



## *Examining the Relationship between Teacher Leadership Skills and Students' Self-Discipline: A Correlational Study*

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### Abstract

Teacher leadership and student self-discipline are recognized as critical factors influencing academic success and personal development. This study aimed to examine the relationship between teacher leadership skills and students' self-discipline in Government Girls High Schools, District Malakand, Pakistan. Employing a quantitative correlational design, data were collected from 201 students and 20 teachers using a self-constructed questionnaire with 26 items covering leadership skills and self-discipline. The questionnaire was validated by experts and pilot-tested, demonstrating high reliability (Cronbach's alpha = 0.90 for leadership skills, 0.86 for self-discipline). Data analysis using SPSS version 23 revealed a significant positive relationship between teacher leadership skills and students' self-discipline ( $\beta = 0.54$ , C.R = 9.539,  $p < 0.01$ ). These findings indicate that teachers who exhibit strong leadership qualities including classroom management, motivation, and effective communication, positively influence students' ability to regulate behavior, manage time, and pursue academic goals. The results are supported by transformational leadership and social learning theories, highlighting that students emulate disciplined and accountable role models. This study highlights the importance of enhancing teacher leadership through professional development programs to foster student self-discipline, academic engagement, and overall personal growth.

**Keywords:** Teacher leadership Skills, self-discipline, secondary school students



## Introduction

Teacher leadership is widely acknowledged as a pivotal factor in fostering positive student behavior, engagement, and academic achievement. In educational contexts, teachers are not only conveyors of knowledge but also role models who guide students toward personal development, behavioral regulation, and life skills. Among the critical attributes influencing student outcomes, teacher leadership skills and student self-discipline have emerged as significant predictors of academic success and personal growth (Bass, 1985; Duckworth & Seligman, 2005).

Teacher leadership refers to the ability of educators to influence and inspire students and colleagues to achieve enhanced learning outcomes. Teacher leaders actively contribute to instructional improvement, classroom management, and student motivation (Harris & Muijs, 2003). Effective leadership in teaching involves guiding students through clear communication, setting high expectations, providing constructive feedback, and fostering a positive classroom climate (York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Such leadership not only promotes academic achievement but also encourages students to develop self-regulation and behavioral control. Emmer and Stough (2001) emphasize that classroom management skills—a core dimension of teacher leadership—play a crucial role in maintaining a disciplined and conducive learning environment.

Self-discipline is defined as the ability of individuals to regulate behavior, control impulses, and remain focused on long-term goals despite distractions or challenges. Duckworth and Seligman (2005) highlight self-discipline as a stronger predictor of academic success than intelligence quotient (IQ), with disciplined students demonstrating superior time management, goal achievement, and consistent academic performance. In the classroom, self-discipline enables students to persist in challenging tasks, resist distractions, and adopt behaviors that enhance learning outcomes.

The theoretical underpinnings of the relationship between teacher leadership and student self-discipline are grounded in both transformational leadership theory and social learning theory. Transformational leadership theory posits that leaders inspire and motivate followers through vision, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass, 1985). In educational settings, teachers who exhibit transformational leadership qualities encourage students to adopt disciplined behaviors, set goals, and persist toward academic achievement. Social learning theory further supports this link, suggesting that individuals acquire behaviors by observing and imitating role models (Bandura, 1977). Teachers who consistently demonstrate responsible, organized, and disciplined behavior serve as models, promoting the internalization of similar traits in students.

Empirical research reinforces the importance of teacher leadership in developing self-discipline among students. York-Barr and Duke (2004) found that teachers who demonstrate instructional leadership positively influence student engagement and self-regulation by providing clear expectations and supportive guidance. Katz and Porath (2011) emphasized that motivational support and positive teacher-student relationships enhance student responsibility and accountability, fostering self-discipline in learning tasks. Harris and Muijs (2005) demonstrated that schools practicing distributed leadership exhibited improved student engagement and classroom discipline, indicating that teacher leadership fosters shared responsibility and collective motivation within the learning environment.



Furthermore, studies highlight that teacher leadership behaviors such as mentoring, feedback, and guidance directly impact students' ability to regulate their learning (Muhammad et al, 2022). Wang and Holcombe (2010) showed that students perceiving strong teacher support exhibited higher self-discipline and academic engagement over time. In the Pakistani context, Bashir and Iqbal (2021) found that teacher leadership practices in secondary schools, particularly those involving mentoring and feedback, were significantly associated with students' goal setting, time management, and academic persistence. These findings suggest that teacher leadership is a key determinant of students' self-regulated learning and behavioral control.

Despite the recognized importance of teacher leadership, limited research has specifically examined its relationship with students' self-discipline in Pakistani secondary schools. Many students in Pakistan struggle with time management, motivation, and behavioral regulation, which can negatively affect academic achievement and personal development. Teachers play a crucial role in mitigating these challenges through effective leadership practices, yet empirical evidence on this relationship remains scarce.

Therefore, the present study investigates the relationship between teacher leadership skills and students' self-discipline in Government Girls High Schools in District Malakand. By exploring this relationship, the study aims to provide insights into how teacher leadership can be leveraged to promote self-discipline, inform teacher training programs, and improve educational outcomes within the Pakistani context. Based on theoretical frameworks and prior empirical findings, it is evident that teacher leadership skills are closely associated with the development of self-discipline among students, and understanding this relationship is vital for fostering both academic and personal growth.

### **Problem Statement**

In the educational environment, developing self-discipline among students is essential for improving academic performance, responsible behavior, and overall personal development. However, many students in schools struggle with maintaining discipline, managing their time, and controlling their behavior during the learning process. Teachers play a central role in shaping students' attitudes and behaviors, and their leadership skills can significantly influence the classroom environment. Effective teacher leadership can motivate students, establish clear expectations, and encourage responsible behavior, which may lead to improved self-discipline. Despite the importance of these factors, limited research has been conducted to examine how teacher leadership skills are related to students' self-discipline, particularly in the context of Pakistani schools. Therefore, this study aims to examine the relationship between teacher leadership skills and students' self-discipline to better understand how teachers' leadership abilities may contribute to the development of disciplined behavior among students.

### **Objectives of the study**

1. To find out the relationship between leadership skills of teachers and self-discipline of students.

### **Hypothesis**

**Ho:** There is no significant relationship between teachers' leadership skills on students' self-discipline.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is significant relationship between teachers' leadership skills on students' self-discipline.



### Significance of Study

This study is significant because it highlights the relationship between teacher leadership skills and students' self-discipline in the educational setting. The findings will help teachers understand how effective leadership qualities such as guidance, motivation, and classroom management can promote disciplined behavior among students. The study will also assist school administrators and policymakers in developing training programs that enhance teachers' leadership abilities, which may lead to improved student behavior and academic performance. In addition, the research will contribute to existing educational literature and provide useful insights for future researchers interested in teacher leadership and student development.

### Methodology

This study employed a quantitative, correlational survey design to examine the relationship between teacher leadership skills and students' self-discipline in Government Girls High Schools, District Malakand. The population included 7th and 8th grade students and their teachers, with a sample of 201 students and 20 teachers selected using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sampling method and random sampling techniques. Data was collected through a self-constructed questionnaire with 33 items across three dimensions: leadership skills, self-discipline, and student interest in learning, measured on a five-point Likert scale.

The questionnaire was validated by a panel of six experts and refined after a pilot study. Reliability was confirmed with Cronbach's alpha values of 0.90 for leadership skills and 0.86 for self-discipline, indicating strong internal consistency. Data was analyzed using SPSS version 23, employing descriptive statistics to summarize responses and correlation and regression analyses to test the hypothesized relationships. Ethical procedures, including informed consent and confidentiality, were strictly followed. This methodology ensured systematic and reliable investigation of the relationship between teacher leadership skills and student self-discipline.

### Data Analysis and Interpretation

The data was analyzed through bootstrapping method using Amos Software

### Hypothesis

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is significant relationship between teachers' leadership skills and students' self-discipline.

Figure 1 shows that LS had a positive and significant influence on SD. The passage from LS to SD was very good at level 0.001. The beta coefficient ( $\beta$ ) is 0.54, the critical ratio (C.R) is 9.539, and the probability value is  $p < .01$ . This means that LS has a significant effect on the SD of pupils in Government high schools Malakand. The C.R number (C.R= 9.539 > 1.960) is higher than the T table value, which means that LS has a positive and important effect on SD. The p value, which is less than 0.05, also made this significance stronger. So, H<sub>1</sub> was true and accepted.

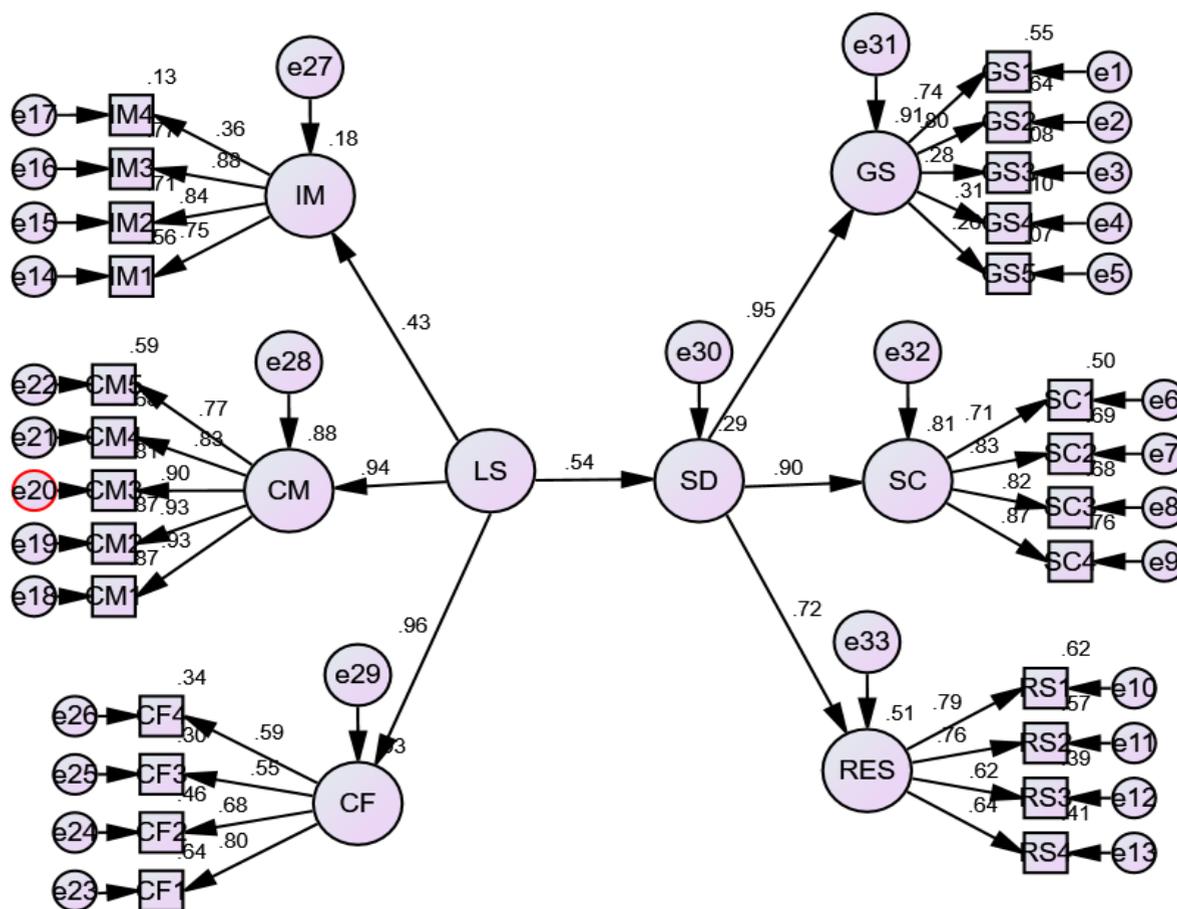


Figure 4.1: Influence of LS on SD

**Discussion**

The results of this study demonstrate a significant and positive relationship between teacher leadership skills (LS) and students’ self-discipline (SD) in Government Girls High Schools, District Malakand. The regression analysis revealed a beta coefficient ( $\beta$ ) of 0.54, indicating that teacher leadership skills have a moderate-to-strong positive influence on students’ ability to regulate their behavior, manage time, and maintain focus on academic goals. The critical ratio (C.R = 9.539), which exceeds the threshold value of 1.960, and a p-value < 0.01 confirm that this relationship is statistically significant at the 0.001 level, providing strong support for the study’s first hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>). These findings suggest that as teachers demonstrate greater leadership abilities, students are more likely to exhibit higher levels of self-discipline.

This positive association aligns with theoretical frameworks such as transformational leadership theory, which posits that leaders influence their followers through inspiration, motivation, and role modeling (Bass, 1985). In the classroom context, teachers who demonstrate strong leadership skills—such as effective classroom management, clear communication, and the ability to motivate students—create structured and supportive learning environments. These environments foster responsibility, self-regulation, and goal-directed behaviors among students, which are key components of self-discipline. Furthermore, social learning theory supports these findings by emphasizing that students learn behaviors by observing role models (Bandura, 1977). Teachers who



consistently exhibit organized, disciplined, and accountable behaviors provide students with practical examples to emulate, thereby promoting self-discipline.

In conclusion, the study's findings provide strong empirical evidence that teacher leadership skills are a significant predictor of students' self-discipline, confirming the importance of proactive, organized, and inspiring teaching practices in fostering behavioral regulation and academic success among secondary school students.

### Conclusion and Recommendation

The study concludes that teacher leadership skills have a significant and positive impact on students' self-discipline. Effective leadership in the classroom—including motivation, communication, and structured guidance—enables students to develop responsibility, self-regulation, and goal-oriented behaviors. These findings highlight the importance of enhancing teacher leadership through targeted training, as it not only improves instructional effectiveness but also fosters disciplined, motivated, and academically successful students.

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