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EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHOOL THROUGH PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: A THEMATIC ANALYSIS AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL

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Abstract
In modern era, it has been realized that for the organizational development it is necessary to focus on the professional development of the employees. Now a day, it has become a challenge at secondary education level in Pakistan. The main objective of this study was to evaluate the professional development activities performed by the school principals. This study is qualitative and the population of the study was public secondary school principals from Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan. 30 respondents were selected as sample through purposive sampling technique. Data was collected through open-ended questions by interviews. For data analysis themes and subthemes were generated and coded into Nvivo-12 on the bases of pedagogical knowledge, classroom practices, students' evaluation and feedback, friendliness and approachability. The findings revealed that female teachers had more competencies regarding these themes as compare to male respondents. Moreover these factors can be more effective for the professional development of teachers and can foster teachers' competence.

Keywords: Professional Competencies; Pedagogical Skills; Classroom Management Skills

INTRODUCTION

Public school performance has been a matter of concern for Pakistan (Parveen et al., 2021). The public schools' performance has declined over time, providing the space for the private sector, which enrolled one-third of all stu-dents (Tahira et al., 2020). The government is taking many initiatives to improve the performance of public schools (Mahmood et al., 2021). Some researchers in the country concluded that the lack of resources available in public schools led to the poor performance of schools (Ahmed et al., 2022; Gillani, 2021). Teachers, however, have a direct responsibility to shape a student's academic achievement and are considered as the key factor in the school environment (Bassey et al., 2019; Marlina et al., 2021; Tahirsylaj, 2019).

Teacher individual characteristics predominantly affect the students' performance in schools (Sirait, 2016). Many studies highlighted that teacher characteristics such as education background, experience, perseverance, teacher evaluation score, preparedness of course work are the variables for improving student performance (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Dobbie, 2011; Kane et al., 2008;
Milanowski, 2004; Rockoff, 2004). Teacher characteristics create an environment in the classroom that leads to stu-dents performing positively or negatively (Khalilzadeh & Khodi, 2021; Nguyen et al., 2022). Some characteristics of teachers foster classes to exhibit friendliness and coopera-tion, while other characteristics create an environment of jealousy, unhealthy competition, or hostility (Ferguson & Johnson, 2010). The favorable characteristics and behaviors that contribute positively to the school environment are defined as teacher competencies in the school (Ali & Haider, 2017; Kawuryan et al., 2021). To polish the teacher competencies, various teacher training programs are needed for a variety of teachers working in schools (Siddiqui, 2019). Teacher differs in qualities on the

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basis of gender (Ahmad et al., 2020). The authors of that study further stated that female teachers provide better delivery during theory classes, whereas male teachers' performance is better in laboratory-based classes. Teachers also evolve during in service experience and develop different qualities as a result of ''learning by doing'' effect (Rice, 2003). As various teachers differ in performances, it has become a challenge for policymakers and school leaders to design PD programs to help all their teachers become as effective as the best teachers (Sims et al., 2021). Several training programs were initi-ated and executed across Pakistan but failed to achieve the desired outcome (Siddiqui et al., 2021). There is a need of systematizing professional training programs and their continuation (Arif et al., 2022). Therefore, this study seeks to understand the qualities presents in public school teachers and their differences based on gender and experi-ence. That provides valuable information for the policy-makers to design the teachers' training programs by keeping in mind the actual state of teachers' qualities.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

It is challenging to describe teacher knowledge with a universal definition (Hopkins & Stern, 1996). The dynamic nature of teaching makes it hard to summarize different aspects of teaching attributes into one single definition (Wiens et al., 2013). For some researchers, teacher knowledge relies primarily on content knowledge and ''verbal ability'' (Ballou & Podgursky, 2000; Hess, 2004; Tatto & Senk, 2011). Another set of researchers stated that quality teaching could be achieved by acquir-ing specialized knowledge and methods (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2007). Wiens et al. (2013) described quality teaching as providing con-tinuous emotional and social support to students to develop them cognitively. Despite differences, there is consensus in researchers that having positive characters can be defined as teacher knowledge. Some researchers in the past have defined teacher knowledge by combing two aspects of teacher knowledge: knowledge of general pedagogical principles and skills and knowledge of the subject matter to be taught. (Ben-Peretz, 2011; Goodwin, 2021; Kawuryan et al., 2021). Many researchers associate different attributes, that is, sense of humor, punctuality, emotional intelligence, content knowledge, curriculum knowledge as good teach-ing qualities. (Arnon & Reichel, 2007; Cain, 2001; Klette & Hammerness, 2016). Shulman (1986a) however, has been the founding father of this area by first acknowledging the need of combining subject matter knowledge with successful teaching methods in order to maximize student learning experience. Shulman (1986b) also stated that few important things were missing in teaching methods: ''*the knowledge about what to teach, how to teach it, how to engage students and how to deal with students' learning* difficulties''

According to Shulman (1987), pedagogical content and knowledge (PCK) consists of various strategies which addresses students' misconceptions. In addition, the author has listed several other aspects of knowledge that is, propositional knowledge, norms of teaching; case knowledge, practical knowledge which falls under the umbrella of pedagogical content knowledge. One year later, Shulman (1987) suggested that the quality teaching is transforming knowledge into material that students can easily under-stand. To achieve this, the author lists several other knowl-edge bases that teachers must possess. There illustrates seven aspects of teach-ers' knowledge which constitutes teachers' professional knowledge. Shulman (1987) emphasized the need of hav-ing all these aspects in teachers' knowledge to have qual-ity teaching in classroom settings. The author also stated that pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) separates a

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teacher from a content specialist. Only a teacher with good PCK can understand the need of tailoring a good lecture so to set up a domain which can be presented for instruction and tailored to learners' interests and skills.

With time, many more researchers have introduced different frameworks which define teacher knowledge and how these individual qualities of teachers have an overall impact on the students' performance. Gess-Newsome (2015) gave a comprehensive knowledge framework which encompasses teachers knowledge on one end and also highlight how this knowledge is related to classroom and student performance (Figure 2). With growing interest in the field of education and continuous demands of 21st century requires more from a teacher to be considered as effective teacher (Klette & Hammerness, 2016). Those competencies are required from teachers which can ready 21st century learners. Though these above discussed frameworks include a vari-ety of teacher knowledge aspects which covers a variety of individual competencies requires to be an effective teacher, these frameworks still miss some individual com-petencies which are considered as essential in the current era of education (Stronge, 2018). The 21st century has various other challenges for teachers and they require additional qualities and competencies to be effective in
this era. Teaching strategies need to change to empower 21st-century learners (Caena & Redecker, 2019). Ali and Haider (2017) highlighted teachers core competencies can be categorized into three categories; Instructional, Professional, Personal. Each sub category consists of various competencies which are needed in this era of education to prepare 21st-century learners. The below paragraphs highlight the key competencies highlighted in the world literature in these three dimensions (Instructional, Personal, Professional) of core teacher competencies.

Instructional qualities are considered part of teachers' professional competence (Kunter et al., 2013). Different competencies that is, pedagogical content knowledge, curriculum knowledge, encouraging students inside class-room, timely evaluation and positive feedback to stu-dents has been termed as the key instructional competencies of teacher (Blazar, 2015; Hill & Chin, 2018; Kaiser et al., 2017). Studies in the past have pro-vided evidence that teacher's instructional quality strongly linked with student performance (Depaepe & Ko¨ nig, 2018; Ko¨ nig & Pflanzl, 2016; Voss et al., 2011). This quality can also be used as a basis for measuring teacher effectiveness in school (Grossman et al., 2013). Ko¨ nig et al. (2021) concluded that teacher instructional competencies serve as a significant predictor of quality-oriented mathematical teaching and learning processes and contribute to students' mathematical progress.

According to Holzberger et al., (2021), different factors, that is, effects of social composition, leadership, teacher collaboration, and school climate, determine the school's instructional quality. Stovner et al. (2021) concluded that procedural feedback from teachers in the classroom proved to be more effective for students' understanding and behavior. According to the authors, teachers' instructional competencies helped students build conceptual understanding of mathematics lessons. Student evaluation and timely feedback are very important for their success (Faulconer et al., 2022). Providing feedback through students' evaluation enhance their active learning progress (Owen, 2016). It is considered as one of the essential approach from teachers to facilitate students' development (P. Ferguson, 2011). Personal competencies such as understanding the feelings of students, clear communication and a sense of humor,

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significantly affect student morals and performance in the classroom (Shoaib & Ullah, 2021). Teacher sense of humor affects students' attitudes in building their confidence and making them feel less anxious in the classroom (Tunnisa et al., 2019). Students learn quickly when feeling happy and amused (Binti Rusbadrol et al., 2015). It also enables positive interactions between teachers and students, which contributes to building a positive environment in the classroom (Banks, 2016). Koutsoulis (2003) concluded in his study that students highly ranked the teachers' ability to show understanding and teacher friendliness. This quality enables teachers to communicate effectively with students to improve and maintain teacher-student relations. Teacher friendliness also contributes to the affective learning in the classroom (Rimland, 2013). Binti Rusbadrol et al. (2015) defines personality as, morals, attitudes, character, skills, self-confidence, intellect, inspiration, behaviors and so on. Mkpanang (2015) illustrates that personality refers to external and observable characteristics. Arbabisarjou et al. (2015), which distinguishes him from others. Teacher personality greatly affects the teacher-student relationship (Raufelder et al., 2016). A positive teacher-student relationship would increase the students' motivation to learn and improve their academic achievement (Joe et al., 2017). In their study, Noreen et al. (2019) also stated that teachers' per-sonality plays a significant role in accomplishing students' educational achievement. According to the authors, the teachers' openness to the students positively affects their achievement. Khalilzadeh and Khodi (2021) analyzed the relationship between five personal traits (extraversion, neuroticism, conscientiousness, agreeable-ness and openness to experiences) and student learning motivation. The researchers concluded that teacher per-sonality significantly affects student achievement. Teachers' conscientiousness personality trait positively affected students, while the teachers' extraversion personality trait harmed students' motivation to learn. These studies confirm that teacher personality affects student performance either positively or negatively. Hence making teacher personality a significant contributor for the school success.

Professional competencies are those attributes of a teacher which are not necessarily related to the subject knowledge or technical competence (Massingham, 2019). These attributes are normally linked with how a teacher works in a school's general educational environment. The professional competencies of a teacher play a key role in fostering students' learning (Schleicher, 2016). These competencies help teachers establish relationships in the school environment and demonstrate positive values, attitudes and behavior (Goepel, 2012). Teacher punctuality is considered as one of the key professional competencies of an effective teacher (Sahito et al., 2016). According to the authors, teacher punctuality positively affects students' performance. Through punctuality, a teacher could enhance his/her performance which even-tually affects student performance (Amadhila & Guest, 2022). In support of this view, Abrami (2001; Kunter et al. 2013) described teacher professional com-potencies as professional beliefs, work-related motiva-tion, and self-regulation. The authors concluded in their study that teachers' enthusiasm for teaching and self-regulatory skills on instructional quality affected student outcomes.

RESEARCH MEETHODOLOGY

The sub-themes of the central phenomenon were used a guiding framework for tailoring interview guide for this study. A set of structured and open-ended questions were derived in the interview guide to take responses from the participants. Firstly, the

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public schools were selected using the criteria of size of school and principal working experience in that school. Permission was asked from the principals by explaining the purpose of this research. After the consent, inter-views were scheduled on different dates from the principals. All interviews were conducted in English by directly interacting with the principals. The duration of the interview ranged from 20 to 30 min. The public schools of Lahore district formed the target population of this study. The study uses a purposeful sampling technique to choose one high level school from every sub division of Rawalpindi district to represent every sub-division in the sample. This is to better infer about the overall population. Purposeful sampling helps to identify and selection.

All interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. The interviews data was recorded and later was sent back to principals before performing the main analysis of the study. This is to ensure the credibility and authenticity of research as any minor errors are highlighted before the analysis (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). As the struc-ture of this study was much operationalized based on previous knowledge in the field of teacher knowledge and teacher competencies so the deductive content analysis approach was used in analyzing the data. Advantage of using deductive content analysis is that it systematically categorizes textual data in order to make sense of it (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Interview responses were coded together based on already established themes using line analysis to organize the interviews according to research questions (Chenail, 2015). ANvivo-12 soft-ware was used as the analytical tool for analyzing the qualitative data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study main objective is to assess the competencies of teachers. The researcher categorized the teachers into two sub categories based on gender and experience. The heads gave their feedback about the individual competencies of teachers through the means of a structured interview. The heads feedback highlights key difference in the teachers' competencies across gender and experience. Teacher pedagogical content knowledge and teaching practices inside the classroom can be termed as instructional competencies (Blazar, 2015). Instructional compe-tencies are considered part of teachers' professional competence (Kunter et al., 2013). This quality can also be used to measure teacher effectiveness in school (Grossman et al., 2013). Stovner et al. (2021) concluded that procedural feedback from teachers in the classroom proved to be more effective for students' understanding and behavior.

Pedagogical Knowledge. A few studies in the past have pro-vided evidence that teacher pedagogical knowledge affects the teacher's instructional quality, which is linked with student performance (Depaepe & Ko¨ nig, 2018; Ko¨ nig & Pflanzl, 2016; Voss et al., 2011). Instructional competencies are considered part of teachers' profes-sional competence (Kunter et al., 2013). This quality can also be used to measure teacher effectiveness in school (Grossman et al., 2013).

Male Teachers. Most principals say that their school teachers do have the pedagogical knowledge needed for teaching. After going through a screening process, the teachers join the school education department in which their qualifications and other skills were considered the basis for selection. However, the teachers may lack the modern pedagogical knowledge currently being applied in the world.

''Teachers are good as they have the right qualification for teaching and before joining they go through a compulsory training program especially design for improving

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pedagogical competencies in teachers'' [Principal 3].

Another principal said that:

''Teachers are competent with respect to their subject knowledge, but many teachers are missing the recent pedagogical approaches used in the modern times around the world. Teachers uses the old ways of teaching as they are now comfortable and established a teaching style like that.'' [Principal. 1]

Female Teachers. Female teachers are found to be good in terms of pedagogical knowledge they have. Most principals perceive them as more competent and dedicated when it comes to teaching.

''Our female teachers are very good in pedagogy and do have a wide range of knowledge regarding different pedagogical aspects.'' [Principal 3]

Also, they shows more interest in learning new pedagogical techniques in the training programs as one principal added this:

''During training programs, female teachers grasp more quickly and apply more knowledge they learn in those training programs.'' [Principal 6]

Classroom Practices. Learning environment largely affects the student performance in the school (Shamaki, 2015). Teachers in the classroom dictate the tone of their class and builds a warm classroom environment for their students (Oyeniyi & Seminary, 2019). This is considered as one of the leadership competencies of teachers to create a positive learning atmosphere for students to make them feel welcome in the classroom.

Male Teachers. Most of the teachers use real-life exam-ples in the classroom to explain things. They do not normally use a variety of different materials in the classroom to give lectures. The thing most of the teachers lack is encouraging students to ask questions in the classroom.

''The teachers can only use materials which has been available to them. Teachers usually rely on blackboard as a tool for instruction. Though some young teachers encourages students to ask question in the classroom, most of the teachers don't. The classroom environment is more formal and respectful in which students feel relaxed'' [Principal 2].

''The teachers sometimes use different materials in the class-room to give lectures. The young teachers are more friendly and welcoming to the students compare to the senior teachers. The teachers do encourage good questioning in the class-rooms'' [Principal 3].

Female Teachers. Teachers' use conventional methods to give lectures as the resources provided to teachers only allow them to do this. For encouraging students, school offers different school prizes based on their results, but on class level its teacher's responsibility to encourage stu-dents. The young teachers were found to be more encouraging than senior teachers. As one of the principal said this: *''Senior teachers shows less interest in encouraging students for active participation in their class while young teachers shows more interest of students' participation and allow them to ask questions.''*

When the question was asked about whether teachers use different methods of teaching in the classroom. The principal replied:

''Now a days it becomes important to use different kind of methods for teaching but mostly they use old methods of teaching. Some young teachers use Students learning outcome (Slo's) based methods in their classroom.'' [Principal 3].

Also teachers in schools missing the advanced tools for teaching as one of the principal said this:

''No they don't use any kinds of advanced tools for teaching in their classroom. It's due to the lack of sufficient budget and lack of teachers' interest in adopting advanced tools. Teachers usually use same tools like white boards, cardboards etc.'' [Principal 7].

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Students Evaluation & Feedback. Student evaluation and providing timely feedback is very important for their suc-cess (Faulconer et al., 2022). Providing feedback through students evaluation enhance their active learning prog-ress (Owen, 2016). It is considered as one of the essential approach from teachers to facilitate students' develop-ment (P. Ferguson, 2011).

Male Teachers. All the principals gave positive responses related to evaluation of students from teach-ers. In all the schools, teachers regularly evaluates stu-dents' performance using different tests and exams conducted within the schools. They provide feedback in terms of students marks obtained.

''In our school, the teacher evaluates students by using different test and giving them homework. The teachers regularly gave homework and evaluates the students' performance. They always provide feedback to the students related to their performance in school tests and homework assignments'' [Principal 6].

About the frequency of student evaluation one principal said this

''The teachers evaluate every student based on their daily homework assignments and school tests and give positive feed-back to the students'' [Principal 3].

Female Teachers. Teachers frequently evaluates stu-dents' performance through classroom test and terms etc. They provide timely feedback about students' performance.

''In our school, this culture is set that our teacher continuously evaluates students and give them feedback based on their per-ormance'' [Principal 4].

One of the principal gave her opinion that continuous evaluation is kind of compulsory because of official requirements from the government. She said that:

''There is government requirement from the top management to evaluate the students regularly and record their performance based on the scores. So, teachers have to continuously evaluate the students'' [Principal 1].

Personal competencies such as understanding feelings of students, clear communication and a sense of humor, greatly affect student morals and performance in the classroom (Stronge, 2018). Teacher personality greatly affects the teacher-student relationship (Raufelder et al., 2016). A good positive teacher-student relationship would increase the students' motivation to learn and improve their academic achievement (Bouras & Keskes, 2014; Joe et al., 2017; Lamb, 2017). Noreen et al. (2019) also stated in their study that teachers' personality plays a significant role in accomplishing students' educational achievement.

Friendliness and Approachability. Koutsoulis (2003) con-cluded in his study that students highly ranked the teachers ability to show understanding and teacher friendliness. This quality enables teachers to communicate effectively with students to improve and maintain the teacher-student relations. Teacher friendliness also contributes to the affective learning in the classroom (Rimland, 2013).

Male Teachers. And most of the teachers are responsible and have a good personality. The teachers dress prop-erly and communicate clearly in the classrooms. They work in a graceful manner with students and having a respectful relationship with students.

''The teachers normally do not allow students to freely talk with them as they it may leads to the teachers losing their respect in the eyes of students. They maintain a very formal relationship with the students'' [Principal 2].

Female Teachers. Female teachers are found to be friendlier with students', especially young teachers. They talk more often with the students during the class timing and outside class timing. Moreover, they have personal relationship with the students' and students feels

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comfortable reaching them if they encounter any problem.

''Young teachers are friendlier with their students as compared to senior teachers. Students find it easy to approach young teachers if they encounter any kind of problem'' [Principal 7].

Sense of Humor. Teacher sense of humor affects students' attitudes in terms of building their confidence and making them feel less anxious in the classroom (Tunnisa et al., 2019). Students learn quickly when they are feeling happy and amused (Martin, 2007). It also enables positive interactions between teachers and students, which contributes to building a positive environment in the classroom (Banks, 2016; Luz, 2015).*Male Teachers.* Teachers in school normally interact in a more formal way. Using jokes in the classroom while teaching is not common among the male teachers. One principal commented on this:

''Teachers in my school lack this quality. They think that amusing students in the classroom might change their respect-ful relationship with the students.'' [Principal 4].

''Teachers some time shared jokes and funny stories with the students. This practice is more common in the young teachers. The senior teachers are more formal in the classrooms.'' [Principal 3].

Female Teachers. Teachers have a good sense of humor in schools, but the use of sense of humor in the class-rooms is limited. In school culture, amusing student might be considered as unethical and not appropriate from the teacher's point of view. As one of the principal was being asked this question that whether teachers use jokes and funny stories to amuse and relax the students in the classroom? The principal responded:

''Very rarely teachers express sense of humor in classroom. They avoid using jokes and amusing students in the class-rooms.'' [Principal 5].

Emotional Intelligence. Personal competencies such as understanding the feelings of students, clear communication and a sense of humor, greatly affect student morals and performance in the classroom (Shoaib & Ullah, 2021). Emotional intelligence helps to know emotions which helps in understanding the students' behavior and make good relationship with them (Abiodullah & Aslam, 2020). A good positive teacher-student relationship would increase the students' motivation to learn and improve their academic achievement (Joe et al., 2017).

Male Teachers. It is not very common attributes found among the male teachers in schools. Mostly teachers do not really try to understand the students feelings and emotions while teaching them.

No, teachers normally do not give too much attention t the feelings of students. They only care if someone is sick or show-ing some physical problems but not to phycology problems.'' [Principal 4].

Female Teachers. Female teachers are good in under-standing the feelings and emotions of teachers. They give proper attention if they see someone is having some problem and that is why they are having more stronger relationship with the students as compared to the male teachers.

''Female teachers are good in understanding the feelings and emotions of the students. If some students are not behaving well, teachers are quick to respond to it. Our female teachers understand students way better than male teachers.'' [Principal 3].

DISCUSSION

The research highlighted key differences in teachers competencies based on gender and age. In general, the female teachers found to possess more teaching competencies as

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compare to the male teachers. These results are in line with by Ahmad et al. (2020) research in which authors concluded that female teachers perform better than male teachers in school environment. Islahi and Nasreen (2013) also concluded that female teachers have proven to be more effective for student performance. Additional differences were highlighted by school's principals based on teachers age and seniority level. Senior younger teach-ers, whether male or female, found to possess more teaching competencies than senior teachers. These results are in contrast with the studies of Rice (2003), Podolsky et al. (2019) conclusions that experience leads to increase in teacher competencies and effectiveness. This is the overall picture of the teacher-quality assessment of this research. In the later paragraphs the researcher further breaks down the analysis part into more specific details.

From the instructional competencies side, all of the teachers were found to be good in pedagogical knowledge as they have the right qualification for teaching and before joining, the teachers go through a compulsory training program. These pre-service training programs are especially designed for improving pedagogical competencies in teachers (Nawab, 2017). With regards to classroom practices, mostly teachers, whether male or female, uses old methods of teaching due to the lack of availability of new resources. This is highlighted by Rehman and Khan (2011) that use of old methods in classroom is due to the lack of proper modern training and poor finance. Some young teachers however are applying different methods and tools in teaching. In terms encouraging students and giving positive feedback to them, mostly female and young teachers encourage their students to ask questions in the classroom. Though, evaluating students is common and frequent in public schools, mostly male teachers fail to provide positive feedback to the students. This is also highlighted by Ali and Haider (2017) that female teachers have better ability to understand the emotions of students, Ahmad et al. (2020) and provide more timely and positive response to students in the classroom.

From the personal competencies point of view, female teachers are found to be friendlier with students, especially young teachers. They talk more often with the students during the class timing and outside class timing. Moreover, they have personal relationship with the stu-dents' and students feels comfortable reaching them if they encounter any problem. In addition, the sense of humor of female teachers is also comparatively better than the male teachers. In terms of emotional intelligence, female teach-ers are also good in understanding the feelings and emo-tions of the students. While most principals think that male teachers do not try to understand the emotions and feelings of students. These results are supported by various studies (Ahmad et al., 2020; Ali & Haider, 2017; Islahi & Nasreen, 2013) who concluded that female personality is more effective and suitable for school teaching.

Table. Summary of the Teacher-Competencies assessment

Teachers competencies	Sub-competencies	Male teachers		Female teachers	
		Young	Senior	Young	Senior
Instructional competencies	√ Pedagogical Knowledge	Good	Good	Good	Good
	√ Classroom Practices	Average	Average	Good	Average
	√ Students Evaluation & Feedback	Good	Good	Good	Good
Personal competencies	√ Friendliness and Approachability	Average	Not Good	Good	Average
	√ Sense of Humor	Average	Not Good	Good	Average
	√ Emotional Intelligence	Average	Not Good	Good	Good
Professional competencies	√ Work-related Relationship	Not Good	Average	Good	Good
	√ Punctuality	Good	Good	Good	Good
	√ Focus on Professional development	Average	Not Good	Average	Not Good

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From the professional competencies side, female teachers found to have better personal relationship with the peers than the male teachers. Female teachers discuss about the work-related activities with their colleagues more often than male teachers. Furthermore, all the teachers, despite the difference in gender or age group are very punctual. The heads of schools believe that government regulations are the factor behind the punctuality of teachers. According to them, the new government rules also encourage school teachers to be more punctual in school as attendance is been strictly noted and disciplinary actions is taken if teachers are found to be not following the rules. As supported by Habib (2013) that strong check and balance from government leads to less absenteeism from teachers. Finally, the teachers show mini-mum interest in taking the professional development programs. The principal perceives that lack of financial benefits and courses timing could be factors behind lack of motivation from the teachers. This is also concluded in the study of Aslam (2014) that less benefits and work life balance of teachers are primary cause of lack of motivation for teachers to focus on professional development. The Table sums up all the main points highlighted in the interviews to present an overall picture of the teacher-competency assessment:

CONCLUSION

The research is carried out to explore the teacher competencies in public schools of Pakistan. Normally, teacher performance measured through school performance as a whole and very less consideration is been given to the individual strengths and weaknesses of teachers. This research shed light on the individual competencies differences among teachers by investigating the competencies of teachers as perceived by the principals. The results high-light varying competencies in teachers based on gender and experience level. The young teachers, whether male or female, are found to possess more teaching competencies as compared to senior teachers. These findings are in con-trast with Rice (2003), Podolsky et al. (2019) conclusions that experience leads to increase in teacher competencies and effectiveness. The study concluded that some of the competencies that is, focus on professional development, sense of humor and friendliness and approachability becomes less and less in senior teachers. The results also highlighted that female teacher possess more teaching competencies as compared to male teachers. This is in line with the studies of Ahmad et al. (2020), Islahi and Nasreen (2013), that female school teachers possess more competencies and perform better in school settings.

This research not just only highlighted the gender and age-based differences in teaching competencies but also provided a detailed analysis framework (see Table 6). This table can serve as a criteria to understand the individual strengths and weaknesses of teachers. PD programs can be developed using this as a criteria to first measure the strengths and weaknesses of teachers. The professional development programs are normally designed based on general basis to treat every teacher with same stick. Therefore, there is need to adopt a different approach for teacher training. As Islahi and Nasreen (2013) recommended that PD programs should undertake the individual indifferences among teachers. The especially designed PD programs can be more productive for enhancing the teachers' capabilities (Sims et al., 2021). Moreover, the research also highlights that some competencies like punctuality can also be improved through proper governance of schools and some aspects needs proper training pro-grams to polish the teacher competence.

Following are the recommendations on the behalf of findings:

Information like that provides vital information to the government to design teachers' professional development programs by keeping in mind the strengths and weak-nesses of

individual teachers. These specially designed learning opportunities can be more effective for TPD of teachers. Through tailored training programs professional development of teachers can reach its goals more effectively and efficiently than relying on a standard base approach for TPD. Furthermore, these types of information highlighting individual facets of teachers' competence provides more insights for TPD programs than comparing general performance of schools and making TPD programs for enhancing teachers performance.

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