback towards school improvement?

*

None

Appendix 6: Sample of Questionnaire B Responses

1. What do you consider as the three main aspects of school leadership?

*

Communication
Empathy
Trust

2. How do you believe school leaders' feedback upon teachers' observations contributes to their professional growth and performance improvement? *

Leader's feedback can help fix a teacher's setbacks and point out areas of improvement.

3. How does a school leader constructive feedback to a teacher influence students' achievement?

*

Students can achieve more if constructive feedback shapes a better learning experience for the students and strengthens the teacher's methods.

4. What are the key elements of effective feedback provided to teachers that would insure meaningful development towards school improvement?

*

Encouraging better communication with students, encouraging a supportive and friendly environment, and prioritising a student's needs.

5. Can you share an example of feedback that had a positive impact on the teaching process? How did it influence the school improvement?

*

Encouraging interactive learning. This made students more alert and more open to learning new concepts and improved their achievements.

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6. How does feedback from school leaders affect teachers' motivation and commitment to continuous improvement?

*

Feedback, when positive or constructive, encourages teachers to strive for better outcome and motivates them to implement the given feedback

7. What strategies or practices do you find most helpful in implementing the feedback received from school leaders into your teaching practice? *

Develop a strategy then analyse it and share it with supervisors and ask for support/suggestions.

8. What barriers might hinder the effective implementation of school leaders' feedback?

*

Available resources in a school

9. How would you suggest school leaders approach the feedback process to optimize its impact on school improvement? *

Make sure the feedback is constructive and applicable. Make sure the feedback will not cause a drastic change in the teacher's methods that will cause confusion to students.

10. Do you have any other thoughts related to leaders' feedback towards school improvement?

*

No