

**LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING: A CASE STUDY IN SIX  
PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS OF PAKISTAN**

**By**

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**A Thesis Submitted to  
The University of Birmingham  
for the Degree of  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

School of Education  
The University of Birmingham  
November 2012

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## **ABSTRACT**

The study explores the practicability and usefulness of the Carpe Vitam Concept of Leadership for Learning (LfL) for schools in Pakistan, placing this project amongst the pioneering work that might bring a new insight for practitioners, policy makers and researchers in the South East Asian region and particularly in Pakistan. Data was collected from six public and private secondary schools with a case study approach through interviews, questionnaires and documentary analysis from six headteachers, thirty teachers, three hundred and sixty parents and three hundred and sixty students. Data was analysed with a constant comparison approach that looked for meanings through emerging themes. The study construes how leadership and learning are conceptualized and experienced differently by different stakeholders in public and private schools in Pakistan. The research highlights the importance of dialogue between all stakeholders to establish shared vision for effective learning outcomes where knowledge of self, others, organization and community supplement the entire process at all levels. The study places emphasis on an on-going process of reflection for better resilience, resourcefulness and reciprocity amongst stakeholders for effective outcomes.

## **DEDICATION**

**My inspiration, my pride, my husband**

**my Javed**

**‘Let the beauty that we love be what we do’**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

With utmost pleasure and satisfaction I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation for all the support and guidance that I have received from the University staff, the participants, my family and friends. Many thanks to my supervisor Dr. Christopher Rhodes, whose endurance and encouragement gave me the confidence that I would be able to complete this project successfully.

This study would have never been possible for me, had Almighty Allah not blessed me with extremely caring and loving parents and my family in Pakistan, my exceptionally supportive brother Dr. Zafar and sister, Fauzia in Birmingham and most importantly my son, Hasan, daughter Tehreem and my talking parrot Mamlisa who always expressed their total confidence in their Mom.

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# **PART ONE: INTRODUCTION**

## **CHAPTER ONE: OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY**

### **1.1 Context and Rationale of the Study**

The growing interest, expectations and competition among schools across the world about how to improve learning has made it a challenging task for school leaders, and subsequently literature indicates emerging interest among researchers. Learning is the main purpose of every single school in the world. Leadership is considered an important factor in creation and maintenance of schools that make a difference. This concept is not unique or controversial but what makes many educationalists curious is the enigma of leadership capacity and its interplay for learning within every school (Murphy and Hallinger, 1988; Leithwood and Jantzi, 2005; Marzano et al., 2005; Murphy et al., 2009; Bush, 2008 and 2009; Leithwood et al., 2008; MacBeath and Dempster, 2009; Khan et al., 2009; Stoll and Temperley, 2009). It is important to know how these two are perceived by different stakeholders for improvement in schools and to what extent an interflow of information, skills and dialogue has defined the shared meaning of these two keywords: leadership and learning. The literature contains enormous information explaining the importance of multifaceted roles and responsibilities of educational leaders for ensuring better learning in schools in many countries across the world, particularly in the West. The study is an important initiative, as it aims at contributing to the knowledge on leadership and learning and their interplay with each other in an Asian country, Pakistan, where very scanty research is available in this area (Simkins et al., 1998; Maqbool, 2011).

The study explores the concept of leadership for learning (LfL) in Pakistan as it is explained in the Carpe Vitam LfL Project (MacBeath et al., 2009) which was carried out in eight countries of the world and has gained the interest of many researchers for being an international, multicultural and multi contextual model. The study explores whether leadership is a key factor for the capacity building of schools for effective learning outcomes (Raza, 2009; Khan et al., 2009; Maqbool, 2011) and whether prevalent leadership approach in Pakistani Schools is similar to that of the LfL Carpe Vitam Project. Central to the concept of capacity-building is the notion of distributed and shared leadership that inculcates a sustainable learning environment through dialogue, social cohesion and co-constructivism. The study explores the extent and importance of involvement of parents, students, teachers and headteachers as significant stakeholders in the process and dialogue for learning in the schools in Pakistan as it has been highlighted as a key factor to improve learning in the LfL Carpe Vitam Project.

For my own part, I have developed an interest in leadership and its interplay with learning based on my experience in the field of education in different roles from a teacher to head of department in university and director of professional development of one of the largest private school systems in Pakistan. My earlier understanding of the concept which developed during my MSc studies highlighted the role of leadership as the key factor behind the success of schools (Javed, 2005). While working as Head of Department in University and as a Consultant for professional development of teachers and headteachers over the last couple of years, I had an opportunity to work on different projects in the public and private schools in

Pakistan where I had a chance to observe the working of these two sectors closely. The public schools in Pakistan are under government control and follow the national curriculum with centralised policies and framework imposed through the education ministry, whereas the private schools work independently and have a choice to select any curriculum besides the national curriculum. The public schools have thin resources as compared to those of the private schools in Pakistan. Many criticise the performance of public schools in Pakistan for low quality outcomes and consider that increasing budget and physical resources may also improve their performance (Rizvi, 2008; Khan et al., 2009) but the quality of learning in many of the private schools is also condemned as being of low standards although schools are well equipped with all physical resources (Maqbool, 2011).

The LfL research highlights the importance of shared leadership among different stakeholders as a key factor as compared to other physical resources to enhance effectiveness of schools, therefore the study has a purposive sample from three public and three private schools where most of the physical infra-structure is similar. It is explored whether the LfL approach of involvement of stakeholders and shared leadership is an important factor in making learning more meaningful and effective in schools of Pakistan. My understanding of leadership roles and the process of learning transformed during these years and with the literature review of this study from being a simple notion to a complicated task with many interlinked and interdependent factors. The ever growing interest among educationalists and other stakeholders across the world on developing schools as learning communities emphasizes the need to establish a diverse leadership approach (Fertig, 2000; Beresford, 2003; Dinham, 2007;

Diosdado, 2008; Wahlstrom and Louis, 2008; Mulford, 2010; MacBeath and Dempster, 2009). Sarrat (2004) says that schools should not only be nurseries of tomorrow's world but they should also focus on developing problem solving skills among children which will be required in the real world. It is advocated that the learning process should not only emphasize the 'success for myself' attitude but it must also promote a 'betterment for all' approach. This goal is achievable only through involvement of all in the learning process. However, involvement of all to the same level of learning brings forth a difficult challenge to educationists as learning abilities of students may be different from each other and consequently success becomes subjective and variable. This involvement of different stakeholders is the core value in the concept of LfL (MacBeath et al., 2009) and main theme that fabricates this study.

## **1.2 Aims of the Research**

The research questions in my study provide the structure and guidelines for the "*operationalization*" (Cohen et al., 2007) of the research. These questions set the direction through which research aims can be met in the form of specific answers using particular methods of data collection. The wording of research questions according to Maxwell (1998, 2005), ensures fitness for purpose in terms of research aims and answers what these are intended to discover. He suggests that the best research questions are those which explore processes. The purpose of this study is to explore the usefulness of the concept of LfL for improving learning in schools of Pakistan through involvement of parents, students, teachers and headteachers as important stakeholders. The research has the following overarching aim:

- To analyse the scope of the LfL for improving learning in schools in Pakistan.

This overarching aim is explored through the following research questions in the study:

1. How is leadership and learning understood in the schools of Pakistan?
2. How do headteachers in schools in Pakistan perceive that they influence teaching and learning in their schools?
3. To what extent are headteachers, teachers, students and parents engaged in a dialogue for learning in their schools in Pakistan?
4. To what extent do teachers perceive themselves to be part of a learning community in their schools?
5. To what extent is student voice a contributory factor for improvement in teaching and learning in schools of Pakistan?

The first research question sought to help to understand how two keywords in this study are interpreted in the schools of Pakistan in terms of current practice and future improvement. The second and fourth questions aimed to provide a clearer picture in terms of leaders' and teachers' understanding and interplay of their roles to influence and improve learning in school. The third research question explored the extent of involvement of different stakeholders in and out of schools to improve learning as partners with a co-constructivist approach. The last question analyses the scope of student leadership in these schools as contributors and stakeholders in the process of learning in schools in Pakistan. This should, therefore, enable a better understanding of how and to what extent the concept of LfL is useful in schools of Pakistan to enhance and improve learning and consequently, generate tentative

recommendations regarding what kind of strategies would nurture leadership for better learning in the schools of Pakistan.

### **1.3 Conceptual Framework of the Study**

The juxtaposition of the two words, leadership and learning has given rise to a range of intriguing combinations such as ‘leadership in learning’, ‘leadership of learning’ or ‘leadership for learning’. Many of the authors and researchers who explore the concept of leadership and learning (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009; Nash and Roberts, 2009; MacBeath and Cheng, 2008; Frost, 2006), instructional leadership (Blase and Blase, 2004; Kruger, 2009; Ringler, 2007; Southworth, 2002; Hallinger, 2001, 2003a and b; Hallinger and Heck, 1996 and 1999; Jenkins, 2009) or better performance of the school through teamwork and distributed leadership (Diosdado, 2008; Møller, 2005; Goldstein, 2004; Harris, 2004a and b; Hopkins, 2001) are from the United Kingdom (UK), North America, Australia or Europe. This raises curiosity among many researchers in the East to explore whether all of these theories, studies and concepts are universal in nature and could be equally applied to all contexts (Tjosvold et al., 2007). The study is based on the LfL Carpe Vitam Project, named after its Swedish commissioning body (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009; MacBeath et al., 2009) that has an international perspective and is highly contextualised within its approach as it was introduced in eight countries where many researchers and practitioners from the UK, the United States (US), Greece, South Africa, Australia and Norway worked in collaboration for three years from 2002-2005 on the Project for improving learning in schools in the selected parts of their countries. They have presented school specific, cross-international

characteristics of the concept and reported particular findings about the suitable nature of leadership and learning and the possibility of any interrelationship. The findings of the project have been linked with different research to identify similarities and implications of the concept. This contextual approach with an international perspective within this model attracts my interest to explore it within the context of Pakistan in this study. The study explores to what extent the concept is applicable in a developing country like Pakistan, what are the similarities and to what extent modifications are required to make it effective in the local context therefore any relevant research about Pakistani schools within the context of the study was considered important (Scheid, 1954; Rahman, 1997; Simkins et al., 1998; Barrs, 2005; Babur and Safdar, 2005; Rizvi and Elliott, 2007; Raza, 2009; Riaz, 2008; Khan et al., 2009; Maqbool, 2011; Farooqi, 2011). The Carpe Vitam Project is based on five principles that highlight importance of learning environment, shared leadership, dialogue for learning, shared responsibility and accountability. The main focus of the study and the LfL Carpe Vitam model is to improve learning through involvement of stakeholders with a focus on leaders' roles in schools. As learning and leadership are highly contextualised terms and procedures, the study tries to define these two terms as seen, observed and experienced by concerned stakeholders in the participating schools in Pakistan. It also brings forth the importance of the headteacher's role and its impact on learning outcomes at all levels in schools. It highlights the importance of reflection and dialogue in the process of LfL among different stakeholders in the participating schools in Pakistan. The study highlights the importance of resilience, resourcefulness and reciprocity and reflectiveness as identified by Claxton (2002) and places more emphasis on an on-going process of reflection and dialogue at different levels in the

schools with the knowledge of self, others and organization through dialogue at different levels in school and a constant reflectiveness (Figures 30 and 31).

Owing to all the on-going work in the context of LfL in different parts of the world, no ‘one’ definition can be found, making the concept flexible to the prevalent environment and diversity of culture of different organizations (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009). This open-ended approach may modify the concept as per the culture that exists in and out of an organization making it ‘problematic’ to define the term (Rhodes and Brundett, 2010). In line with it, Levacic (2005) says that much work is required in the area of leadership and learning and their interplay with each other as the actual evidence in literature is sparse. This resonates with many other studies which demand more contextual and frequent work in this. This will be helpful in making more formal and workable structures for the cause of better learning (Robinson, 2007a; Mulford, 2008). Similar need is identified by many researchers in Pakistan (Simkins et al., 1998; Rizvi and Elliott, 2007; Khan et al., 2009).

#### **1.4 Research Design**

The study investigates how leadership and learning is understood and to what extent LfL is prevalent in schools of Pakistan and how it is perceived and experienced by different stakeholders. This inclusion of voices of different stakeholders to understand how the process of learning and leadership is perceived and experienced in this study is similar to the interpretative position of Gunter and Ribbins (2002) in the humanistic knowledge domain,



whereas the aim to understand the process of learning and the usefulness of the concept of LfL in the schools in Pakistan places this study in the conceptual knowledge domain. To be able to know the reality as it exists in the participating schools of Pakistan in the context of the research topic, and to investigate whether the initial area of research interest could yield important and valuable information, the study was conducted in two parts: the pilot and the main study. Considering the research aims and questions and my own philosophical stance, the research has a qualitative case study methodology in both parts of the research. Stake (1995), in his work on case study suggests researchers make their selection because the case is given. *“We are interested in it, not because studying it we learn about other cases or about some general problem but because we need to learn about that case. We have an intrinsic interest in that case”* (p.3). The concept of LfL highlights the importance of co-constructivism in the process of learning and places high importance on the active involvement of parents, students, headteachers and teachers besides other stakeholders in the process of learning (MacBeath et al., 2009). Highlighting the importance of stakeholders in the process of learning, Dahlberg et al. (2007) acknowledge that the participants are mostly *in a process of collaborative co-construction* (p.141). In line with it, the findings of the pilot study highlighted the importance of parents’ and students’ opinions and it was decided that the students’ and parents’ voice would be included in the main study. The pilot study explores how leadership and learning is conceptualized by different stakeholders in these schools within their specific context.

Working with the private and public schools which are quite different in terms of flexibility of policies and availability of physical resources in Pakistan, provokes an interest in me to explore the extent to which the concept of LfL that is contextual and adaptable might be useful to improve learning in both of these sectors. I have used a mixed methods approach to collect data using the six settings in public and private schools in three big cities of Pakistan. The sample was purposive and was selected based on certain similarities such as basic infrastructure, physical resources, student numbers and age group in these schools as well as based on certain variations such as geographical locations to have diversity in data. In order to enhance the authenticity in the findings through triangulation in the design, data was collected from different sources through interviews, questionnaires and documentary analysis. As Scott and Usher (1999) state, using documentary analysis with other sources produces rich data. This approach maximises the scope of inclusion of information through different sources and from different stakeholders. Six headteachers and thirty teachers in the main study were interviewed; in each of the schools sixty questionnaires to parents and similarly to students were given. School calendars, newsletters, log books and teachers' lesson plans were analysed in these schools as part of the study.

Qualitative research is usually under frequent criticism by many for its inability to claim and establish validity and reliability because data obtained through in-depth interviews, questionnaires or documentary analysis might be seen to be atypical rather than representative. However, using a mixed method approach to collect and analyse data enhances design triangulation in the research making my claim in line with many others (Gronn, 2000; Gunter

and Ribbins, 2003) who argue that this kind of research enables the development of a knowledge base that is relatable to the experiences of others and provides better understanding of the subject under research to all concerned. This strategy brings rich data that informs the study as Dahlberg et al. (2007) claim that “*a deep theoretical perspective combined with experience from practice opens up beneficial possibilities for dialogue and confrontation*” (p.142). The research methods in the study created a closer relationship for interaction among participants and researchers than the methods employed in any quantitative study with a limited, tightly structured environment. The data is analysed question by question where findings are reported in themes relating to the research questions and are supported by tables and quotations and inferences from informants and different documents. The findings highlight theoretical and methodological issues linking with the research questions and the literature reviewed. Based on the analysis of the findings, conclusions are drawn with implications for practitioners and researchers.

## **1.5 Structure**

This thesis is divided into five parts. The first part, Chapter One presents the introduction, places the research in the context with rationale and aims of the study and provides the conceptual framework and research design. Part two, Chapters Two, Three and Four, discusses the literature and conceptual framework that underpins this study. The third part, Chapter Five, presents the research design in this study with a focus on the philosophical stance, methodology, research methods, data analysis and ethical considerations. Part four, Chapters Six and Seven, presents findings and analysis question by question under emerging

themes. Finally, in the fifth part, Chapter Eight, conclusions are drawn in the light of findings and outcomes of the research as described in the previous part of the research. The chapter finishes by suggesting further research work which could be done in this area and recommendations for the consideration of leaders and policy makers to bring improvements in the existing practices.

## **PART TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Introduction to Chapters Two, Three and Four**

This part of research draws upon a wide range of literature in a systematic way according to the aims of the study. The five research questions provide a structure in the study. The first two research questions are intended to bring the literature into focus by linking the theoretical background to the research's main area of interest: LfL. Likewise, questions three, four and five are “road signs” for data collection to make recommendations whereas empirical data is used to augment and modify the existing concept of LfL in schools according to the Pakistani context.

The concept of LfL as introduced in the Carpe Vitam LfL Model (MacBeath et al., 2009) is explored in this study in six schools in Pakistan. The initial search around the generic themes of leadership and learning in schools highlighted the keywords that helped in making a more systematic search of the literature. During the literature review, certain concepts about the leadership approach, organizational culture, learning theories, role of leaders and other stakeholders emerged as important components of the concept. Books were selected from catalogues and databases of different libraries accordingly. Keywords were entered into the internet databases and e-resources to access the relevant material and literature available across the world. The strategy proved to be useful as many of the researchers' and authors' names could be identified who have worked in the area relevant to the study. Government

reports, policy documents and literature from relevant departments and agencies, for example, Department for Education and Skills (DfES) UK, the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) UK, were reviewed. The literature was explored making use of all the possible resources. Alert accounts were set up on ZETOC and British Education Index to receive notification about any new addition related to the topic. Names of many journals and authors were uploaded in the alert catalogue. Citation, referencing and abstract databases on different portals and websites, for example: [www.informaworld.com](http://www.informaworld.com), [www.i.cite.bham.ac.uk](http://www.i.cite.bham.ac.uk) were explored. My registration at the LfL website: [www.leadershipforlearning.org.uk](http://www.leadershipforlearning.org.uk) and affiliation with the International Congress of School Effectiveness and Improvement (ICSEI) gave me the opportunity to remain updated about any on-going work presented in any international seminar or conference relevant to the study. As the literature review progressed, I could see relevant themes emerging as the key factors of the LfL which might complement or complicate the implementation of the concept. Access to different databases like the British Education Index and Illumina, e-books and e-journals and conference papers through Shibbolethid/Athens unlocked the gateway to an immensely rich literature.

To begin with, the concept of LfL is examined from the point of view of meaning and comprehensive definition in the first chapter of this part of the research, called 'The Concept '. Firstly, meaning of learning, learning process and different learning levels and abilities was conceptualized. Later, the idea of leadership was explored whether it is about position or process, role or responsibility, authority or delegation, ability or style. And the last part of this chapter explores the interplay between learning and leadership. It is investigated as to how the

concept of LfL is different from other similar concepts that revolve around leadership and learning. This wider picture helps identify the main factors constituting the concept. These factors are described in further detail in the second chapter called ‘The Constituents of the Concept’. The third chapter highlights different challenges which leaders may have to face while trying to implement the concept; this chapter is called ‘The Challenges and Risks Involved with the Concept of LfL’. Each of the chapters provides a detailed description of the topic under consideration following a thematic and systematic approach. According to the developing themes, chapters were further divided under subheadings.

## **CHAPTER TWO: THE CONCEPT**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter covers different features of the concept of LfL. It starts with ‘learning’. It presents an in depth description of various aspects of learning, from definition to the entire process that takes place in different levels in schools. Later on the literature about leadership is reviewed to understand if it is about few or about all, if it is about having authority or distributing the leadership and if it is about being an academic leader or administrator in schools. In the last part of this chapter, the interplay between leadership and learning is studied. The focus of the chapter is on understanding the concept of LfL and specifically on the characteristics of the LfL Carpe Vitam concept.

### **2.2 Learning about Learning at School**

*“The principal goal of education is to create men who are capable of doing new things, the second goal of education is to form minds which can be critical, can verify, and not accept everything they are offered”* (Piaget cited in Fisher, 1990: p.26).

Learning is the primary purpose of every single school in the world. Learning theories, for example of Piaget, Montessori and Dewey have been highly influential in their impact on practice whenever introduced with a focus on stages in child development. However, researchers, for example Egan (1997) and MacBeath et al. (2009), suggest a different way to understand learning as it is felt that the stage theories are doctrine and counterproductive. It is



suggested that the learning stage theories should be applied more fluidly to children's learning process that allows constant modifications in the ways of knowing as children or adults, building not so much on what we know but how we know (Egan, 1997). He proposes five modes of knowing and understanding that are developmental in approach with a focus and attempt to comprehend the world. Among those five modes, somatic understanding, being the primitive form of interpreting the world, is a representational mode that may not rely on language but bodily sensation and rhythm to learn. Mythic understanding, where the world is understood in comparison of two, for example, good and bad, black and white through images and metaphors, and causality and relationship is understood. Romantic understanding stems out from the real world around us in which the exotic and the extreme may exert fascination. Philosophic understanding always looks for the hidden logical realities and truths. Ironical understanding involves mental flexibility. It is reflexive and inquisitive where individuals get to know how to make sense out of a non-sense. Egan claims that understanding grows better and all of these modes remain with every individual throughout his/her life enabling him/her to proceed ahead in life with confidence of knowing and being able to know. Given different educationists, learning is considered an ability and skill that can be developed according to three levels (Sternberg, 2002). In level 1 learning an improved practice for a certain task, for example, exam practice (mock exams) is achieved. Level 2 learning makes the learner perform well in real exams. In level 3 learning, students are helped to a positive attitude of mind that enables them to do well in what Edwards (2003) calls life's complex uncertainties which is quite similar to Egan's fifth level of learning that dwells on mental flexibility and reflectiveness of every individual to face unpredictability of changes in life.

The simple notion of learning being the core purpose of every school becomes complicated as literature challenges the simplicity of the process and link between schooling and learning. The findings of many researchers like Illich (1971), Gardner (1993), and LeDoux (1996) point out that learning is a far more complicated term than is generally assumed. They somehow contend that schooling is anti-learning and due to its limited resources, and other institutional constraints, it could also limit creativity and curiosity among learners. Schooling should be relevant to the needs and abilities of the learners of the twenty first century with minimal possible emphasis on quantifiable set standards and more on qualitative aspects. In comparison with this thought, Hopkins (2001) suggests that any school improvement procedures should emerge from classroom practices and their link with the world that stretches beyond these classrooms. Powerful teaching and learning is the heartland of authentic school improvement. Joyce and Showers (1995) say that successful teachers are not simply charismatic, persuasive and expert presenters rather they provide their students with cognitive and social tasks and guide them how to make productive use of them. It is also argued that age-related structured curriculum results in a compromise on the learning needs and interests of the students (Lewis, 2007). These concerns make the understanding of learning and learning process extremely important for those who lead schools. The next part explores what leadership is, how it is practiced and conceptualized in schools.

### 2.3 Learning about Leadership at School

Many researchers consider leadership an important factor in creation and maintenance of schools that make a difference and explore how leadership is practiced (Leithwood and Jantzi, 2005; Murphy et al., 2009; Leithwood et al., 2008; MacBeath and Dempster, 2009; Gronn, 2010 and 2011; Khan et al., 2009); how important the effects of leadership are in promoting and developing a collaborative learning environment in schools (Jones, 2000; Quinn, 2002); what the essential characteristics are of successful leadership which make the difference (Bennis, 2000; Day, 2004; Gurr et al., 2006). The literature highlights a paradigm shift in the concept from a single heroic position to a shared skill among many and highlights the difference between management and leadership tasks and activities in schools (Kotter, 1990). Earlier it was argued that single-handed, leaders could turn around organisations from failure to success and become heroes in their life time but that has a risk of becoming a positional power. The characteristics of such leaders have been considered as all knowing at all times, solving any problem and being primarily responsible for how things work (Bradford and Cohen, 1998). It is, however, argued that this type of leadership may lead to communication blockages, slow responsiveness to change, hierarchical decision making, rigid procedures and poor quality decisions and poor organizational learning as a whole. *“The leaders do not consider and acknowledge the abilities/talents of subordinates”* (p.19).

Over the past century a great deal has been argued and learned about leadership but there has not been a consensus on any one agreed definition of leadership. Yukl (2006) says that like all *“constructs in social sciences, the definition of leadership is arbitrary and very subjective”*

(p.46). Bush (1995) too, points to a variety of theories, several of which overlap, and adds that the discourse of leadership is confusing: “... *similar models are given different names, or in certain cases, the same term is used to denote different approaches*” (p.23). Relevant to the point, what Doyle and Smith (2001) say about the leadership seems more convincing, signifying it as an indefinable concept. It seems to be one of those qualities that one knows when one sees it, but which is difficult to describe.

Moving ahead to find more about good schools that have a passion to lead through better learning outcomes, educational researchers identify various factors and approaches. Handy (1993) considers identifying and selecting the best methods of co-ordination very important for leaders to maintain a collective control in response to changing times and changing needs of those they lead. The changing nature of the knowledge society brings new challenges for the educational institutions that are responsible for preparing citizens capable of responding and contributing to social as well as economic development in a local as well as global context (Charles, 2003, 2006; Smith, 2007; Gibb et al., 2009). The recent research describes leadership as an ability and skill to bring change for some shared objective through shared efforts. Yukl (2006) defines leadership as the ability to bring change by influencing others through shared vision that emerges from leaders’ ability to understand the context in which they work. According to Leithwood and Riehl (2003) leaders mobilise, motivate and work with others to achieve shared objectives.

Mortimore et al. (1988) and many other researchers describe leadership style as centrally important in successful schools (Hopkins et al., 1997, Clarke, 2000, 2001; Serf et al., 2009). Spillane (2006: p.16) maintains that the “*collaborative, democratic, participative or transformational are different approaches*” which leaders take on depending upon different circumstances and needs to make their working and intended outcomes achievable. Which is that leadership style that promotes learning? Gardner (1989) suggests a list of such traits; some of which are aspects of a person's behaviour, some are skills, and others are to do with intellectual ability. Bolman and Deal (1997) introduce the idea of conceptual pluralism “*against a jangling discord of multiple voices*” (p.11) for a shared vision by involving all in an organization that is dependent on leaders’ ability to adopt suitable styles according to the contextualised needs. Bush and Glover (2003) present eight models of leadership. It is questioned, however, if leadership can be confined to a list or limited characteristics of one person or group only? Based on this, Harris (2004b) comments that it seems unlikely to stick to one model only when there are different labels applied to the same conceptual terrain, such as instructional leadership, learner centred leadership and pedagogical leadership. Later on, Bush (2008) classifies the leadership theories and styles into nine categories ranging from managerial to instructional influenced by underpinning values of being democratic, collaborative or transformational. He concludes that there is “*no single all-embracing theory of educational leadership as being situated in diverse locations*” (p.9). He considers that group involvement in the decision-making process enhances school effectiveness with a democratic approach.

Waite (2002) points out different disagreements between researchers on leadership styles which he describes as “*paradigm wars*” (p.66). These paradigm wars highlight the notion that leadership is not a single entity. It is a process which is widely spread in an organization. This notion described as distributed leadership has appealed to many researchers in recent years (MacBeath and Mortimore, 2001; Bennett et al., 2003; Gronn, 2003; MacBeath and Moos, 2004a, 2004b, 2008; Lingard et al., 2003; O'Donoghue and Clarke, 2009). Leithwood and Duke (1999) describe the process as participative leadership which provides a chance to the group members to participate in decision-making. He further adds that leadership is available to all stakeholders as they are part of the decision-making process. According to Hopkins (1987) and Southworth (2002) learning outcomes are enhanced when there is a combination of visionary leadership with that of a collective decision-making process where teachers feel that their views are represented. Kyriacou (1986) and Harris (1999) point out similar responses of pupils in their research on effective teachers. She says that effective teachers, like effective leaders are adept at managing pupils, “*command their trust and hold high expectation of pupil achievement*” (Harris, 1999: p.94).

Many agree with the thought that collaboration, co-operation and collegial ways of working are predominantly important for any successful school, which requires a combination of different leadership skills and styles present in the team (Edmonds, 1979; Tyler, 1987; Joyce, 1991; Fullan and Hargreaves, 1991; Hargreaves, 1995; Stoll and Fink, 1994; Clarke, 2000; Springston, 2002; Cranston, 2007; Leithwood et al., 2006; Busher, 2006; Fullan, 2006; Fallon and Bennett, 2009). As Little (1990) suggests, “*collegial interaction at least lays the*

*groundwork for developing shared ideas and for generating forms of leadership that promote improvement”* (cited in Leithwood et al., 2006: p.50). Burton and Brundrett (2005) maintain that the teamwork and collegial interaction in educational institutions has reshaped the meaning and role of leadership, from being central to more collaborative and widespread to ensure improvement through learning and experimentation, leadership itself becomes central to learning.

## **2.4 Leadership for Learning**

Leadership and learning are two words that are the focus of a diverse range of studies in the world of academia. The interplay of these two words changes to a wide extent as we change the position of these two words, for example, leadership and learning, leadership in learning, learning for leadership and LfL. Advancement in the field of exploring the phenomenon of learning at different levels, and the role of leadership towards the accomplishment of the goal, makes it obvious to understand the relation between leadership and learning. As both of the terms used in the concept refer to a complicated and contextualised process, it is difficult to find a uniform definition of leadership for learning which may be acceptable as well as applicable across the world. However, the work of different researchers over the last three decades makes it obvious that not all leadership in schools is equal and a particular type of leadership is especially visible in high performing schools and school districts (Murphy et al., 2009). According to them, this type of leadership may best be labeled as ‘LfL’, ‘instructionally focused leadership’ or ‘leadership for school improvement.’ Elaborating their point, they claim that this type of leadership includes the ability of leaders “(a) to stay

*consistently focused on the right stuff, the core technology of schooling, or learning, teaching, curriculum and assessment and (b) to make all the other dimensions of schooling (e.g. administration, organization, finance) work in the service of a more robust core technology and improved student learning”* (p. 179). Furthering their point, they claim that in this type of leadership and learning, personal belief, attributes and skills have a direct impact on the outcomes.

Swaffield and MacBeath’s work (2009a), based on the Carpe Vitam LfL Project, claims to have a highly contextualized and flexible approach and identifies the importance of individuals’ beliefs and knowledge about learning. *“How we construe leadership for learning depends on our beliefs and understandings about leadership and about learning. If our conception is one that resides in a leader (in a school context the headteacher or principal), and if we believe that knowledge is transmitted or delivered from teacher to pupil, then LfL is about the headteacher ensuring that pupil learns what teacher teaches”* (p.33). Claxton (2002) provides a description of the factors relevant for teachers to improve learning making use of cognitive and behavioural responses of students and teachers in classrooms. He calls them the four Rs of learning: **r**esilience, **r**esourcefulness, **r**eflectiveness and **r**eciprocity. However, are these dispositions relevant to leadership as well, since both of these are much like a skill? He says, *“being able to stay calm, focused and engaged when you don’t know what to do is not merely a matter of training ... of course learning capacity is partly a matter of skill. But we also need a richer vocabulary that includes words like attitudes, dispositions, qualities, values, emotional tolerance and habits of mind”* (p.4). His work provides a strategy for teachers to improve learning outcomes in their classes with highly contextualized and



personalized perspectives. The question arises if these four Rs may also be used to enhance learning at other levels in schools. Can learning process of any kind and level be free of conscious or unconscious reflectiveness? Can this model be of use to professional and organizational learning besides individual learning? Can leaders make use of this model to promote learning in schools? The literature does not provide a clear answer to these questions. However, the description of LfL Carpe Vitam as explained by Swaffield and MacBeath (2009a and b) and Dempster (2009) highlights the importance of three key factors in LfL mentioned in the literature as purpose, agency and context. Swaffield and MacBeath (2009a and b) explain agency as *“the capacity to make a difference”* (p.46). They build on Frost (2006) who defines the concept of agency and purpose. *“Having an agency involves having a sense of self encompassing particular values and a cultural identity, and being able to pursue self-determined purposes and goals through self-conscious strategic action”* (p.20). The concept is similar to the process as identified by Claxton (2002) as four Rs for students’ learning. However, he introduces it as a sequential model where the human brain acts differently under each R (**r**esilience, **r**esourcefulness, **r**eflectiveness and **r**eciprocity). Can this approach be useful for learning at other levels in school? For self-conscious strategic action, will reflectiveness be an ongoing process? Will it be useful for school leaders whose roles are evolving with ever increasing expectations from schools?

Multifaceted responsibilities and demands that are an integral part of leadership make it a risky, unpredictable and not a typical story. Therefore besides agency and purpose, Dempster (2009) adds ‘context’ as the third important factor that influences leadership ability and

performance in every school which is also explained as social capital. Many theorists explain that social capital has three forms including ‘bonding’, ‘bridging’ and ‘linking’ (Granovetter, 1973; Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 1999). Bonding is based on fewer stronger connections among people. Bridging covers a maximum number of people and gels them together following a horizontal, collegial framework. Linking is like bridging but it is more hierarchical in structure.

In LfL, leadership and learning are conceived here as activities linking the centrality of human agency within a framework of moral purpose (Swaffield and MacBeath, 2009a and b). Human agency is interpreted as the capacity to make a difference through “*self-conscious strategic actions*” (Frost, 2006: p.20). The moral purpose refers to the underpinning values of learning process and leadership activity. These values shape the working and learning conditions in a school. Emerging from these three characteristics as identified in the Carpe Vitam Project, five principles of the concept were derived. These five principles include:

- maintaining a focus on learning as an activity;
- creating conditions favourable to learning as an activity;
- creating a dialogue about LfL;
- the sharing of leadership;
- a shared sense of responsibility and accountability.

MacBeath et al. (2009) provide a definition of the concept based on the Carpe Vitam Project. They say that LfL is “*a distinct form of educational practice that involves an explicit dialogue, maintaining a focus on learning, attending to the condition that favours learning*”

*and leadership that is both shared and accountable. Learning and leadership are conceived as activities linked by the certainty of human agency within a framework of moral purpose”* (p.42). However, it is emphasized that LfL definition is contextual and flexible. The definition highlights the concept of agency and purpose introduced by Frost (2006) as mentioned earlier. The definition emphasizes the way leadership is practiced in schools, which is also referred to as leadership style or agency, the importance of involvement of all, or co-constructivism and with moral purpose supported and developed in culture. The Carpe Vitam Project draws upon this framework to study how leadership is practiced to enhance learning in schools (Portin, 2009).

There is extensive work in literature which concludes that for an enhanced performance of school, the concept of capacity building predominantly emerges as a means of sustaining improvement (King and Newmann, 2001; Fullan, 2001; Hopkins and Jackson, 2003; Mitchell and Sackney, 2000; Mullins, 2005; Rizvi and Elliott, 2007). Central to the concept of capacity-building, it has been argued, is the notion of distributed leadership along with “*social cohesion and trust*” (Hopkins and Jackson, 2003: p.95) that is in line with the moral purpose and agency aspects within LfL. Highlighting the purpose, agency and context, Murphy et al. (2009: p.180) present a model framework for this type of leadership. The model suggests that leadership behaviour and capacity is shaped by four elements shown as experience, knowledge, personal characteristics and beliefs. These four elements have an influence on all aspects of learning in schools (Figure 1, p. 28).

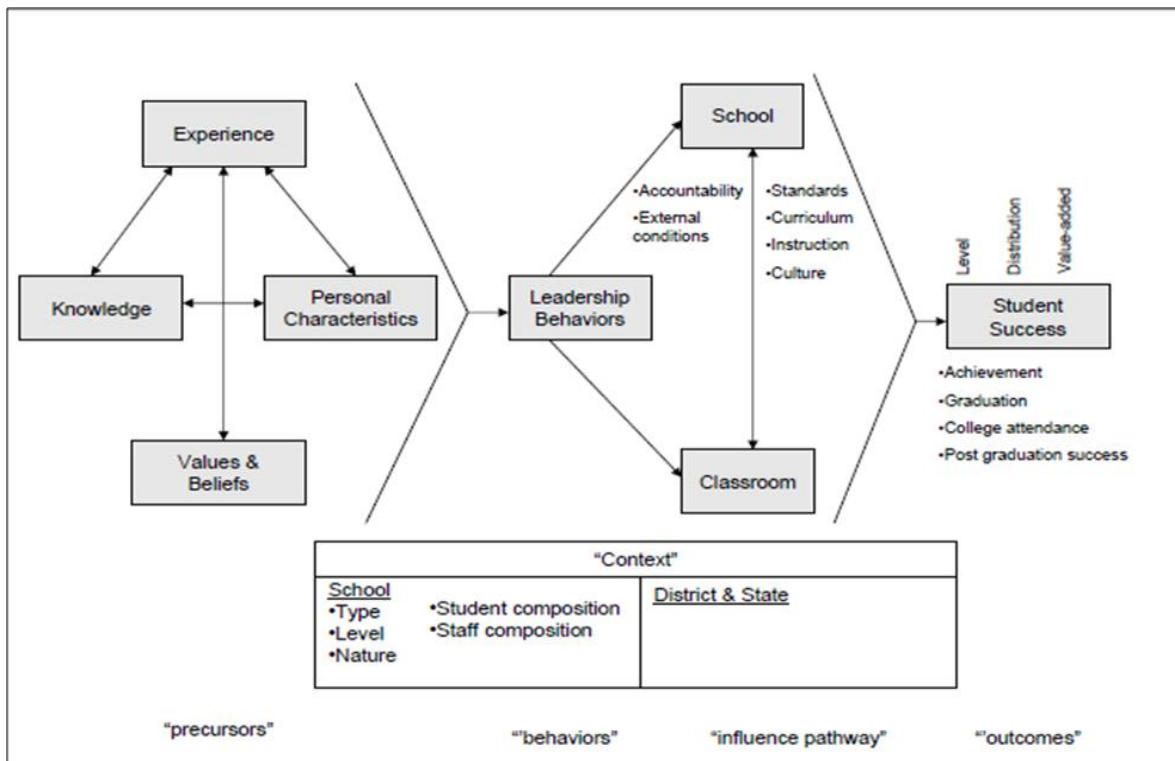


Figure 1: Learning Centered Leadership Framework (adapted from Murphy et al., 2009)

Similarly, the theoretical framework of Knapp et al. (2003) divides learning in an educational institution between three interacting groups and contexts: student learning (the core purpose of schools); professional learning, especially changes and growth in knowledge and skill on the part of teachers and other key school personnel; system learning, or the way that the organization itself adapts and responds to the challenges before it and in relation to the system's learning agenda. Leithwood et al. (2006) claim that leaders influence pupils' learning almost as classroom experiences do. The concept of 'influence' as explained by Yukl (2006) focuses more on influence of individuals than on other individuals as a group. He claimed that *"most definitions of leadership involve a social influence process whereby intentional influence is exerted by one person (or groups) over other people or groups"* (p.3). It can

perhaps be true that influence and its outcome stands out to be one of the most important factors and therefore considered important in LfL under the notion of purpose, agency and context as it forms the basis of various leadership concepts, styles or models. This leads to another set of questions in an organization like a school where teaching and learning goes side by side, as to what is the role of different stakeholders, can leadership be only about one role or is it a capacity within all involved in the process of learning? What is learning and does it only refer to students' performance or is it also about the entire organization? The work of different scholars tries to find answers to these questions (Hargreaves and Fink, 2006; Leithwood et al., 2008; Bush, 2008). Rhodes and Brundrett (2008, 2009 and 2010) comment that leaders' ability to understand the learning process in schools is pivotal. As with a better understanding of the phenomenon of learning at different levels in school and knowing the importance that resides in the role of leadership towards the success and effectiveness of a school makes the relationship between learning and leadership quite clear. Harris (2004b) investigates different types or forms of leadership in schools which maximize student learning and contribute towards school improvement. She seconds the earlier findings of Spillane et al., (2001) and Muijs and Harris (2003) promoting distributed leadership as an effective tool to maximise capacity of the institution at micro and macro levels but argues that literature is less clear on the form distributed leadership takes in schools and more work is required in the field.

Quite similar to the context factor in LfL that highlights the learning styles and abilities of students as being extremely diverse in schools, Fullan (2001) suggests that schools should use

a variety of teaching-learning methods. His idea of a collaborative community of practice appears essential for leading learning. To establish a collaborative learning environment, all stakeholders must be on board to plan, design and develop strategies. It becomes imperative for leadership to nurture such a collegial and collaborative environment in school. Some of the international examples of various researches affirm this certainty such as Leithwood and Jantzi (1999a and b) and Silins and Mulford (2002a and b). Comprehensive and systematic analysis of such evidence by Hallinger and Heck (1996 and 1999), Southworth (2004), Marzano et al. (2005) and Robinson (2007b) provide us with considerable confidence that a leader's ability to take all on board in the process of learning is a critical explanation for variation across schools in the level of pupil outcomes.

Fitzgerald and Gunter (2006) state that in successful schools, leadership focus remains on developing professional learning communities. In outlining reasons to highlight factors raising success for learning, leadership that develops the organization through empowerment catalysing useful change is considered as the most important factor. Many others describe the concept as organizational learning or a professional learning community. Learning organization has been defined in terms of different developmental, delegated and shared procedures resulting in individual change and sustainable competitive advantage with prospects of growth (De Geus, 1988; Simon, 1993; Weick, 1991). HM Inspectorate of Education (HMI) (1977) states that "*the most important factor in the success of any school is the 'leadership' in the school*" (p.36). Extensive work done by many investigators of school improvement and other researchers, returns to the simple fact that no such move is possible

without a capable leadership with an understanding of how effective learning takes place in school, which is the core purpose behind every school (Hopkins et al., 1997; MacGilchrist and Hopkins, 1998; Mortimore, 1993; Hopkins, 2001; HMIE, 2007; Gronn, 2011).

In spite of all the work in the West, Simkins et al. (1998) conclude that very scant research is available in developing countries like Pakistan investigating the importance of the role of educational leadership in terms of learning outcomes. For a long time, in countries such as Pakistan, a headteacher has been considered as an administrative member of the staff who is non-academic. However, the changing times have highlighted the importance of heads as instructional leaders in some schools of Pakistan (Raza, 2009), but Khan et al. (2009) caution that the quality of learning is deteriorating in the public schools of Punjab (Pakistan) as the leadership, being overloaded with many administrative tasks, is not actively involved in the pedagogical practices of the school. Agreeing with this, Maqbool (2011) says that the majority of the principals consider that school leadership is mainly responsible for management of the school; quality of learning is totally dependent on teachers' ability. Contrary to this, Berson et al. (2006) review theoretical work in the West relevant to the nexus of leadership with organizational learning. They suggest that leadership plays an important role at multiple levels within the context of organizational learning through sharing of responsibilities. Culture maintains the sustainability of the concept with a strong focus on nurturing the core values which encourage creativity and innovation but also ensure maintenance and continuity of the shared ethos with the commitment to lead (Hargreaves and Fink, 2004; Glover and Coleman, 2005; Busher, 2006; MacBeath and Dempster, 2009).

In synthesizing various perspectives on LfL it appears that the concept of co-constructivism emerges as a fundamental characteristic which is included in many of the relevant studies (Mumford et al., 2002; Mitsoni, 2006; HM Inspectorate of Education, 2007; Bezzina, 2008; MacBeath and Dempster, 2009; Rhodes et al., 2008 and 2009). For further developing the understanding of the concept of LfL, the remaining part of the chapter elaborates the core characteristic present in the generics of the concept as being co-constructivism.

#### **2.4.1 Co-Constructivism**

The on-going research in the field of education challenges traditional epistemological constructivism that stems from symbolic inter-actionist (Mead, 1934) and socio-cultural theory (Vygotsky, 1962), as a result of some very important questions which it raises about achieving inter-subjectivity (Chi, 1996; Brown et al., 1989; Bruner, 1986). These researchers find it confusing how different human beings or learners may reach the same or similar cognitive structures. They also investigate the influence of surrounding factors on the course of learning and challenge that learning cannot be a passive process. The researchers claim that learning is fundamentally a social activity. Contrary to constructivist theory, they say that learning and enculturation are not led by any one individual or one brain but are a result of social interaction, embedded in a society which is a mixture of belief, perspectives and knowledge. According to this philosophy which is called co-constructivism, human beings do not learn anything from one single person.



The literature, however, does not provide any one definition of the term co-constructivism in the process of learning but MacBeath et al. (2009) present some comparisons in terms of some underpinning factors which make this concept different from any other learning theories. These factors highlight three main characteristics:

(a) Different types of social discourses have a different impact on learning: (for example, parent-child dialogue, peer interaction, teacher and student interaction, learning in teams, project-based learning, learning through placements).

(b) Different teaching methodologies have different psychological effects which co-construct knowledge differently from each other. For example, processes involved in collaborative discussion after socio-cognitive conflict or productive exploratory talk and collective or tutoring and scaffolding.

(c) There may be expected and sometimes unexpected outcomes of collaboration in case any other interactive factors are overlooked: for example, academic task fulfilment, student motivation and conceptual development.

The basis of personal development no more resides in socially isolated construction of knowledge, but its co-construction takes place in a social and cultural space (MacBeath et al., 2009). Similarly, as Bruner (1986) states: *“Most learning in most settings is a communal*

*activity, a sharing of the culture. It is not just that the child must make his knowledge his own, but that he must make it his own in a community of those who share his sense of belonging to a culture*” (p.86). Knowledge, from this perspective, is no longer seen as solely coming out of any one person’s brain, but resides in its wider spread across individuals whose joint interactions and negotiations determine decisions and the solution of problems and encourage further growth of knowledge and learning (Cohen, 1994). Commenting on shared decision-making, Follett (1927) explains that *“the leader has not always the largest share in decision-making, and yet he may not thereby be any less the leader”* (p.257). As highlighted in the earlier part of the chapter, an impressive array of researchers from different parts of the world come to a consensus that leadership distribution does make a difference in the effectiveness of school. Freire (1990) concludes in his research that any one leader may not justify all of his decisions taken alone. For this reason, he advocates the practice of *“co-intentional education”* where leaders and the led are busy exploring the existing realities but may also create and recreate knowledge. Spillane (2006) also emphasizes the similar thought under the *“concept of co-performance”* (p.59) in decision-making through a democratic way of working and sharing the leadership. He argues that leadership must be prevalent at *all levels* among teachers and all other stakeholders to establish a *“conceptual pluralism”* (Bolman and Deal, 1997) towards a shared vision about learning and learning outcomes (Kohm and Nance, 2009). Advocating co-ordinated and collaborated efforts, Spillane (2006) cautions that done otherwise allows for *“the possibility that those performing the routine might, intentionally or unintentionally, pursue different or even contrary goals”* (p.59).

In a study, Reich (2007) recommends John Dewey's work as a pragmatic turn in education which still gives orientation to educational goals, methods, and practices. Taking his notion further, Reich introduces the idea of "*interactive constructivism*" in education where teachers and learners explore, invent and co-construct meanings of existing or new knowledge. This typology is similar to what Hopkins (2001) and Watkins (2003), as mentioned earlier, have discussed in their work. They give a lot of emphasis to experience and the concept of democracy in education where teachers and learners are equally important to decide the process of learning. Lingard et al. (2003) also highlight the importance of the collective and combined contribution of everyone linked with students and schools from leaders, teachers, students and community to parents for improvement in learning. This type of shared and collective effort results in what they call "*productive leadership*". As discussed in the earlier part of the literature review, different researchers' work indicates the importance of a co-constructivist approach by integrating the teacher centred and student centred approaches together (Biggs, 1992; Broadfoot, 2000 and 2001; Shayer and Adey, 2002; Blase and Blase, 2004; Rhodes and Brundrett, 2010).

Hopkins (2001) says that learning experiences are combinations of content, process and social climate. Hopkins has identified three main areas of collaboration as mandatory for the completion of the process of learning. He identifies them as the content (the syllabus and course content), process (classroom practices) and social climate (interactions and environment existing in and outside the class). Involvement, interaction and contribution from all three levels make the process of learning complete. Watkins (2003) presents three models

of the learning process as being instruction, construction and co-construction. In the first level called instruction, “*learning is taught*”. According to Watkins, this level remains concerned with quantity, essential facts and skills; often dependent on transmission of knowledge from an external source (for example, the teacher). “*Learners*” remain mostly passive here. The next level, called construction, is concerned with the learners’ construction of meaning through discovering, open-ended learning, and making connections. Learners seem to be engaged in the process of learning. The third level is concerned with the learners’ construction of meaning through interaction and collaboration with others, especially through dialogue. This type of learning is an integration of content, process and social climate that puts “*the power into powerful learning experience*” (Hopkins, 2001: p.73). The question arises as to how co-constructivism integration is actually established in school. Is the learning process only about classroom experiences where teachers are the main designers of the process or does it involve learning at different levels in school where each other’s knowledge and involvement in this process can make it more effective? Are the four Rs in Claxton’s (2002) work used to create co-constructivism? It is argued that leadership has a direct impact on this co-constructivist approach in teaching-learning practices (Rhodes et al., 2009; Swaffield, 2009; Swaffield and MacBeath, 2009a; Leithwood, 2006). The term learning-centred education refers to pedagogical philosophy and practices in which all of the educational objectives, plans and procedures are designed and implemented in such a fashion that make the learner and learning the principal focus (Freire, 1973; Boyatzis et al., 1995; Bilimoria and Wheeler, 1995; Southworth, 2004; Rhodes et al., 2009).

Agreeing with Senge's (1990) discussion in *The Fifth Discipline*, many of the contemporary researchers in educational leadership and management recommend that schools should become learning organizations in a socially constructed and interdependent environment which is continuously changing (Fullan, 1993; Leithwood and Louis, 1998; Mitchell and Sackney, 2000; Lauder et al., 2008 and 2009; Ashton et al., 2009). Brown and Lauder (2001) maintain that schools which have a focus on learning become habitats of learning communities which work with a shared vision and collective intelligence for continuous improvement (Deming, 1986). A system thinking approach enables the stakeholders to see the bigger picture of their organizations analysing the importance of moving from the part to the whole. This environment nurtures a co-constructed learning ethos in the organization keeping the individual's personal, interpersonal and other social interaction in view where schools have learning at different levels (Zaleznik, 1997; Mitchell and Sackney, 2000; Stöcklin, 2010).

Southworth (2004) divides learning into six levels moving from micro (pupil level) to macro (learning networks level) as the pupil level, the teacher level, the collaborative staff level, the organizational learning level, the leadership learning level and finally the learning networks level. Rhodes et al. (2009) give an interesting illustration of how leaders may respond to each level differently based on the inter-subjectivity. At the pupil level, leaders may want to make interventions based on the data of learning outcomes. At the teachers' level of learning, the leader may provide opportunities of professional development through mentoring. In the next level, the leaders institutionalize and develop systems of collaborative staff development that promote culture for learning in schools. In the organizational learning level, a culture of trust

and openness prevails establishing a learning community within school. In the next level of learning, wider promotion of LfL at all levels takes place. Leaders themselves like to be the lead learners. In the sixth level, networking for learning takes place. This networking may be intra or inter organizational. This interpretation clearly denotes the importance of the role of leader interaction at all levels of learning. Hallinger and Heck (1999) state that learning centred leaders' influence may be direct, "*reciprocal*" or indirect, but it is definitely there. Referring to Knapp et al.'s (2003) three tiered model of learning, Swaffield (2009) adds system learning as the fourth tier to already existing levels of student learning, professional learning and school learning in the LfL model. The important aspect of the model is the interconnected flow of activities that gives a boost to the learning outcomes at each level. The imperative aspect of the model is the continuity of the learning phenomenon, involving everyone from students to leaders as co-constructivists to see the entire learning as an essential socio-cultural interaction; every one continues to negotiate and re-negotiate the known and unknown towards a collective conceptualism. This particular aspect of the learning environment, where everyone is a lead learner and shares the LfL at the same time, makes this concept different from many other school improvement and school effectiveness themes (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009; Johnson, 2007). LfL is a process of developing and maintaining a high performance learning environment that ensures sustainability in the system (Gronn, 2006; Fullan, 2006; Giles and Hargreaves, 2006; Hargreaves and Fink, 2006).

## 2.5 Summary

The chapter provides an introduction to the concepts of leadership, learning and LfL. It provides a wider picture of these concepts that highlights the importance of the context, moral aspect and agency in the process. No work in the literature explains how the process is conceptualized in a developing country like Pakistan. Therefore the study might contribute to the existing knowledge in this area by exploring how leadership and learning are conceptualized in Pakistan. The literature suggests there is no one definition of LfL available. This distributed perspective of leadership provides a chance to all in schools to become partners in the process of learning with a co-constructivist approach. LfL promotes the idea of learning at different levels in school but co-constructivism is considered important in this regard. Do schools in Pakistan have a learning environment that is based on co-constructivism and promotes learning at different levels or is it only teacher led classroom activities? Claxton's (2002) four Rs model to improve learning outcomes among students is appreciated in the literature about LfL for being pragmatic and improving students' learning but can the model be used for improving learning at all levels? Co-constructivism in LfL takes place when social interactions and contexts of different actors shape and form knowledge. The general description of the concept highlights the importance of certain underpinning factors as the main principles or the constituents of the concept which are explored in detail in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER THREE: THE CONSTITUENTS OF THE CONCEPT**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This section discusses the key components that constitute the whole concept of LfL as introduced in the Carpe Vitam Project (MacBeath et al., 2009). Frost (2009) presents five ‘principles’ of the concept of LfL. The proponents of the concept present these constituents as a progressive set of principles shaped by a conceptual framework as emerged from the Carpe Vitam Project (MacBeath et al., 2009). Although these principles have been identified in the Carpe Vitam Project of LfL, other studies gleaned from the literature also present similar arguments about learning, leadership and learning communities in effective and successful schools (Mitchell and Sackney, 2000; Knapp et al., 2003). The chapter provides a comprehensive literature review about these key components in the LfL and other studies accordingly.

### **3.2 The Five Principles - Key Components of the LfL**

The five principles identified in the Carpe Vitam Project create a deeper and broader meaning of LfL in school. These principles aim at:

1. Improving learning in schools.
2. Creating an environment for learning.
3. Having a dialogue for learning.



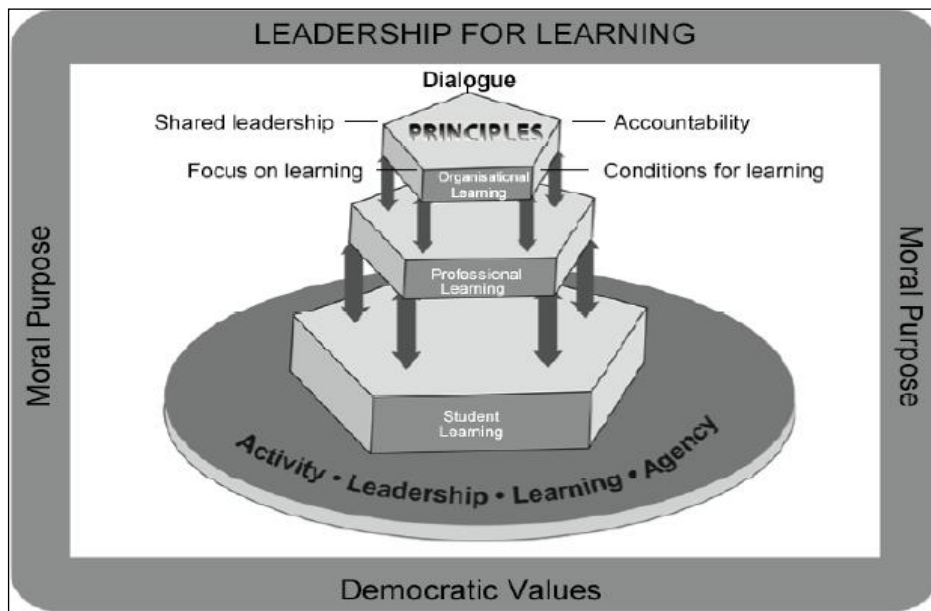
4. Sharing leadership.
5. Sharing accountability.

Literature provides similar components in other studies that were considered important to enhance leadership and learning effectiveness in schools. Georgopoulos and Tannenbaum (1957) identify characteristics of an effective educational system consisting of a social system supported by certain means and resources in a collaborative and motivated environment. This criterion resonates with some of the principles of the concept of LfL that demand for a shared vision, collaborated efforts in an environment that supports learning. Edmonds (1979) concludes in his research project that effective schools possess certain characteristics that enhance learning outcomes. These characteristics, known as the 'Effective School Correlates', highlight the importance of a strong instructional leader in the school environment that is conducive to learning. Students and teachers feel safe at school in order to concentrate on teaching and learning. Effective schools are characterized by high academic emphasis. Similarly, Mortimore et al. (1988) present key characteristics of effective schools that highlight the interplay of leadership and learning, but involvement level of the different actors, particularly of students, have not been explained in this model. Reynolds (2010 and 1991) claims that the strategies to enhance learning through capacity building of schools must be based on an understanding of the educational system, which can be explained by the characteristics of the actors at different levels and intention behind each action taken. These findings are close to the idea of context, agency and moral purpose of the Carpe Vitam LfL

concept. Reynolds (2010) puts forward three basic questions as a diagnostic measure to assess the role and responsibility in every school. These questions include:

- Who, at what level is initiating the improvement?
- Who on what level is involved?
- Who is aiming at what objectives?

Agreeing with this, many researchers have argued that the role of leadership should be reconceptualized as it is not about delegation or doing managerial tasks only (Cuban, 1988; Hallinger and Heck, 1999). Although similar conclusions were drawn in other studies as well, however, it is argued that teachers and school principals may embrace new ideas with enthusiasm but have difficulty translating these into coherent action without the requisite tools and comprehensive description of the entire phenomenon and its characteristics; hence the concept of agency in LfL seems important in this regard. Can Claxton's (2002) four Rs be a tool here for leaders in schools? Can different levels of learning as identified in the earlier studies in the West (Watkins, 2003; Southworth, 2004) be used to identify these levels in schools in Pakistan? The LfL concept envisages these characteristics more profoundly and systematically by introducing them as 'principles'. These principles are interlinked with each other in a 'wedding cake' representation of interconnected layers of learning incorporating the leadership and learning as activity through agency, all framed by moral purpose and democratic values (Swaffield and MacBeath, 2009b) as shown in Figure 2 (p. 43).



*Figure 2: LfL Carpe Vitam Project - An Integrated Model  
(adapted from Swaffield and MacBeath, 2009b)*

This model of LfL has a layer of student learning, professional learning and organizational learning. At every level of learning, the five principles of the concept are applicable. The interesting and important aspect of this model is that the activity takes place in this model on a horizontal as well as vertical level with an upwards as well as downwards flow of learning which is a highly contextualised perspective. However, will it be important as suggested by Reynolds (2010), to identify the level and ability of all involved to have knowledge of self, others in and out of organizations in the process of LfL, as the current model has a scope of further research on this aspect? His work resonates with the findings of Bandura (1989) that suggests the importance of this kind of awareness to enhance efficacy. Walker and Dimmock (2002) and Walker and Leary (2009) highlight the importance of structural and operational support and connectors in the organization to make interflow of knowledge meaningful. The five principles mentioned above are considered pivotal as they ensure a smooth flow of

activity within this model. The next part of this literature review chapter describes five principles in detail and presents a review of the relevant literature.

### **3.3 First Principle: A Focus on Learning**

Schools have always been entrusted with the task of education. However, different studies in the literature question the effectiveness of the process through which children learn at school. Rhodes and Brundrett (2009 and 2010) argue that for a long time ‘learning’ and the whole phenomenon associated with learning at schools has been interpreted in the literature with different theories in terms of classroom practices being student-centered or teacher-centered or examination results being the main performance indicator. Many researchers indicate a paradigm shift away from teaching to an emphasis on learning that has encouraged the focus of education to be moved from ‘teaching’ to ‘learning’ with student led classroom practices (Brooks, 1995; Knowles, 1975; Taylor, 2000; Hayward and Dewey cited in O’Sullivan; 2003). Rhodes and Brundrett (2010) maintain that a student-centered approach offers a ‘bottom up’ experience to the learners whereas a teacher-centered methodology holds a ‘top down’ strategy.

It is claimed that the schools that make a difference have leaders who are passionate about the development, implementation and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the entire school (Murphy, 2002; Murphy et al., 2009). What is learning for different stakeholders? What does it mean to have a focus on learning? Is this about learning of students only or does it involve professional learning as well? Research shows that school

heads in effective schools spend more time in the direct classroom supervision and support of teachers, solving instructional problems collaboratively and providing staff development activities (Heck et al., 1990; Southworth, 2002; Stein and Spillane, 2005). Although some promulgate that instructional leadership and the movement of school improvement have inherent limitations as they focus more on principal leadership instead of the contemporary notion of a widespread flow of leadership among teachers and students, it is also argued that the concept of instruction has a focus on teaching instead of learning in schools. It is argued that leadership should exist at different levels as an activity in the school and its focus should not be on teaching but on learning at all levels (MacBeath et al., 2009; Murphy et al., 2009; Spillane et al., 2001).

The focus on learning in LfL is wider and multi-level. The wedding cake format of the LfL model (Figure 2, p. 43) suggests that learning focus is interactive at all levels of the concept. It starts with the focus on students' learning and moves to professional learning of the staff. This learning leads to the next two levels called organizational learning. Teaching is the most common routine in every school but questions arise whether teaching has a focus on learning. Do teachers really follow and implement the vision of their leaders to improve their pedagogy in response to students' learning? Black and William (1998) found that:

*“Teachers will not take up attractive sounding ideas, albeit based on extensive research, if these are presented as general principles which leave entirely to them the task of translating them into everyday practice”*(Black and William, 1998: p.15).

Teachers who modify their pedagogy in response to students' learning as an indicator of their performance and are keen to explore students' potentials and expositions, have a focus on learning (Leithwood and Jantzi, 1997 and 2005; Stephen et al., 2007; MacBeath et al., 2009). Teaching and learning are two interdependent factors which are often unpredictable, non-prescriptive and require skilled supervision as well:

*“The observation of such an aesthetic performance, one that is subtle and complex, would require an equally subtle and complex theory of supervision” (Kelehear, 2008: p.240).*

It is acknowledged that teachers, who have a focus on learning, appreciate the importance of dialogue such as between students and teachers or teachers and leaders. Biggs and Moore (1993) assert that teachers who have the focus on learning invite dialogue and critical reflection for conceptual exploration. This thinking from inside as suggested by MacBeath et al. (2009) enables teachers and students to create resonance. Non-existence of such an activity may create dissonance with the classroom activities, curriculum content and discussion. The more they could relate to it, the more effective would be the learning process. Whether it is a student, teacher or organizational leader, effectiveness is linked partially with reflective practice which is an important R out of four as highlighted by Claxton (2002). Furthering the concept it is argued that:

*“exploring children's misconceptions provides a fund of examples and anecdotes and every teacher can tell their own stories of how children get it wrong and then build subsequent*

*knowledge on misconceived premises ... exploring those mutual misconceptions can take pupils and teachers a long way in their learning journey” (MacBeath et al., 2009,p.75).*

Galton (2007) recommends that teachers and learners should be given, what he calls, wait time to reflect on their understanding or misconceptions. The more the students understand about their own learning and the more teachers do about their own teaching, lesser becomes the gap between what is taught and what is learnt. He builds on Drummond (1993) and suggests that teachers can assess their teaching through assessing students’ responses in homework, assignments and daily classroom activities. The more they find students involved with a positive approach, the more successful will be the process of learning. Starratt (2004) suggests that in order to establish such links, the learning agenda must coincide with the moral agenda of the children and teachers in schools. This concept is in line with the viewpoint of Waters et al. (2003) who suggest that if the pedagogy strategically inhibits a participative and exploratory style where intentional efforts are made to know the learners, their socioeconomic exposures, their personal traits, teachers, students, parents and leaders become partners with each other. When this ‘knowing’ culture is established, individuals willingly proceed to make meaning of the different events and their relationships with real life experiences (Smith, 2007). As teachers have a focus on students’ learning, it seems obvious that they have a focus on their own learning as well. The first principle of LfL applies to teachers as well in the same manner as it applies to students (MacBeath et al., 2009).

As explained earlier, this type of ‘subtle performance’ is only possible if the learning focus is also kept on the professional learning of all those who ‘supervise’ and facilitate learning in schools (Kelehear, 2008). Different studies consistently highlight the quality of teachers as a key determinant of variation in students’ learning outcomes. Therefore, all of these studies concede that learning focus in every school must also include professional learning of teachers (Darling-Hammond, 1988; Darling-Hammond and Richardson, 2009; Kelehear, 2008). These studies assert that teachers must have a deep understanding of their learners’ needs, abilities and potential of the subject area. The literature also affirms that engaging teachers in high quality professional learning transforms many of them into teacher leaders within their organization. Teacher empowerment is considered by many as the most successful way to improve teacher effectiveness (Elmore and Burney, 1999; Vernon-Dotson et al., 2009; Elmore, 2002; Hollingworth, 2012).

Furthermore, these studies assert that schools must keep abreast of the pace of change in the learning process through which young learners need to be educated. This requires new knowledge about teaching and learning, new types of expertise by educators. Teachers must continually update their conceptual and pedagogical skills. The growing evidence base about student learning forms a compelling case for engaging teachers in highly effective professional learning and collaborative efforts and has profound implications for what is taught, how it is taught, and how learning is assessed (MacBeath et al., 2009). An environment of trust and collaboration is essential, as is a shared vision of where the school needs to go. This focus on learning among students and teachers takes any school to the wider



level of organizational learning which is the third level in the wedding cake model of LfL (MacBeath et al., 2009). Collinson and Cook (2007) assert that any move to bring improvement in schools is interlinked with its ability to bridge the gaps between teaching, learning and organizational learning needs. This collaborative focus on organizational learning can cover the journey from good to great.

Argyris and Schön (1978) link such organizational practice of an interactive process of action and reflection with the concept of single-loop learning and double-loop learning. Single loop learning refers to the managerial, quantifiable tasks that are linked with audit, calculation, evaluation, standardisations and which Cousins (1996) refers to as competency traps. These, according to him, may cause delusion in an organization about its effectiveness in real learning. A focus on real learning comes when an organization enters double loop thinking and challenges its practices. According to MacBeath et al. (2009), real learning implies risks. It is concerned with the qualitative aspects of an organization, with its values and purpose, truth and validity, summative and formative assessments, all striving to qualify within the second loop through genuine and regular reflection on their routine practices. Learning, then as Cousins (1996) argues, flows from organizational sense making of solving problems together and as a leadership approach to promote and develop collaboration. It enables an organization to appreciate the consistency of routines, but also warns of the consistency traps and status quos. Organizations look for diversity of experiences and learn from opinions emerging from inconsistencies. Argyris and Schön (1978) assert that valuing consistencies can make an organization competent but valuing inconsistencies can make an organization learn

more which is fundamental in an organization like school. A fourth level of this focus on learning is wider in scope as it goes beyond one school to system learning as Swaffield and MacBeath et al. (2009a) suggest. This is the level where policy matters can be decided and frame of work can be established. At this level, interschool, school-community, school-market co-operation and networking takes place. This type of focus on learning looks for the real understanding of the purpose of learning and benefits of collaboration and sharing (MacBeath et al., 2009; Muijs, 2010). In line with Hadfield (2006), studies of Muijs (2010) and Hadfield and Jopling (2011) argue that collaboration and networking are emerging as a strong school improvement strategy. A focus on system learning displays three dimensional features being of a calculative ‘what’s in it for me/us’ culture; and that of a moral culture demanding commitment for ‘the shared benefit’ and of the network or an obligation to the initiative itself. Working with different agencies or on an interschool basis, teachers and students learn to work in a more diversified environment. It gives them a chance to assess their abilities beyond classroom routines and formal assessments.

The first principle explains how a focus on breadth and depth of learning is maintained in LfL and how it is conceptualized. The next principle of the concept explores how an environment can be established that ensures and enhances learning at all levels within the model of LfL.

### **3.4 Second Principle: An Environment for Learning**

Andrews (2006, cited in Vivienne, 2008) argues that learning what is necessary to live, cannot be untangled from living in a manner that allows one to learn. Learning and living, according to him, are inextricably connected. The idea that every school should have an environment for learning is a simple but fundamental concept that needs to be the prime focus of all schools. Hargreaves and Woods (1984) suggest three aspects that can establish a learning environment in schools. They consider that schools should inculcate three types of skills among learners; personal and social skills, practical and professional skills and examination skills. They consider that a school culture must support learning through appreciating and motivating all those involved in learning. As the LfL fosters upon distributional perspective of leadership, it is seen as a means to capacity building of all the stakeholders and the school (Hargreaves and Fink, 2004; Leithwood et al., 2006; MacBeath, 2005; MacBeath and Dempster, 2009; Swaffield and MacBeath, 2009a and b). The scheme of works in distributed leadership may be linked with the organizational theory developed in McGregor's (1960) theory: X and Y related to human motivation. McGregor suggests that theory X leaders view people as passive, work avoidant, and smartly opportunists. They are to 'be led' with tight controls, close supervision, and heavily centralized authority with very limited opportunity to participate in decision-making. Theory Y leaders, by contrast, believe that people are responsible and willing to take initiative. The co-constructivist approach prevalent in the LfL is strongly influenced by the interconnected factors related to human motivation. Hence, Copland (2003) suggests that for building and sustaining capacity for leadership with a distributed perspective, one needs to be more towards theory Y. The concept is considered fundamental to a whole generation of

scholarship in educational leadership on establishing a highly interactive motivated, working environment within an organization (Sarason, 1993; Berkowitz, 1996; Bronfenbrenner, 1986; Fyson, 1999; De Leon, 2000; Moos, 2002 and 2008; Martin and Dowson, 2009). Do organizations have only one type of people in them or is there a mix? Can organizations divide their people straight forwardly into these two categories? Can leaders motivate their team members effectively in schools in Pakistan? Literature does not provide any clarification on these emerging thoughts.

It is felt that schools need to prioritize learning for all members that fosters inquiry, facilitates dissemination of learning through practicing democratic principles and providing for members' self-fulfilment (Collinson and Cook, 2007). Although many schools, according to them, are implementing fragments of these conditions. For example, some of them establish or join professional learning communities; others focus more on teamwork, without linking them to organizational learning. The absence of a linkage to an overarching theory may turn these fragments of a deficient focus on learning into simply unrelated fads that impinge on their already limited time. Their findings strongly advocate that efforts to create a learning environment in schools must be co-ordinated and integrated with the organizational learning. It is argued that leadership should take time and give time to reflect on the practices of teaching and learning in schools. Dempster and Bagakis (2009) outline the value of engaging students in reflective practices that “*contribute to their development of understanding learning*” (Dempster and Bagakis, 2009: p.95). MacBeath et al. (2009) argue that:

*“...mutual observation of classroom life and shared discussion of pupils’ work is an important part of refining professional practice for teachers...”* (MacBeath et al., 2009: p.76).

Davies et al. (2005) highlight the importance of educational leaders *dedicating time for themselves and others for reflection*. They suggest that reflection develops strategic thinking and new mental models for understanding the educational environment in a better way. Among different factors that establish such an environment in schools, culture has been considered a key factor. It is argued that learning environment in any organization is influenced by many factors which can be classified into three main categories, of which two are classroom based including pedagogical approaches and skills as well as learning behaviour, and the third based outside the classroom being socioeconomic status of the society, teachers, students and organizations. Collinson and Cook (2007) also conclude their study on similar findings and report that both individual learning and purposeful organizational learning are necessary. Literature highlights other factors of the learning environment including innovation and inquiry, creation and dissemination of knowledge among ‘knowledge workers’ (Drucker, 1994), and a responsibility to support new thinking and behaviours in the interest of promoting learning, respectful human relationships and development of members (Golman, 2006). Similar to these are the five prompts of learning environment as presented by Dempster and Bagakis (2009) in the second principle of LfL. They consider classroom activities, opportunities of development for all at school, safe physical environment, parental involvement and school culture as important prompts for learning environment in schools. Leaders in schools take the responsibility for creating the

learning environment by extending support for organizational capacity by creating an environment that promotes innovation, inquiry and shared understandings. The leaders play an important role in establishing an environment conducive to organizational learning.

Dempster and Bagakis (2009) suggest that all of those involved in learning should have opportunities to reflect on their skills and process of learning in school. It highlights the need of professional learning among teachers and leaders in school besides having a focus on students' learning. New understanding of leadership takes the emphasis away from individual leaders toward a notion of distributed leadership that is embedded in social action through relationships among individuals who have common interests and uphold a process of inquiry, innovation and learning. Also important to the idea of shared leadership and continuous improvement is "*logic of attraction that people are attracted to or inspired by changes in leaders' behaviours*" (Weick and Quinn, 1999: p.380).

It is suggested that to engage this logic of attraction, leaders must first make deep changes in themselves. When deep personal change occurs, leaders then behave differently, and these new behaviours in the leaders attract new behaviours from followers. Thus many researchers argue, like Bush et al. (2010), Bush (2009, 2011) and Harris (2004a and b), that a focus on leadership development is integral to effectiveness of learning at school in all different levels. As these leaders develop professionally, their focus on learning gets stronger and "*... serves as a catalyst for unleashing the potential capacities that already exist in the organisation*" (Leithwood et al., 2006: p.5) or can be developed through consistent professional development of teachers incorporated in the school development plan, nurturing staff self-efficacy and

motivation and through improving the physical working conditions for staff and students.

Hirst (1974) asserts that teachers should be prepared with a vision that:

*“... the intention of all of teaching activities is that of bringing about learning”*. Furthering his point, he says *“the concept of teaching is totally unintelligible without a grasp of the concept of learning”* (Hirst, 1974: p.105).

Drawing on his work, many researchers advocated the idea of learning centred classroom practices and teachers’ professional development for that. Teachers should have knowledge of how learners learn (Bruner, 1996). He outlines four models of what teachers should learn about the way learners learn. He suggests that teachers should learn the power of imitation and didactic approach as a teaching resource. They should also have the knowledge of what Bruner calls ‘pedagogy of mutuality’ and what Bolman and Deal (1997) suggest as conceptual plurism. Teachers take learners as a partner to contribute to knowledge with a co-constructivist approach. Bruner’s fourth model is one that enables pupils to distinguish between personal and canonical knowledge, it is linked with the ontology and epistemological stance of the learner. Summing up the four approaches, he concludes that:

*“nobody can sensibly propose that skills and cultivated abilities are unimportant. Nor can they argue that the accumulation of factual knowledge is trivial. No sensible critic would ever claim that children should not become aware that knowledge is dependent upon perspective and that we share and negotiate our perspectives in the knowledge seeking process. And it would take a bigot to deny that we become richer for recognizing the link between reliable*

*knowledge from the past and what we learn in the present. What is needed is that the four perspectives be focussed into some congruent unity, recognised as part of a common commitment” (Bruner, 1996: p.65).*

This sets the direction of teachers’ professional learning. Teachers’ knowledge of learners’ needs and their learning is central to the design of their own learning. The challenge, as Shulman (1986) explains, is that the effective teaching requires subject knowledge that has to be ‘tested’ in examinations according to a set pattern in most countries of the world. The challenge for effective teaching is to learn how to keep the learning process inclusive enabling all students to learn and make real progress in terms of their personal, professional and social skills (Bennett et al., 2003; Galton, 1989; Glover and Coleman, 2005; Bush, 2011). Teachers should learn how to be a ‘developmental teacher’, a term that reflects the essential Vygostkian theoretical proposition (Vygotsky, 1962). This concept focuses on human development through general societal goals with a concrete subject matter instructional practice. Furthering the idea, it is argued that it requires teachers to have deep knowledge of human psychology and be able to link it with students’ learning abilities and the requirements of the outside world besides having subject knowledge. This idea of personality development focuses on the development of motives in relation to societal practice. Similarly, Shulman (1986) after his three years’ research into the teaching and learning practices and abilities of teachers suggests that for intellectual development of students, teachers must learn four distinct components being: comprehension, reasoning, transformation and reflection.



MacBeath et al. (2009) maintain that education in schools should focus on promoting learning behaviours at all levels of the LfL model. Learning behaviours, as suggested by Ellis and Tod (2009) may take the form of skills and disposition. Claxton (2006) gives a good interpretation of disposition and skills. He says that:

*“when you have learned a skill, you are able to do something, you could not do before. But you may not spontaneously make use of that ability when it is relevant in the future, if you do not realise its relevance; or you still need a degree of support or encouragement that is not available. In common parlance, it is not much use being able if you are not ready and willing”* (Claxton, 2006: p.26).

Swaffield and MacBeath (2009b) argue that schools must have a learning environment that inculcates skills in such a manner that learners can relate to those skills with a relevance in the future or with the world outside the class. The importance of parental involvement in this regard as one of the essential components is appreciated in the literature (Epstein et al., 2002). Studies have consistently indicated that active parental involvement and home–school partnerships in school settings can lead to positive developmental outcomes for the children (Connors and Epstein, 1995; Farooqi, 2011). Different researchers and educators have considered the six categories of parental involvement and activities, introduced by Epstein (1996), useful to plan a framework of ideas and practices that connect families, schools, and communities. Previous studies have also successfully employed this typology when examining parent involvement and family–school partnerships (Epstein, 1996; Epstein et al., 2002). This research categorises the concept of parent involvement and family–school–community partnerships into six types including basic obligations of parents (for creating a safe and

suitable environment at home that fosters children's learning and development), parent involvement at school (for example volunteering different services at school), basic obligations of schools (for example communicating with parents about programme expectations, evaluations, and children's progress), parent involvement in governance and advocacy (for example including parents in decision-making and advisory councils) and parent involvement in learning and developmental activities at home (for example providing material and guidance to parents about how to interact with children at home to help them in academic and social learning process) and collaborating with the community (for example working together with community businesses, social service agencies, and other members of the community to provide better educational programmes and strengthen family practices). It is considered a somewhat neglected domain in the past in schools in Pakistan but which is gaining more attention by many practitioners now (Farooqi, 2011).

With regard to pupil learning, many studies like those of Elmore (2000 and 2002), Goddard et al. (2004) and Hakkarainen et al. (2004) claim high impact of networking as a new method of learning through school to school collaboration. Katz and Earl (2010) claim that this new way of learning requires new professional learning of teachers if we want to have the optimal benefit of this type of learning practice. Furthering their argument, they say that significant changes in pupil learning depend on major changes in the practices and the structures of schools, and these changes will emerge from the professional learning that occurs through interaction within and across schools in networks. This orientation to networks suggests that learning and the:

*“... creation of new knowledge by teachers and principals/headteachers leads to deep conceptual changes and new ways of working in schools and classrooms” (Katz and Earl, 2010: p.27).*

It demands a different type of leadership and will result in a widespread flow of leadership as an activity. To what extent are parents and students involved in the process of learning as partners? Is networking a routine feature in schools of Pakistan? What kind of opportunities and support is available to schools in this regard? The literature from Pakistan does not provide clear evidence for this. This type of environment may require an active dialogue among different stakeholders to promote learning with shared goals and vision. The next part of the chapter explains how a dialogue for learning may be established in LfL.

### **3.5 Third Principle: A Dialogue for Learning**

With a consistent approach of double loop thinking in the dialogue, a process is followed to find meaning in existing practice through dialogue as it is and as it might be. This dialogue is positively focused on the moral purpose of schools and is all embracing: leadership, social capital and human agency. It helps to synthesize and join broadly and deeply the distributed leadership at school into action involving people from all levels of the LfL model. Dawes et al. (2000) also present similar findings and claims that dialogic pedagogies are beginning to make inroads into traditional patterns of classroom communication. To be useful in terms of outcomes and understanding, it is important that all the actors involved in a dialogue should have a say and their voice is heard and acknowledged (Farooqi, 2011). It is contrary to the traditional teacher led classroom practices in which learners are positioned as compliant

supporters of the teacher's purpose, their voices barely acknowledged (Nazir, 2010). The importance of this socially co-constructivist learning approach (as described in Chapter One under 'Co-constructivism') is highlighted by many researchers. It shapes the form and extent of dialogue. It is interlinked with the learning and development of knowledge within school and in the community around school (Watkins, 2003; Farooqi, 2011).

In the majority of the schools, as mentioned by Tharp and Gallimore (1988), only one kind of talk predominates being the 'recitation script' of teacher's structured questions, brief recall answers with minimal feedback compelling children to report the point of view that may not be theirs hence limiting the possibility for them to be independent thinkers. Students are judged on their accuracy or compliance in following that command (Tharp and Gallimore, 1988). This type of pedagogical framework badly effects learners' capacity and potential. *"When recitation starts, remembering and guessing supplant thinking"* (Nystrand et al., 1997: p.6). Biggs and Moore (1993) present a model, commonly referred to as the 3P model (presage, process, and product factors) for understanding student learning through consideration of the relations between what teachers and students say, do and think and the learning outcomes. The model explains the entire process as a linear movement from presage to process to product, for interactions between the components and among different actors in equilibrium. A change to any part of the system affects other parts of the system. The three steps of his model include students' as well as teachers' contexts and potential. Process factors refer to the direct interaction between student and teaching presage and its impact on the way students learn. If the process is full of interactive discussion, the learning is deep where

learners actively construct knowledge for themselves. It makes the learning a highly interactive, shared activity which disapproves the traditional transmission model of teaching where teachers are the source of ‘ultimate information’ and learners assume passive roles. Similarly, Carnell and Lodge (2002) argue that traditional teaching methods influence the dynamics and communicative relationships of classroom talk whereas an interactive dialogue takes learning forward to reach understandings that would not be possible otherwise as dialogue enhances reflection and professional learning. This dialogue for learning should not be confined to classroom talk:

*“... if it [the dialogic principle] is valid for children’s learning, it is no less valid for the learning of adults, including teachers themselves” (Alexander, 2004: p.39).*

Alexander (2004) who brought forward the concept of dialogic teaching asserts that certain patterns of interaction among teacher and learners at different levels of exploratory talk (which he calls a dialogue) promote intellectual development among learners. Alexander (2004) categorises classroom talk into five levels. ‘Rote’ is the first level where the drilling of facts and routines takes place through constant repetition. ‘Recitation’, as he calls it, is the second level that focuses on the accumulation of knowledge through recall of what has been previously encountered. He calls the third level ‘instruction/exposition’. At this level, teachers tell the pupil what to do imparting information procedures. In the ‘discussion’ level, the exchange of ideas takes place with a view to sharing information and solving problems. He considers dialogue as the highest level as it results in common understanding and creation of knowledge. He assesses the impact of a dialogic activity on the learning of teachers within the

context of individualism, community and collectivism, or in other words, child, group and class through exploring a range of questions. Dialogue is the means through which LfL is enacted at different levels. It is not simply a requirement for learning and vital for co-constructivism of knowledge but an essential for human development also. In the five factors of dialogic teaching, Alexander (2005) highlights the following characteristics:

- *“collective: teachers and children address learning tasks together, whether as a group or as a class;*
- *reciprocal: teachers and children listen to each other, share ideas and consider alternative viewpoints;*
- *supportive: children articulate their ideas freely, without fear of embarrassment over ‘wrong’ answers; and they help each other to reach common understandings;*
- *cumulative: teachers and children build on their own and each other’s ideas and chain them into coherent lines of thinking and enquiry;*
- *purposeful: teachers plan and steer classroom talk with specific educational goals in view” (Alexander, 2005: p.14).*

The concept of dialogue in LfL is similar to these studies (MacBeath et al., 2009) which starts from the classroom and is interconnected with all four levels of the LfL model. It takes place in an organized way and is positively focused on the moral purpose of school. According to MacBeath et al. (2009), it would be erroneous to confine this activity only to the classroom between student to student or teacher to student since the term dialogue is used in ways that reflect the interests of research communities as well. They introduce the concept of a critical

friend who is a detached outsider who helps through questioning, evaluating, appraising and seeing anew challenging. The dialogue at this level of LfL model is concerned with both the process (which is learning) and the product (outcome of any process), as it happens in the double loop thinking. Trust and provocative questioning are key elements of critical friendship. Descriptions of a critical friend by Stoll and Thomson (1996), emphasise the role of the critical friend in helping schools play a role that is interpretive and catalytic about learning and leadership. At the school to school level or between different organizational levels, the comparison takes place as the first step in the dialogue. The development and prevalence of dialogue depends on honesty, trust and willingness to engage and reframe, in the quest for understanding. Are teachers and leaders in schools in Pakistan involved in the dialogue for learning with a social capital view in their approaches? At what level is this dialogue prevalent in these schools? Is it really important to have this kind of dialogue in schools in Pakistan? The literature does not provide answers to these questions. However, importance of shared responsibility looks inevitable to make this kind of dialogue effective. The next part of the chapter explores how a shared leadership is created and appreciated in this regard.

### **3.6 Fourth Principle: Sharing Leadership**

From early twenty first century onwards, the literature reflects an increased interest of researchers in the role of educational leadership while exploring issues such as improvement and effectiveness in the learning process at schools (Sergiovanni, 2002 and 2005; Hallinger and Heck, 1999; Wenger, 1998; West-Burnham and O' Sullivan, 1998; West-Burnham and

Huws, 2008; Hofstede, 2001; Macbeath and Mortimore, 2001; Gronn, 2003; Street and Temperley, 2005; Busher, 2006 and 2008; Leithwood et al., 2006). The growing concerns about sustainability of the learning environment justify the shift from the twentieth century concept of *singular greatness* (Taylor, 1911; Bobbitt, 1917) towards the promotion and development of leadership potential and skills at different levels in schools (Waterhouse and Møller, 2009). Researchers elaborate the multifarious responsibilities of leadership from problem solving to trust developing, and from empowering to networking with different learning communities. There has been a gradual shift in the role of leadership in schools from a traditional hierarchical model towards a distributed leadership. It has been argued that schools, who decide to bring improvement in learning outcomes through innovative and creative pedagogy, often have a tendency to fade after an initial glory and soon look like any other school (Dormeus, 1981). It is further argued that unless leadership creates a sustainable environment for learning, any move to bring change may be unsuccessful (Borko and Bowers, 2010). The literature indicates a growing interest among many educationists about the leadership practices that foster a collaborative learning environment for organizational progress and effectiveness in the face of ever rising expectations and competitions (Day, 2009; Davies et al., 2005; Dempster, 2009; Gronn, 2008; Raza, 2009; Maqbool, 2011). Sergiovanni (2001) also explains the phenomenon of leadership density. He considers that leadership density is higher if a diverse number of people are engaged in decision-making, with shared information in an environment of trust and respect with a focus on sharing and creating of new knowledge. The purpose behind this sharing of leadership is to encourage or inhibit human capacity for creativity, innovation and capacity building at all levels in an organization. This human capital is also referred to as social capital in the concept of LfL



(MacBeath et al., 2009). This type of organization is considered a learning organization. The concept of LfL views leadership and learning as interconnected skills and activities:

*“we do not assume leadership to be something that resides within the individual at the apex of organizational pyramid, but as exercised across the community, ‘distributive’ rather than ‘distributed’ as delegation .... We seek out leadership not only in the most likely, but in the most unlikely of places. We expect to find it both in the informal life of the school as well as within its formal structures. It may be assumed as well as delegated, and expressed spontaneously as well as in formalized planning”* (MacBeath et al., 2003: p.7).

This perspective of leadership highlights the importance of horizontal flow of leadership currents within organizations which are seen as socially constructed structures of interconnected and interdependent activities. Foster (1986) has also presented a parallel way of framing the concept of leadership in schools as he underlines that:

*“... leadership is an act that enables others and allows them in return to be enablers”* (Foster, 1986: p.187).

The principle of shared leadership in the concept of LfL echoes Gronn’s (2003) idea of leadership. It emphasizes the plural nature of leadership as a collective activity and the importance of its influences over conferred authority. Collaboration, team work and dialogue are considered crucial in developing and sustaining the capacity within any organization to adapt and create or recreate within itself. Bennett et al. (2003) define distributed leadership as

“a way of thinking about leadership” (p.2). Further developing the concept, they argue that “distributed leadership is not about an individual’s contribution for another individual; rather it is an evolving ability of a group or network of individuals in which group members utilise their expertise hence enhancing the collective performance” (p.2). These approaches may delegate power and leadership among the team and stakeholders but not as a must do objective. Harris (2004b) says that distributed leadership and delegation are not the same thing. Leadership is distributed to create a system of interdependent and interactive relationship practice in which “the group has distinct properties over and above the individual who make it up”. In this sense, distributed leadership is a form of collective activities of many individuals in a school. Extending the boundaries of leadership, it thrives on high levels of “teacher involvement” and ensures a wider inclusion of variety of “expertise, skill and input” (Harris and Lambert, 2003: p.16). The organizational studies show a trajectory of the recognition of the limitation of relying on a super heroic style leader. It presents unease with the legacy of the heroic view of leadership in school. Describing these limitations, Hargreaves and Fink (2004) argue that succession planning and sustainability issues necessitate a shift towards the spread of leadership skills at all levels of organizations. They assert that “sustainable leadership is a distributed necessity and a shared responsibility” (Hargreaves and Fink, 2004: p.11). Two recent research projects compare influence of individual vs. distributed leadership on the commitment, motivation and capacity of staff performance in schools (NCSL, 2006). The findings indicate an up to three times increase when leadership is distributed across the school among staff, students and parents. Considering the growing interest of academics in distributed leadership, Waterhouse and Møller (2009) suggest that one of the reasons it is preferred is not relying on one person or leader. The “Super head” leading

the entire school single handed is “*neither realistic nor sustainable*” (p.123). They recommend that distributed leadership may resolve certain other concerns pertaining to succession planning, recruitment, retention of leaders and heads, and other sustainability issues as the institutional performance is depending on leadership as a system of practice of different groups which are interconnected as well as interdependent on each other.

Process and practice are considered the foci of all the discussion about distributed leadership. In this perspective, leadership is open and accessible to all members of the organization. Leadership activity is well structured and dynamic with its own internal transition, transformation and its own development (Gronn, 2010), where the social and situational context of the school also influence it and get influenced by it (Spillane, 2006). Therefore, to ensure the efficacy of the distributed leadership an understanding of the context and the actors’ interpretation of a situation is extremely important. Dialogue between different stakeholders is crucial (Gronn, 2003 and 2005; Waterhouse and Møller, 2009) but how different contexts are interpreted may depend on actors’ knowledge of self, others and organizations. Building on this, Mayrowetz et al. (2007) argue that distributed leadership flourishes if the interplay of relationship between different actors takes place in an environment of trust and respect for each other. Relational trust is defined as:

*“the willingness of individuals to rely upon others and to make oneself vulnerable to others in that reliance”* ( Mayrowetz et al., 2007: p.89).

Different factors such as shared values, appropriate temperaments, shared vision, all factors which account for trust in role constellations (Gronn, 2006), are important contributors to establish such an environment in the organization among all those who share this leadership so the purpose and social capital with agency of LfL seem important in this regard.

In a distributed perspective of leadership, empowered teachers are considered one of the main stakeholders who share responsibility to enhance learning through dialogue with other stakeholders' such as students, parents and school leaders. Katzenmeyer and Møller (2001) say:

*“... teachers who are leaders lead within and beyond the classroom, identify with and contribute to a community of teacher learners and leaders, and influence others towards improved educational practice” (p.17).*

Underlining the significance of distributed perspective of leadership among teachers and given recognition, teacher leadership has a direct impact on teachers' morale and retention, school culture and learning outcomes (Frost and Durrant, 2004). They reject the assumption that the problem of low morale among teachers is always linked with money matters and financial aspects. They believe that it rises if teachers' professionalism is undermined or underestimated which are the 'change agents' (Fullan, 1993) in their classrooms.



*Figure 3: The Leadership Dimensions of Teacher Leadership  
(adapted from Frost and Durrant, 2004)*

Teachers take the role of an action researcher in schools and through constant reflective practice a continuous process of improvement takes place; a dialogue for learning and feedback of the critical friends (Swaffield, 2008). According to this model, teachers can initiate and/or respond to change, constantly upgrade their practices according to the situation. They collect data from school to assess their own performance and modify their teaching practices accordingly. Frost and Durrant (2004) call it teacher leadership through development work as in Figure 3. Katzenmeyer and Møller (2001) highlight three main facets of teacher leadership where teachers feel empowered and their expertise gets recognized. These include their ability to have a leadership of learning through student involvement, curriculum expertise and instructional skills, leadership of operational tasks that includes managerial duties and responsibilities which keep the school organized and moving, and thirdly, leadership through participating in school related decision-making processes as members of

different committees inside or outside school. Students and parents also play an important role in this aspect of distributed leadership.

The concept of LfL also talks about the aspect of student leadership. It is far more than traditionally being delegated by teachers to carry out the tasks as their teachers want them to do. Under this concept, student leadership in school involves re-thinking the student/teacher relationship. Students are considered an important stakeholder whose opinion is valued and they act as equal partners with school to enhance learning outcomes:

*“... student leadership does not, however, imply that students no longer respect their teachers nor that teachers’ own rights and responsibilities are diminished. On the contrary, it seeks to develop opportunities for students to take an active role in improving their school as active partners with their teachers”* (Nash and Roberts, 2009: p.11).

They claim that if students are empowered and are actively involved in the dialogue for learning, it influences their performance and that of school through three interconnected factors:

- students have a deeper understanding of the learning process;
- students pursue not only their own but others’ learning as well;
- the feedback given by the students produces rich data for school development thus giving students an important role in school self-evaluation and decision-making.

Many studies find students astute and articulate observers of the learning process and overall school improvement and argue that seeking student views on school effectiveness with respect to learning, always affirms that students possess unique knowledge and perspectives about their schools that adults cannot fully replicate (Flutter and Rudduck, 2004; Hart, 1992). Soo Hoo (1993) points out that educationalist may ignore a plethora of information if students are not empowered to be partners with schools in order to find out how schools can be better places of learning. He stresses the importance of student involvement in the process of school improvement. He says that some educators have forgotten the important connection between teachers and students.

*“We listen to outside experts to inform us, and, consequently, we overlook the treasure in our own backyard: our students. Students’ perceptions are valuable to our practice because they are authentic sources; they personally experience our classes first hand ... they can teach us so much about learning and learners”* (Soo Hoo, 1993: p.389).

In the Carpe Vitam Project, students were given the chance to plan the lesson with their teachers and in some places changed role with them and taught in the class (MacBeath et al., 2009). MacBeath and Mortimore (2001) suggest that students empowered with a distributed perspective of leadership can be partners with schools in improving pupil culture, learning environment, pupil-pupil and pupil-teacher and school-parent relationships, teacher support and linking with community.

It is argued that the perspectives of the responsibilities of schools, parents and community portray a diversity of concepts (Epstein, 2003). Based on their study in more than 1000 schools, Epstein and Sheldon (2006) present seven principles about the school-family-community relationship for improvement in learning process from pre-school through to high school. They consider this relationship extremely important to better help all students succeed to their full potential. They consider this partnership between schools, students' families and community important as it brings diversity of perspectives on learning. To be able to respond to these perspectives, leadership must have a flow of activity across boundaries. It helps in identifying shared goals and increased levels of LfL. Their concept of school-family-community partnership depicts this relationship as one of overlapping spheres presenting shared understanding between schools and families. The greater the overlap, the greater would be the common understanding, and therefore families become more 'school-like' and schools become more 'family-like'. Thus an important objective of learning being a social construct is achieved that enhances the effectiveness of the learning process and creates better opportunities for the learners. All stakeholders become partners and share the responsibility of creating better learning opportunities in schools.

While holding to the seminal principle of a distributed perspective of leadership, most of the contemporary research is now premised on some form of collaboration, sharing, networking and partnership (MacBeath et al., 2007; Muijs, 2010). This concept of networking takes a school from individualism to collectivism, where all of the stakeholders' expertise, opinions and contributions are highly appreciated for further development. Evidence in the literature



about the networking with multi-agency working has led schools to collaborate with each other and with other external organizations such as other schools and the business world. This multi-agency networking takes place in order to provide a full service to pupils, addressing their social, health, and psychological needs that would not be possible for individual schools. This networking may be resource efficient as it could save material and staff costs for the schools. Schools may also collaborate in different areas such as Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities (Muijs, 2010). The concept of networking as mere school improvement orientation may therefore be too limited a viewpoint. Gronn (2000) suggests that:

*“... distributed leadership implies a different power relationship within the school where the distinctions between followers and leaders tend to blur...”* (Gronn, 2000: p.333).

With all of these claims about the potential benefits of networking and distributed leadership, what is the evidence of success in schools? The question highlights the need of further research in this area in different parts of the world and especially in Pakistan where no specific literature is available about this issue. According to Gronn (2008), distributed leadership offers a different ‘power relationship’. Does this different power relationship, that is prevalent in LfL, also share accountability in networks in Pakistan? The next part of this chapter explores this different power relationship that exists within LfL in terms of shared accountability.

### **3.7 Fifth Principle: Sharing Accountability**

The four principles of LfL, as discussed above, rest on the sharing of leadership, ideas and skills for learning that takes place through dialogue among different stakeholders. The fifth principle of this concept stresses the creation of a process of sharing accountability. Brundrett and Rhodes' (2010) definition of accountability also points to this relationship as they describe it as an obligatory relationship between the one who takes action, to another who appraises the performance. Accountability is considered an important requirement while undertaking an activity, to explicitly address the concerns, requirements or perspectives of others. Through accountability, effectiveness of the worth and use of public resources utilized is ensured (Lewis et al., 2007).

MacBeath et al. (2009) bring the aspect of practical relevance in this concept of accountability. It is argued that the stakeholders, especially heads and staff in schools can execute courses of action required to successfully educate students by reflecting on the existing practices. The claim is made that an accountability system should have practical relevance. This practical relevance is attained when practitioners at schools draw justifiable inferences from the performance of their school for the effectiveness of learning and their own actions (MacBeath et al., 2009). Schools are considered accountable for what they do to learners. It is stated that accountability in school rests on two key factors for which school heads and teachers are considered responsible: answerability for any actions taken or not taken, and enforceability where sanctions are imposed for being unable to comply or deliver. To be clear about the answerability process and criterion, Day and Klein's (1987) argument

seems important as they assert that constructing accountability requires a definition of the relationship between actors delineating respective positions of authority and responsibility. Diosdado's (2008) work, however, reaches the conclusion that there is a worldwide trend encouraging schools to conceptualize, plan and initiate changes locally that suit their specific situations. The practitioners of the concept enjoy freedom to manage different arising situations through right decisions, in the right manner and at the right time. This concept has also been referred to as self-managing schools (Caldwell and Spinks, 1988), local management of schools (Giles, 1995; Gamage, 2000) collaborative management (Cooperman, 1999), site-based management (Dempster, 2000) and self-governance (Bush and Gamage, 2001). Furthering the concept, Brundrett and Rhodes (2010) argue that although there has been a general trend of moving towards decentralization in different schools, but more the organizations move towards autonomy, more rigorous becomes the phenomenon of accountability. Kogan (1986) presents three models of accountability being: state controlled, professional control and consumerist control. The first one is monitored by appointed officers, heads, government officials and elected representatives. The second one is controlled by teachers and other professionals. The third one is more participatory and partnership oriented in the public sector and market oriented in the private sector of schools. Later studies extended his work to five dimensions of accountability being: central control model, the self-accounting model, the chain of responsibility mechanism, the professional model and the partnership model (Halstead, 1994).

The literature presents many arguments that policy makers in many parts of the world have developed accountability design with a quantifiable target driven focus in education (MacBeath et al., 2009; Nichols and Berliner, 2007; Sackney and Mitchell, 2008; Reeves, 2004 and 2009; MacBeath et al., 2003; Lightfoot, 2004). It is argued that there has been an increased emphasis internationally on standardised testing in the last couple of decades. They describe school leadership as caught in the nexus of accountability and improvement. As Sackney and Mitchell (2008) state:

*“... we have found school leaders to be more concerned with accounting than learning, with control than with teaching, with compliance than with risk taking and with public relations than with student experiences ...”* (Sackney and Mitchell, 2008: p.112).

Many recent studies, including the Carpe Vitam Project of LfL, return to the fact that in rising to the challenge of what is envisioned to be creating a consistently excellent system, all schools should have an internal/local system of accountability and self-evaluation with a focus on promoting learning at all levels in school (Brundrett and Rhodes, 2010; MacBeath and Dempster, 2009). Interestingly, the importance of systematic self-review was argued more than a century ago:

*“... the organization of school must be kept mobile to its inner life. To one who is accustomed to wind up the machine and trust it to run for the fixed periods, this constantly shifting shape of things will seem unsafe and troublesome. And troublesome it is, for no fixed plans can be*

*followed; no two schools are alike; and the same school is shifting, requiring constant attention and nimble judgement on the part of school leader” (Tomkins, 1895: p.4).*

In line with him, the proponents of the concept of LfL state that schools which speak for themselves account for the trust invested in them by giving quality accounts, providing evidence of what is deemed to be worthwhile, and as schools, how they measure up to that trust. Many researchers advocate that school leaders are in an era of ever increasing competition, and that they need to create an environment that is up to the expectations of stakeholders including parents, learners, community groups and authorities. Though distant but powerful, other stakeholders are universities, employers and government agencies. Working with these stakeholders makes accountability in schools a diverse and multi-level process (Joyce and Showers, 1995; Muijs et al., 2004). The concept of LfL also promotes a shared sense of accountability (MacBeath et al., 2009). It has a six dimensional model of accountability that takes account of:

- the school having the choice and freedom to decide how to tell its story taking account of political realities;
- a well-established and systematic approach of self-evaluation at all levels of the wedding cake model of LfL;
- a focus on the evidence that is well co-ordinated with the core values of school;
- a shared way of internal accountability that is a precondition to external accountability;
- reframing policy and practice when they conflict with core values;
- maintaining a continuing focus on sustainability, succession and leaving a legacy.

Each of the above mentioned aspects of accountability demand commitment and capability from all actors at every level of this model. Do we have a similar pattern in schools of Pakistan? Are the decisions taken and communicated considering the interplay of different factors and the context of school in view here? Coleman and Earley (2005) argue that the multifaceted nature of the profession of education brings multiple accountabilities to it in terms of internal or external hierarchies, market, working collaborations, partnerships with community and culture within organizations. Each of these interfaces demands a particular commitment and skill. All of these factors, like levels of the wedding cake model of LfL, are interconnected and may have a ripple effect on the culture and learning environment of the organization. Møller (2009) presents five forms of accountability which every school faces: political, public, managerial, professional and personal. Giving details of the five types of accountability, political and public accountability is about the organizational face and reputation in public in terms of the mandate and function of that particular organisation in society. The organization is considered as one part of the whole whereas community and society is considered the whole. Upward hierarchy is an important aspect for the functionality of any organization. Managerial accountability focuses on a person's position in a hierarchy and responsibility towards superiors. His/her contribution and working towards the collective and individual achievement is appraised here in terms of the tasks that are delegated to him/her. Professional accountability is about the demands and integrity of a profession and a duty to adhere to the standards of the profession. Personal accountability refers to the set of beliefs and values that are important to an individual. It reflects on his/her personal culture and ethics such as respect for human dignity and taking the challenge and responsibility for affecting the lives of others. This kind of accountability is regarded as particularly powerful and binding.

Personal accountability needs to be at its apex in a profession such as teaching and in a process like learning. This model of accountability asserts the core value behind the concept of leadership of learning that if leadership and learning are interconnected activities at school, then shared accountability must be developed in school that requires knowledge of the inner working of the school and the significance and capability of school led evaluation. What type of accountability is prevalent in the schools of Pakistan? No specific answer is available in the literature in this regard. Being permeable and accountable organizations, schools work with direct or indirect collaboration and influence of their stakeholders who:

*“may offer advantages to learners but may also present competing demands and different understanding of quality in education”* (Brundrett and Rhodes, 2010: p.68).

There is a significant strand of evidence within literature that the building of confidence and mutual self-assurance leads to a more developed sense of professional and shared accountability. Creating such an environment with widespread leadership and learning opportunities and shared accountability, however, could be one of the biggest challenges for leadership in schools (Mitchell and Sackney, 2009; Møller, 2009; Lieberman and Friedrich, 2008; Sackney and Mitchell, 2008; Sergiovanni, 2005).

### **3.8 Summary**

The chapter presents five principles of the Carpe Vitam LfL Project. As MacBeath and Dempster (2009) analyse that the understanding about learning remains elusive, though there

is extensive research by many, because it is viewed through the ‘prism of school’ overlooking the immense and diverse potential and ability to learn present in students, teachers, leaders and all those involved in the phenomenon of learning. The chapter explains how LfL is a different concept that associates the human aspect and context sensitivity with both leadership and learning. Swaffield (2009) describes that leadership and learning are completely interlinked and interdependent features of school which are conjoined by a ‘sense of human agency’. Claxton (2002) provides a description of the factors relevant for teachers to improve learning making use of cognitive and behavioural responses of students and teachers in classrooms. Are these dispositions relevant to leadership as well, since both of these are much like a skill? Learning enhances leadership and therefore it remains the main focus of leadership in schools. The chapter sets out the main constituents of LfL and describes five principles of the concept as emerged from the Carpe Vitam Project. These five principles include a focus on learning, creating a learning environment in schools, a learning dialogue, distributed leadership and shared accountability. The concept is based on a four tier wedding cake model, where all the activity, leadership flow and learning takes place with lateral and vertical two way interactions. The concept considers leadership as a wider skill that stretches beyond one ‘super hero’ or one role in the organization. Literature provides levels and types of leadership and learning that may have a direct impact on the learning environment in school from being a recitation script to highly engaging co-constructivism and leadership from being bureaucratic and managerial to distributive. A smooth flow of dialogue is important for effectiveness of the learning process, however, leaders’ readiness, resilience and resourcefulness appear important in this regard. There is extremely limited literature available from Pakistan in this regard. Research provides details of different levels of dialogue that



takes place in classrooms. It may be useful if some levels of dialogue could be determined for the dialogue at the entire school level for LfL in schools in Pakistan. Although LfL may look promising in terms of capacity building within schools at a micro and macro level, are there any challenges on the way that could make the entire process difficult? The challenges associated with the concept of LfL are the nature and quality of learning experiences for all involved in the process of learning, the structure that contains them and the environment that supports them. The next chapter of the literature review investigates the risks and difficulties that make implementation of the concept of LfL a big challenge for all those who want to adopt the model.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: THE CHALLENGES AND RISKS INVOLVED WITH THE CONCEPT OF LfL**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The previous two chapters provide details of the framework of LfL in a school which is premised on a strong collaboration and sharing at all levels, extending from classroom to the community and beyond. The issue of increasing pressures from governments to ‘raise standards’ and of growing expectations of parents, make the entire process of teaching and learning more challenging for all those involved in it. The five principles of LfL rest on the notions of collaboration, distributed leadership, shared accountability and a dialogue for learning with all stakeholders on board. Do schools face any challenges in establishing and promoting LfL? To what extent can leadership be shared? Is there any evidence that distributed leadership may or may not promote learning? What are the risks and other issues involved with networking and of students’ influence over how they are perceived as learners and the opportunities that follow? This part of the literature review tries to explore the similar issues and provides a critique of the concept of LfL.

### **4.2 The Dilemma in Distributed Leadership**

There is an extensive research base revealing that the principal’s office is considered as the central point from where every type of change flows through to the school. This interdependency is magnified in the area of distributed leadership (Harris, 2004a; Hartley,

2009; Leithwood et al., 2008; Maqbool, 2011; Raza, 2009). Distributed leadership is considered a useful and effective way of enhancing the performance of the organization and is strongly recommended in the literature as “*the new kid on the block*” (Gronn, 2006: p.1), “*in vogue*” (Harris, 2004a: p.13), and attracting “*growing attention*” (Hoyle and Wallace, 2005: p.192). However, ‘*distributed leadership admits some confusion: its conceptual elasticity is considerable*’ (Hartley, 2009: p.202). The lack of conceptual clarity is a major issue that may make operationalization of this way of working problematic. Delegation and distribution of leadership, if not understood and implemented with clarity can contaminate the whole idea. Many school leaders in Pakistani schools conceptualize delegation of power, distribution of duties, and distributive leadership as being the same (Raza, 2009; Maqbool, 2011). There is limited evidence about the success of distributed leadership initiative or other related efforts to spread leadership to teachers (Lieberman and Miller, 1999; Murphy, 2002; Hartley, 2009; Maqbool, 2011). There are many reasons for this, but the most important is that leadership in schools is not conducive to shared conceptions of leadership. Distributed leadership rests on a transformation in the understanding about leadership and in the ways school principals enact their leadership roles. This repositioning of oneself as a leader is not an easy task for many principals, especially for those in the position for some length of time (Crowther et al., 2002). A distributed perspective of leadership requires reframing one’s conception of schooling, from reliance on bureaucratic and “*institutional lenses toward viewing schools as community-anchored organisations*” (Murphy and Hallinger, 1998: p.268). It also highlights the need for new skills and the use of a new set of performances which still needs to be prioritised in the decision taking list of policy makers in countries like Pakistan (Riaz, 2008).

Analysts have been especially insightful in exposing how the norms needed to establish distributed leadership ethos in a school are inconsistent with the structure embedded in the hierarchical, bureaucratic architecture of schools (Harris and Lambert, 2003). The traditional school designs in Pakistan may discourage the exercise of leadership across role boundaries (Raza, 2009; Khan et al., 2009). The ‘factory’ like models are still prevalent in many government schools in Pakistan, but with a realization about their limited capacity to meet the different needs within the schools, change can be observed (Rizvi, 2008; Raza, 2009). A recent inflow of information through use of technology and a myriad of proposed educational reforms from many parts of the world have initiated a move for decentralization and distributed leadership with a learning centred focus. However, it is understandable that like many experienced principals in different parts of the world, experienced principals in Pakistan also hesitate to let go of the hierarchal organizational models for fear of losing their control (Rizvi, 2008; Raza, 2009). With the changing times grows awareness, largely mounted in the West, that these traditional ways of leadership practices can no longer work with the current complexity of schooling (Day et al., 2005; Fullan, 2001; Sergiovanni, 1998 and 2001). Decentralisation of schools and in schools is considered a befitting strategy. It is argued that decentralization includes transfer of authority of decisions related to the curriculum, the means of teaching and learning, the use of facilities, supplies and equipment, deployment of human resources and the allocation of finances. A distributive aspect of leadership demands an involvement of all stakeholders in these procedures. However, such freedom is questioned quite often in the literature (Earley et al., 2002; Javed, 2005; Hartley, 2009; Rizvi, 2008), which contends that, far from decentralizing education systems, current reforms in different countries such as UK and Pakistan are moving toward more centralized control of schools.

Like LEA's in the UK, the structure of the government school system in Pakistan is based on a bureaucratic model. The Federal Ministry of Education retains the authority to formulate educational plans and policies in Pakistan, but with the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment in the Constitution, more autonomy has been given to provinces particularly in education related matters (Full text of 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, [www.infopak.gov.pk](http://www.infopak.gov.pk)), which can now make policies in the provinces and the districts by the respective provincial and local district authorities. While the rhetoric is about participation through distributed leadership, the reality is that still more power is being centralized through standardised tests, accountability and appraisals and structured curriculum (Rizvi, 2008; Maqbool, 2011). How much authority is (or should be) devolved to schools? How much autonomy do (or should) schools in Pakistan have when it comes to curriculum development, governance and staffing? To what extent is it possible to establish a socially co-constructed model of distributive leadership in schools in Pakistan keeping the contextual diversity in view?

Context sensitivity, being able to interpret and design the school and community interactions, requires a number of personal attributes (Dempster, 2009). According to him, interpersonal and interactive relationship grows deeper with experience and time. Sustainability is a big issue as distributed leaders do not arrive at their support from the school or as a result of their interpersonal skills – they are appointed by higher authorities who may not be school-based. School leaders' ability to study local demography, local politics and other socio-economic factors of the school and those involved with the school (especially staff and students) makes a difference in terms of its effectiveness. Therefore, the availability and quality of leadership

development programmes is considered important in different parts of the world (Bush, 2011; Rizvi, 2008; Leithwood et al., 2006). Literature from Pakistan indicates that extensive work is required in this area as presently there is no formal leadership development programme available to the majority of school leaders here (Raza, 2009; Khan et al., 2009; Maqbool, 2011).

### **4.3 All on Board: Scuttling or Rocking**

The ever increasing interdependence of organizations demands an appropriate response from schools to involve human capital both in and out of the school and in the community for preparing learners in positive interactions in a diverse world. Despite acknowledging the need, school leaders may find it a big challenge to identify and promote this co-constructivist practice in schools where all the stakeholders work together to promote learning particularly when underlying norms are deeply embedded in the culture of a school and reinforced by societal expectations. In some cases, school leaders overlook these cultural influences in school settings or, because of their own belief system and biases, even consciously choose to maintain a status quo of traditional teaching, learning and administrative practices. What are the real challenges that the stakeholders in schools face while trying to bring all on board? How do they position themselves as important partners with schools to establish LfL? Do schools have the structures in place to ensure inclusiveness of all on policies, programmes, and practices in schools? As stated by Bustamante (2006), culture audits are pivotal to assess the readiness of any school to examine how well the experiences and needs of diverse groups in a school are taken care of. If these culture audits are non-existent, leadership may not obtain

‘emic’ (insider) and ‘etic’ (outsider) perspectives of various stakeholders in a school. The schools that stick to the traditional way of working may not progress within the times with a new set of assumptions that view education in a socially constructed domain. To progress and be effective, many researchers contend that it is fundamental for school leaders to review policies, practices, and organizational structures and remove potential barriers. It is emphasized if new policies and practices are not created after the identification and removal of barriers, concepts such as LfL may not be pragmatic (Khan et al., 2009; Banks, 2002).

Concluding their large scale research in the area of school culture, Bustamante et al. (2009) argue that if the roles and responsibilities in a school with a collaborative environment are not defined, they lead to confusion and stress. The research shows that school leaders find it difficult to have a consensus among teachers and other stakeholders about who is responsible for what. In their study, Wells and Feun (2007) argue that although teacher leadership is rated very high, if not managed properly, it may create stress among teachers and may distract them from their core business of teaching and learning. The participants of their study listed many challenges. At the top of every complaint list was concern for the negative, resistant people who were vocal in every staff meeting. Teachers described such colleagues as bullies and unco-operative, and also complained about lack of time and administrative support. Creating a collaborative culture in school without proper planning and in a disorganized manner may not achieve any desired results (Wells and Feun, 2007).

Besides teacher leadership, the literature highlights difference of opinion among different stakeholders, in response to student-related items such as student “voice,” and student leadership. The outcome of any move to promote student leadership in schools is considered dependent on a student’s own initiative, abilities, and choices by the leaders and teachers. However, students may feel that schools have limited opportunities for them and find support and opportunities deficient for their needs in this regard. Lack of time and money are consistently mentioned as barriers to focusing on social integration and co-constructivism for learning (Bang et al., 2010; Rizvi, 2008). Certain constraints have been highlighted by many involved in schools to promote a culture for argumentative practices among students and other stakeholders. And it is questioned if the teachers accept a reposition alongside students who are empowered to reflect critically on the adequacy of information received from the teachers. This analyses teachers’ abilities to manage the highly technology oriented and dynamic students, and challenges teachers’ professional status as traditionally conceived in many countries across the world including Pakistan rather as gatekeepers of knowledge (Bang et al., 2010; Coleman and Earley, 2005). In response to any move focusing on school environment to meet the needs of diverse learners, several school leaders and teachers simply find it difficult due to time, motivation, lack of awareness or constraints on resources. It is felt that distribution of leadership to cater for the diverse needs of learners requires large amounts of funding which is mostly not available to them, particularly in the Public schools of Pakistan (Riaz, 2008; Khan et al., 2009). However, the question arises whether LfL rests only on resources and funding or can it be established making use of skills, potential and willingness of human capital available in every school.



There is a strong emphasis on the importance of parental involvement as one of the essential factor for leading learning in schools (Epstein, 2003; Epstein and Sheldon, 2006; Farooqi, 2011). Little is known about which parental involvement strategies are most effective in meeting the needs of the diverse groups of families despite all the claims about the importance of home-school partnerships and involving community in children's educational process (Brent et al., 2006; Farooqi, 2011), or what barriers may be limiting the implementation of parent involvement activities. Further, the literature claims that teachers, parents, and school leaders may have somewhat different perceptions and expectations of learning, parental involvement and community-school partnerships, thus making the task of this social inclusion in the process of learning difficult (Reynolds, 1991). Teachers are often unhappy about parents attitude for being 'too pushy', 'too concerned with their own child's learning at the expense of the rest of the class', or 'too critical of the teacher's teaching style' (Farooqi, 2011). The question arises if parental involvement and concern about their children's performance in schools can be seen as positive attributes that contribute to the concept of LfL if personal biases are kept on one side.

The real challenge in resource-starved environments in schools across the world, and particularly in a developing country like Pakistan, is to determine what the local community and society in general want from schools and then determine the most cost-effective inputs to create such effective schools (Prew, 2009; Riaz, 2008). While networking is becoming an increasingly popular school improvement strategy with potentially high levels of success, there is little research that shows the challenges that school leaders face as they enter into these new relationships (Evans and Stone-Johnson, 2010). Their study shows that head

teachers face three types of challenge in these networks: contextual considerations for network involvement, sustaining internal commitment and capacity building while trying to establish network participation. The strength of the network and professional collaboration rests on its voluntary approach of participation. Networks that fail to maintain this focus often fall apart, as members drift away (Hopkins, 2001). Therefore, it is imperative to have the purpose of any professional collaboration and network very clear, but at the same time it should be flexible regarding its goals. This flexibility allows the participation of a vast constituency and may help promote creativity among learners. In addition to local policy issues, teachers' beliefs, experiences and circumstances also directly impact on networks and get influenced by these as well. Networks on the one hand can be a source of development of human capital as the very nature of networking tends to attract individuals with strong interpersonal skills. However, on the other hand, some of the ambitious individuals may become overly involved (Hadfield, 2006) or grow disconnected with their own school community (Lieberman and McLaughlin, 1992). While studies have shown teachers' appreciation for leadership opportunities, teachers who are involved in networks may sometimes complain of being over-burdened by additional responsibilities (Lieberman and McLaughlin, 1992). This can have negative effects on both individual teachers and their school community. The availability and stability of funding can also be a constraint for any type of network. While economic factors can play a role, sustainability is also affected by factors like commitment, purpose and leadership skills making the entire process of professional collaboration a complicated business. It is also questioned if the tightly structured curriculum and pressure of examinations really allows freedom and flexibility to develop and sustain networks (Hargreaves and Fink, 2006; Reynolds, 2010). The benefits of networking and collaborative learning process make it

attractive to many of those involved. No research has been conducted so far in schools in Pakistan to investigate whether networking would be a useful way to promote learning. Are there any existing models of practice available? What problems may be obstacles to the growth of networks in schools of Pakistan? All of these questions highlight the areas of potential research in Pakistan.

#### **4.4 Curriculum Design and Assessment**

Despite all the claims of educational researchers and the growth of the “knowledge society” (Hargreaves, 1999), secondary schooling may prove resistant to the influence of any school improvement moves with its age-graded, subject-based curriculum, and lesson-by-lesson schedule under a lot of pressure of examinations. Many experiments and claims made as a fresh start in schools with different ways of learning usually provide quick success demonstrations of desired results, but there is always a tendency to fade after an initial golden age. These schools soon look like any other school or vanish altogether (MacBeath and Moos, 2004a; Giles and Hargreaves, 2006; MacBeath et al., 2009). It is argued that the structured nature of the curriculum design, with high dominance of subject knowledge and examination results, make it a big challenge for learning to follow a co-constructivist and innovative approach in school (Coleman and Earley, 2005). Furthering their point, they argue that the most dominant model in schools is the reception model where teachers are considered more knowledgeable and in control, and learners remain passive and dependant. The same is in practice in Pakistani schools where teachers are considered the gatekeepers of knowledge (Khan et al., 2009). It has been argued though, that learners at schools need to experience a

curriculum in which they recognize themselves and relate it to the world in which they live (MacBeath et al., 2003) but finding room within a structured curriculum is a big challenge.

In a comparative study among teachers in Pakistan and the UK, curriculum design and dominance of exam results as an important performance indicator, is identified in both of the countries as the main barrier to any innovation and flexible approach in teaching and learning (Javed, 2004). Recent research by Galton and MacBeath (2008) has found a similar conclusion. Their study highlights pressures experienced by teachers who try to adopt co-constructivist approaches that work against the grain compared with fixed priorities and structure of the reception model. In examining the interplay between different stake holders' abilities to learn from each other and ambitious classroom practices, they state that there are certain aspects whose prevalence may be pivotal to bring change in the existing practices. Some of these include decision-making with a participative approach of leadership within school, leadership skills at different levels in school and the willingness to collaborate. And one of the most important factors is the support and flexibility within the curriculum to accommodate and appreciate the diversity of learners (Galton and MacBeath, 2008). Does the curriculum have this flexibility in terms of context sensitivity in schools, particularly in secondary schools which are usually under stress because of the pressure of examinations? Are learners free to learn the life skills instead of focusing on examination skills? Spencer's (1861) thought that he put forward more than a century ago, still remains a dream:

*“How to live?- that is the essential question...in what way to treat the body...the mind. To manage our affairs...To bring up a family...to behave as a citizen....To utilize those resources*

*for happiness that nature supplies...how to live completely...To shape up for complete living is the function which education has to discharge” (Spencer, 1861 cited in MacBeath et al., 2007: p.131).*

They consider this type of education and learning as the most effective. His concept of ‘complete living’ and learning ‘how to live completely’ as he introduced in the nineteenth century, is closer to the idea of shared leadership and learning in the concept of LfL. Does the curriculum of the twenty first century schools enhance this concept? Or do many of the concepts, such as critical thinking, and networks in schools, present in the literature fade away with pressure for coverage of the syllabus and curriculum contents? Comparing what Spencer (1861 cited in MacBeath et al., 2007) highlighted as a crucial change required in school education and what literature suggests today, it seems quite alarming how little educational arrangements have changed over the past 150 years. While educational reforms claim to bring many changes to the approach to education these are still not appreciated for being consumer oriented (Galton and MacBeath, 2008). What should the practitioners in schools do? Can they collaborate with each other to bring improvement in school? How can they create a learning environment in schools with a co-constructivist approach? Do students feel happy and satisfied with the existing teaching and learning practices in schools?

There is evidence that school is a turn-off for many students. Csikszentmihaly et al. (1993) find in an international survey, exploring the success and failure factors among teenagers, that for the vast majority life at school alternates between failure and apprehension. Similar

findings were reported in Andersson's (1998) research cited in Broadfoot (2007). The research finds that only 30% of students were happy in school out of the total 1200 students who participated in the survey, and consider that being in school is a meaningful and contributing experience to their self-esteem. Other research also highlights similar widespread student disaffection, lack of interest and alienation (Elliott and Shin, 2002). Pollard and Triggs, (2000: p.152) express a student's feelings who participated in their study that reflects how difficult students find it to relate to what is 'taught' in schools to their context and realities:

*"At the end of the day, I'm going to get something out of this - a good job, but some of the others just think 'oh no, another day at school'"* (a student quoted in Pollard and Triggs. 2000: p.152).

Javed (2004) argues that a paradigm shift in teaching and assessment practices is required in schools with a developmental approach involving all of the learners and catering for the context sensitivity. What is assessed in exams? Assessments, standardised tests, GCSE, GCE and the senior school examinations and results seem to be the most important words in the dictionary of secondary school education in many parts of the world including Pakistan, where private schools follow the British curriculum and examination system and the public schools have a similar pattern under the local education authorities and examination boards (Farooqi, 2011). Galton and MacBeath (2008) find in their studies that the rigidity and structured nature of these examinations is a constant source of stress not only for the students and their families but also for the teachers. The participants in their study complain of a loss of confidence, loss of creativity and spontaneity and an increase in stress caused by the pressure of assessments

and examinations. A similar response was found in a comparative study among teachers in Pakistan, UK and Ireland (Javed, 2005) where the majority of them consider the pressure of examination a major constraint for them to promote a ‘real learning environment’ in schools. They think that examinations assess very limited abilities of students who are working under pressure during that time. However, there is evidence in the literature that schools that have a high agenda for paying attention to learning preferences of the learners always have enhanced effectiveness and achievements (Frost, 2006 and 2009; MacBeath et al., 2007). Ellis and Tod (2009) argue that if schools want to establish a learning environment, the emphasis from measurable and quantifiable test results, that raises accountability issues among teachers and school leaders, will have to be reconsidered by all involved in the process of education at school.

#### **4.5 Accountability Issues**

The fifth defining principle of the LfL concept rests on a shared responsibility and sense of accountability among all the stakeholders. Though the concept of shared accountability sprouts from distributed leadership and co-constructivist approach of the LfL concept, is it possible that all the stakeholders have a similar understanding of the accountability in schools? Many researchers question whether all stakeholders perceive, react and assess the organizational environment similarly (Coburn, 2004; Coburn and Stein, 2010; Spillane and Diamond 2007; Spillane et al., 2001). Linking with and building on the sense making concept of Weick (1991), these researchers present an on-going discussion on the possibility that the actors within and from outside the organizations understand the need of and respond to

accountability systems alike and with a clear idea of their roles and ‘share’ in the accountability. It is argued that they will have a different view and understanding of accountability and struggle to make sense of the environment and make choices in the context of any perceived opportunities and constraints. Swaffield (2008) highlights the role of ‘critical friend’ for internal accountability and explains it as:

*“... an outsider who not only has a different perspective on the school from those within it, but also assists them to see the familiar in a new light. The overall aim of a critical friendship is to support improvement through empowerment, by demonstrating a positive regard for people, and providing an informed critique of processes and practices. The critical friend’s viewpoint has credibility if it is informed by an understanding of the specific situation and of the general context.”* (Swaffield, 2008: p.323).

The importance of this type of accountability is considered effective by many. Thus the inspection, audit and other external accountability measures give way to an internal system of accountability under self-evaluation. MacBeath et al. (2009) states that all of these types of accountability are driven by three motives: the importance motive, the economic motive and the accountability motive. For all of these motives, setting the priorities under a shared vision is the key element required. Similarly Elmore (2004) also asserts that the outcome of accountability practice in schools can be effective if the focus remains on three broad aspects: (a) modifying content and instruction, (b) monitoring progress, and (c) instituting rewards and sanctions based on progress or lack thereof. Many studies assert that the effectiveness of this accountability system is dependent on the organizational capacity or ‘collective capacity’ to



co-ordinate according to the demands of local context; leaders' and teachers' professional knowledge and skills and technical and financial resources influence its ability to successfully implement and reach the set goals of its internal accountability system (Boudett et al., 2005; Carnoy et al., 2007; Elmore, 2004). Simkins et al. (1998) asserts that accountability is a complex issue. Explaining three main components of the accountability process, he says that it is between 'one party A' to another 'party B'. The three components include:

*“an expectation that A will act in ways which are legitimate requirements of B. Second, that A will render some form of account to B. Third, that B may exercise sanctions over A if A fails to conform to B's expectations”* (Simkins et al., 1998: p.22).

Coleman and Earley (2005) argue that accountability is enacted in different ways and any model can be informed by the four main dimensions of accountability, including political (formal structures and policy issues), market driven (customer or client needs oriented), professional (self-imposed standards) and cultural (fostering new ideas and knowledge to society). Thus, whatever model of accountability is in practice at schools, these four dimensions must be there. This concept resonates not only with the five principles of LfL but also highlights the challenges associated with an effective system of accountability. Furthering their point, Coleman and Earley (2005) argue that decentralization of schools can enhance efficiency in schools. However, it is also clear that in order for systems to succeed, those exercising decision-making 'power' must also be open to scrutiny and share accountability with others. Accountability, according to them, can be regarded as having 'greater freedom at institutional level' with a culture that dwells on trust, equity and collaboration. Trust is

considered critical in a culture that promotes competition as well as collaboration with sharing of responsibility and accountability. Maintaining this balance between authority, accountability, autonomy and trust could be a real challenge for all practitioners at schools.

Trust in educational settings, although understudied, is an important component of schools. Schools which have a high trust in their environment have lesser need of ‘monitoring’ (Pounder et al., 1995). How is that level of trust created? Are school leaders in Pakistan skilled and ready to create this environment? Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000: p.550) also suggest that *“trust is pivotal in the effort to improve education. And yet, trust seems ever more difficult to achieve and maintain”*. Scholars argue that this simple notion of having trust in the organizational environment attributes increased collaborative relationship, promotion of risk-tolerant climates, and links to improvement in academic productivity but requires skill and willingness from all (Bryk and Schneider, 2002; Tschannen-Moran and Hoy, 2000). The failure to develop trust results in anxiety, estrangement, and isolation and low quality academic activity (Hoy et al., 2006; Tschannen-Moran, 2004). What are the practices that can promote this culture in schools? Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) state:

*“... creating an organizational culture of co-operation rather than competition is likely to have a significant impact on the trusting and trustworthy behaviour of participants”* (Tschannen-Moran and Hoy, 2000: p.573).

Fullan (2006) says that this type of change requires a lot of time, commitment and skill from leaders and all those involved. How are schools really assessed? Which schools are considered good? Is it about leadership and learning or is it about examination results only? Educators across the world are in an unparalleled time, with high-stakes accountability and increasing governmental and public pressure to improve (Galton and MacBeath, 2008; Coburn and Stein, 2010). Ironically, with all the claims made, the ‘improvement’ is usually all about exam results. Students and teachers are always overloaded with the pressure of standards, assessments, and requirements in terms of ever increasing demands for standardized assessments. The literature indicates how standardization becomes the enemy of diversity in schools and pressure of examination takes away all the creativity (Hargreaves and Fink, 2006). With this growing exam oriented competition, the ability of schools and all those involved to respond to the diverse students’ needs in their classes reinforces what Tyack and Cuban (1995) term ‘the grammar of schooling’ in secondary schools, with its one teacher and one class system of age-graded curriculum (Hargreaves, 2003). How can this convention be changed in schools? To what extent does LfL develop an environment that responds to contextualised sensitivity as well as to standardisation? What are the effects of this pressure of accountability on teachers and leaders in schools of Pakistan? How does it affect performance of the students in Pakistani schools? The literature does not provide answers to these questions. The over emphasized test results as a major bench mark for performance indicator are seen as one of the root causes of the recruitment and retention crisis at all levels in schools (MacBeath, 2006). However, in reality, is it examination results which are required the most in our world today? Are there any other skills and values that schools should develop among

learners? Hart et al. (2004) state that attending to the learning capacity of young students enables teachers to:

*“... widen and enrich learning opportunities in such a way as to strengthen and build children’s desire to engage and their power to further their own learning”* (Hart et al. 2004: p.172).

The concept of LfL, in line with Hart et al. (2004) demands important reconstruction and re-conceptualization of the assessment of learning process in schools with a different mind-set as ‘deciding what to give value to’ (Rinaldi, 2006). The questions arise whether the present assessment systems really promote leadership and learning in an environment of collaboration and teamwork; and what is the extent of the relationship among children, people, organizations and the wider world, and how it is reflected through the accountability and assessment system in school. LfL promotes a collaborative learning culture within all levels of its wedding cake model. In an ever-changing world, the most powerful kind of human capital is the capacity to collaborate and create new associations and innovative organizational linkages. Collaborating and networking can be highly beneficial in this regard (MacBeath et al., 2009). Does a formal hierarchal structure of schools in different parts of the world and growing competitive environment allow this flexibility to collaborate with other schools which can be competitors in the real world? Networking may be a new theme for schools in Pakistan as no research could be found in this regard. Is the concept of networking to promote learning and capacity building in practice in Pakistani schools? How is accountability shared in networks? These questions highlight areas of potential research in Pakistan.

#### **4.6 Summary**

The third chapter assesses the challenges that practitioners face in schools and that force them to follow conventional ways of working. Berliner (2005) says that the learners in schools live nested linked with the contextual layers of experience through which they attempt to make sense of their world. Failure to grasp this interconnectivity makes the system ineffective. It is considered that the performance indicators based on quantitative learning outcomes may not be the appropriate way to ‘measure’ their effectiveness and success and put any move to transform education in schools through involvement of all of the stakeholders at risk of failure. Students’ and parents’ involvement, though highly advocated, lacks any proper structure. Curriculum design, pressure of exams, limited resources and deficient human capital all challenge the extent to which the LfL concept is really practiced and adopted. The ever increasing pressure of exam results and accountability has created problems of retention and sustainability. The chapter highlights many areas of potential research particularly in Pakistan where very scant research is available.

#### **4.7 Conceptual Framework drawn from the Literature Review**

The literature review informs the underpinning conceptual framework and purpose of the study which analyses how leadership and learning are conceptualized and twinned, how their interplay transforms the whole school life into a new legacy of collaborative action and may result in a better form of leadership and learning in schools. Literature reveals that leadership for learning depends on the understanding, capability and practice of those involved in the

process of learning. Different contextual variations may have a significant impact on the meaning of leadership and learning in schools. Having international, multi contextual aspects, the concept of LfL based on the Carpe Vitam LfL Project (MacBeath et al., 2009) has gained the interest of many educational researchers and practitioners. Chapters Two to Four provide a description of the concept in literature with a focus on the five principles of LfL as explained in the Carpe Vitam Project (MacBeath et al., 2009). Similar to the five principles of the LfL identified in the Carpe Vitam Project, literature highlights the importance of leadership as an activity in schools that has a focus on learning and creates an environment for learning for all in schools through dialogue, shared leadership and responsibility among different stakeholders with underpinning factors of context, agency and purpose. Considering these aspects that inform and design the conceptual framework of the study, the practicality and usefulness of the LfL Carpe Vitam Concept is analysed in the selected schools in Pakistan. The literature review has provided clarity of the concept but raised many questions as well.

Importance of an on-going dialogue for learning among stakeholders is advocated in LfL but to what extent do leaders involve other stakeholders and take decisions accordingly in schools in Pakistan? How leadership and learning is conceptualized in schools has an impact on the outcomes. Claxton's (2002) four Rs provide a strategy for teachers to be able to understand and improve the process of learning among students in the classroom but the literature highlights the importance of stakeholders' involvement in the process of learning at all levels of learning. Can Claxton's model be a tool here for leaders in schools to enhance learning at all levels? Can different levels of learning as identified in the earlier studies in the West

(Watkins, 2003; Southworth, 2004; Alexander, 2004) be used to inform the learning process in schools in Pakistan? Is it only about the readiness of the leaders and stakeholders or is it also about their ability and knowledge to enhance learning outcomes? Contextual variations and different resources and involvement levels of different stakeholders may have a different impact on learning outcomes with co-constructivism (MacBeath et al., 2009); and to what extent is it different or the same in a big country like Pakistan? How is leadership and learning conceptualized and practiced in the public and private schools of Pakistan? The complex and changing nature of both leadership and learning in schools, and the concepts and significant relationship between them, informed the conceptual framework and research questions of the study. These have provided valid indicators on which the study can be based to explore the usefulness of the concept in schools in Pakistan with implications for the research design, methodology and methods for this study, as described in the next chapter.

## PART THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN

### CHAPTER FIVE: RESEARCH DESIGN

#### 5.1 Introduction

I will explain in this chapter the research design with a justification in terms of my ontological assumption, philosophical stance, research methodology and methods. The validity and ethical issues will also be considered in terms of the research design. The chapter will provide details of the methods employed to collect and analyse data in the study with a focus on ethical consideration. Saunders et al. (2007) portray the research process as an ‘onion’ where assumptions must be made at each individual stage of research approach, referred to as layers of the ‘onion’ (Figure 4).

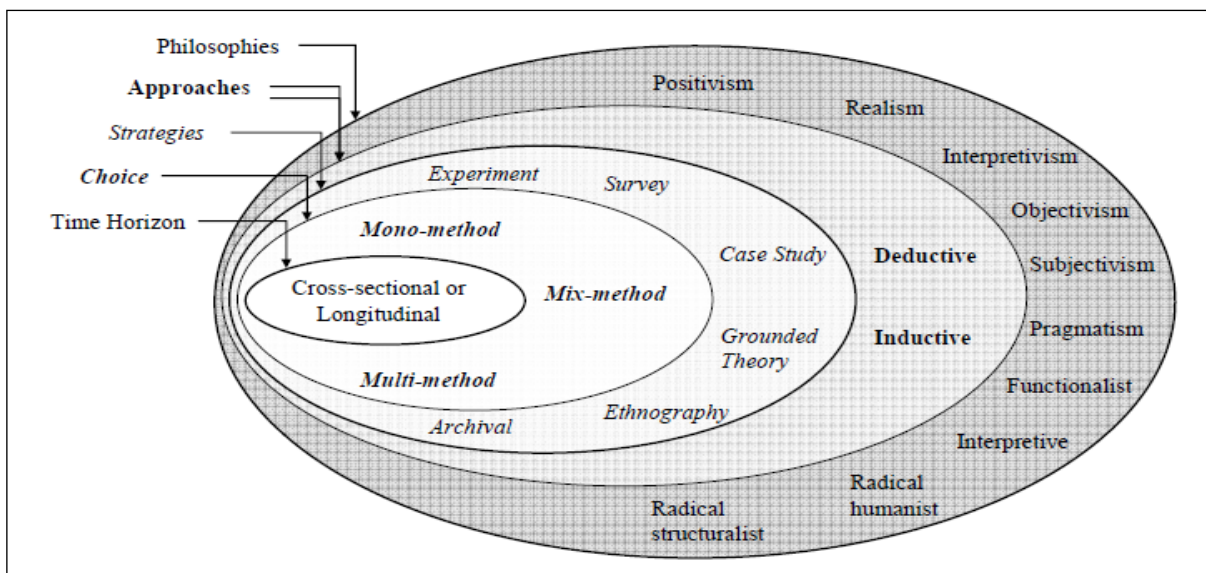


Figure 4: The Research Onion (adapted from Saunders et al., 2007)



Similar to this notion, Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) explain the entire sequence of the research design. They suggest:

*“... ontological assumptions give rise to epistemological assumptions; these in turn give rise to methodological considerations; and these in turn give rise to instrumentation and data collection” (p.21).*

My research design follows the same sequence. The conceptual framework emerging from the literature review informs the research methodology, guides research tools, data collection and analysis in this research. The underpinning theoretical framework of the study is linked with the Carpe Vitam LfL model that highlights the importance of how leadership enhances learning outcomes with a focus on moral purpose, context and agency through involvement of different stakeholders with a co-constructivist approach. The study explores to what extent this model of LfL may be useful in bringing improvements to the schools of Pakistan. Theoretical and conceptual frameworks inform the research questions that explore the level, extent and type of interaction and dialogue among students, parents, teachers and leaders (headteachers) in schools of Pakistan with a focus on five key principles of LfL that emerge from the literature review. Using a systematic approach, moving from general to specific, the chapter locates this research first in a wider framework of knowledge in context of the research questions. Further I explain my philosophical stance to knowledge with an ontological and epistemological perspective. This clarification determines the application of a quantitative and/or a qualitative methodological paradigm and from an objective/positivist (Bryman, 2008) or subjective/interpretive (Scott and Morrison, 2007) perspective. The

chapter provides a discussion about the research methods with a justification with regards to the theoretical and conceptual framework of this study, and analyses the reliability and validity factors within the findings. Ethical issues connected with the research have also been described.

## **5.2 Wider Framework**

The study follows a systematic approach and research questions help me navigate the process of research from the starting to the concluding thoughts. I feel that the identification of the researcher's position within the wider framework may make the following procedures more systematic and logical. The research is located within the field of LfL which has a number of overlapping and related factors like understanding about learning, learning as a process, learning levels, conceptualization of leadership, leadership as a process and leadership in practice, culture and sustainability. The research aims at a conceptualization of the process within the social settings of schools in Pakistan and subsequently is concerned with gathering and theorizing from the experiences of the school leaders and those who are led. The research explores the on-going practices, issues and challenges within LfL. To what extent are different stakeholders involved in the dialogue for learning in Pakistan? The research aims to develop an understanding of the concept of LfL keeping all the underpinning factors and implications, and to analyse if the concept is applicable in the Pakistani context, as some Asian researchers suggest that an effective leadership approach in one culture may be not very useful in another (Tjosvold et al., 2007). The implementation status and scope of the concept in the secondary schools in Pakistan is to be investigated. It explores the role of leadership in the context of

learning, and how leadership and learning is seen, practiced and experienced by different stakeholders in a developing country like Pakistan. I feel that my research is located in the conceptual as well as humanistic knowledge domains directed towards developing “*knowledge for understanding*” which could be used to generate “*knowledge for action*” (Wallace and Poulson, 2003: p.18). For the educational researcher, according to Pring (2000), an understanding of other related people and their interpretations are important. This study seeks knowledge of the on-going practices and acknowledges the ‘*social world*’ (p.96) of the practitioners. I find my research combined in the ‘*conceptual and humanistic knowledge domains*’, as proposed by Gunter and Ribbins (2002: p.378) within the wider context of educational leadership; an appropriate supporting framework since the focus of the study is to capture stakeholder perspectives and to conceptualize the process of LfL in schools.

### **5.3 Philosophical Approach**

Bassey (1999: p.38) maintains that research is a “*systematic, critical and self-critical enquiry*” which aims to contribute to the “*advancement of knowledge and wisdom*”. He describes that research is primarily concerned with “*understanding the phenomena of educational activities and actions*” (p.39). Morrison (2007) argues that in trying to understand and generate knowledge in the field of education, researchers operate within a highly interactive area of different beliefs, perceptions and actions. Similarly, McKenzie (1997) points out that “*research is embedded in a churning vortex of constructive and destructive tensions*” in which “*old certainties*” are overruled by “*the new certainties*” (p.9). McKenzie identifies two questions which are of extreme importance for the researchers: what is our theory of

knowledge (epistemology) and what is reality (ontology). Cohen et al. (2007) describe that research is concerned with understanding the world. This understanding is informed by how we view our world and interpret according to our preferences and understanding. This understanding and interpretation is linked with the philosophy of the researcher. These philosophical issues are what researchers silently think (Scott and Usher, 1999); these are extremely important as they define the direction and meaning of knowledge within a research project. Literature about social and educational research defines the unique nature of the ontological, epistemological and methodological considerations of the interpretive and positivist approaches (Bryman, 2008; Creswell, 2009; Cohen et al., 2007; Hitchcock and Hughes, 1995; Morrison, 2007). In order to identify my philosophical stance, it is important to identify the ontological and epistemological position which will form and identify the methodological approach in this study.

Ontological assumptions are linked with the essence of realities which may be external to individuals or may be produced by the individual consciousness (Cohen et al., 2007). It is important for a researcher to identify the ontological position to recognise different perspectives of realities. Cohen et al. (2007) point out that there are two positions being the nominalist and the realist in the ontological assumptions. The realists find the reality being imposed on the individuals being external to them whereas nominalists view reality as being made by every individual; it is not external in this perspective. This debate is more like a nature-nurture debate to me. Many of the contemporary researchers in educational leadership and management recommend that schools should become learning organizations in a socially

constructed and interdependent environment which is continuously changing (Fullan, 1993; Leithwood and Louis, 1998; Mitchell and Sackney, 2000, Lauder et al., 2008 and 2009; Ashton et al., 2009). The co-constructivist approach with the underpinning factors of moral purpose, context and agency within LfL, different levels of learning resulting from different types of interaction of students and teachers (MacBeath et al., 2009), suggests that reality is a combination of both of the assumptions that is dependant on how humanbeings interpret and interact within their surroundings. According to Swaffield and MacBeath (2009a: p.3) leadership is made “*manifest in negotiated order between leaders and followers*”. While leaders can often draw on their positional authority to support the beliefs and actions they advocate, followers can influence leaders by drawing on personal characteristics, their access to information and their special knowledge or expertise. In some situations, the external element may be very dominating to shape reality and in other situations the individual may transform realities themselves. The literature highlights some ‘principles’ of the concept of LfL without which the concept remains incomplete, but then it also highlights the importance of the context of every school. It is argued that with all of the principles, the concept has been and will continue to be, a developing narrative as it involves norms such as trust and collaboration and varies in form depending on the frequency and quality of contact and strength of bonding between people.

Educational researchers bring a wide range of realities or ontology to their work as different theoretical perspectives. Some of these theoretical perspectives change in response to changing times and other direct or indirect influences of the interactive factors. So,

epistemology, as Morrison (2007: p.18) says, is central to research endeavour, “...*researchers seek to know the reality they are describing*”. Epistemology is closely related to ontology but refers to knowledge and its creation. What is the true nature of knowledge, and how does a person come to know that? Researchers ask questions based on what, how and why or why not to investigate the concept under consideration. Hofer and Pintrich (2002) say that these questions are linked with the personal epistemology of the researchers. Personal epistemology or epistemological stance signifies individual conceptions of what knowledge is and how it is known. These conceptions are referred to by various labels, for example, epistemological belief, epistemological posture, epistemological resource, and ways of knowing (Niessen et al., 2004). In making sense from the data collected, the researcher draws upon a set of beliefs structured implicitly or explicitly in certain epistemologies called paradigms. There are three claims about knowledge; one which claims that knowledge is objective that can be discovered, invented or passed on: mostly people who are physical scientists would subscribe to this type called positivists. On the other side, interpretivists claim that the knowledge is subjective and is dependent on perceptions and understandings of the people involved who can experience the same world in an entirely different fashion. These two epistemological assumptions in these instances determine extreme positions on whether the knowledge is something which may be acquired or which has to be personally experienced (Cohen et al., 2007). The third claim attracts many researchers from social sciences where the human being is a subject as well as an object of the study and is labelled as post-positivism (Trochim, 2002). The literature presents an interesting debate between the proponents of epistemological identification and affiliation in every research. Guba and Lincoln (1988) argue that the basic assumptions underpinning the conventional positivist and the interpretive (which they call

naturalistic) paradigms are fundamentally in opposition to each other. They say that “...*to call to mix any of the paradigms will be equivalent of making a compromise that the world is flat over the view that the world is round*” (p.93). Patton (1988) also seconds their view by saying that their position is a convincing one. Contrary to this, in a recent work, Niessen et al. (2008) present their *enactivists* view which maintains that:

“... *boundaries between student–teacher, individual–community, cognition–bodily experience are becoming blurred ... therefore, epistemological beliefs should be conceptualized as fluid and dynamic constructs, emerging in web-like configurations instead of being treated as static and mechanical beliefs*” (Niessen et al. 2008: p. 27).

Considering my position within the wider framework, and my philosophical stance in this research which explores the interplay of the two words ‘learning’ and ‘leadership’ that are dependent on many other interactive factors, I subscribe to interpretivism, where “... *social actors or enactivists or leaders and stakeholder negotiate meanings about their activities*” (Scott and Morrison, 2007: p.130) in organizations like schools. Cohen et al. (2007) argue that interpretivism attracts many educational researchers as it enables them to fit to the kind of concentrated action found in classrooms and schools. The influence of researchers in structuring, analysing and interpreting the situation is less than any other more traditionally oriented research. The on-going research in the field of education challenges traditional epistemological constructivism that stems from symbolic inter-actionist (Mead, 1934) as a result of some very important questions which it raises about achieving inter-subjectivity (Chi, 1996; Brown et al., 1989; Bruner, 1986). They also investigate the influence of surrounding

factors on the course of learning and challenge that learning cannot be a passive process. The researchers claim that learning is fundamentally a social activity. Co-constructivism is an important underpinning factor that informs the conceptual framework of the study. Contrary to constructivist theory, it claims that learning and enculturation are not led by any one individual or one brain but are a result of social interaction, embedded in a society which is a mixture of belief, perspectives and knowledge. Dialogue and active involvement of different stakeholders is the key essence of co-constructivism.

Within the paradigm of interpretivism, many researchers subscribe to symbolic interactionism, a concept emerged from the work of Mead (1934) but there is no clear and final set of assumptions or principles associated with the concept. However, Woods (1983) provides a summary of the key emphases of the symbolic interactionism. He argues that humans are the constructors of their actions at micro and macro level that have an impact on the outcomes. The concept is also seconded by the enactivist view in education suggested by Niessen et al. (2008) who claim that effective learning cannot take place in a controlled and passive environment. The meanings of different actions and events are different for all of the human beings depending upon their own perspectives and experiences through life. These meanings are subject to change based upon continuous negotiation through interactions with each other, or may change because of change in social context or in role identities. The concept of LfL revolves around the process that allows dynamic constructs resulting from fluid interaction of different stakeholders involved. As informed also by Hosking and Bouwen (2000), who say that enactivism holds a relational ontology, meaning that:



*“... all social realities and all knowledge of self, others, and things are viewed as interdependent or co-dependent constructions existing and known only in relation to each other. However, the researcher’s role may remain of a non-participative or participative observer who can observe action or interpret others’ enactivist actions.”* (Hosking and Bouwen, 2000: p.130).

In line with the concept of LfL and literature, analysis of how and at what level different stakeholders in schools of Pakistan interact with each other emerges as an important part within this study. It is embedded within practitioners’ practice regarding how and why those ideas and actions are generated, used and nurtured as Beck (cited in Cohen et al., 2007) explains:

*“The purpose of social science is to understand social reality as different people see it and to demonstrate how their views shape the action which they take within that reality”* (Beck, 1979 cited in Cohen et al., 2007: p.20).

Researchers conceptualize what is being done or might be done, to establish consistency and stability within the practices and culture and/or if required how to bring in change. The concept of LfL is intellectual, interactive and as such it depends on thinking, dialogue and interpretation of the concept and its implementation.

## 5.4 Research Methodology

This section reflects on the justification for the approach to the chosen research methodology. Many researchers suggest that research methodology and design should be selected keeping fitness for purpose in view as there is no one frame fits all model available or hard and fast rules about it (Cohen et al., 2007; Bryman, 2008; Morrison, 2007). Cohen et al. (2007:78) suggest that *“the purposes of the research determine the methodology and design of the research”*. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2003: p.443), *“the important thing is to know what questions can be best addressed by which method or combination of methods”*. Contrary to Guba and Lincoln (1981), Reichardt and Cook (1979) suggest that the researchers must move beyond the debate around paradigms and methodologies, and use whatever suits according to the requirements of the research questions. Seconded by many others, it is argued that paradigms should be complementary rather than competitive to each other according to the requirements of every research and study (Burrell and Gareth, 1979; Shulman, 1986; Miles and Huberman, 1984, 1994; Hassard, 1991; Donmoyer, 1999). Shulman (1986) argues that different paradigms are like pieces of puzzles: *“Only when the different puzzle pieces are assembled can we have a reasonably complete picture of educational phenomena”* (p.6). The participants’ perceptions combined with contextual realities originate the ontological and epistemological stance of this study. Based on the interpretation of their responses, themes and patterns emerge. Therefore the study is within the qualitative paradigm, yet Scott and Usher (1999) argue that considering quantitative and qualitative research techniques distinctly apart is to lack subtlety. Adding to this, Johnson et al. (2007) emphasize the importance and need of a third paradigm, mixed methods research, which draws upon the strengths and weaknesses of

both positions. Significantly, they suggest: “*what is most fundamental is the research question; research methods should follow research questions in a way that offers the best chance to obtain useful answers*” (Johnson et al.: p.17).

The research is a qualitative study with a mixed method approach (Johnson et al., 2007) or as identified by Patton (1981) as multiple paradigm research or paradigm of choices in the context of research methods, data collection strategy and analysis approach, with a single underpinning epistemological stance. Morrison (2007: p.27) argues that for the interpretivist there cannot be an objective reality which exists irrespective of the meanings which human beings or different actors bring to it through interaction or enactivism (Niessen et al., 2008). The rationale behind taking the mixed methods approach in this study emerges from two important considerations: first, the epistemological and ontological position of the researcher with regards to the research that is linked with the underpinning theoretical and conceptual framework and, second, to achieve the objectives of the study and to address the planned research questions with the optimal capacity (Morrison, 2007). As Fraenkel and Wallen (2003) maintain, qualitative can be used with quantitative research but “*the important thing is what questions can be best addressed by which method or combination of methods*” (p.44). The justification behind this strategy is “*to obtain different but complimentary data on the same topic*” (Morse, 1991:122) to best explore and conceptualize the research questions. Mixed method approach also brings together the different strengths associated with each method that helps to overcome the weaknesses of qualitative and quantitative methods in their stand alone justification within any research (Creswell, 2009; Patton, 1988). Mixed method

approach allows the researcher to use data together that is collected through different tools and in different forms, for example, words, narrative, pictures and numbers to add meaning and precision (Johnson et al., 2007). By combining the quantitative and qualitative methods, weaknesses associated with these can be minimized (Johnson et al., 2007; Morrison, 2007). With emphasis at different levels and phases of research, mixed method approach can analyse data with better links between different levels within data (Morrison, 2007). Therefore, it can potentially address a broader and more comprehensive range of research questions (Johnson et al., 2007). The study looks for purpose and meanings that inform thoughts and actions of those involved in the process of learning in schools with a focus on LfL. The data is collected through different sources such as interviews, questionnaires and documentary analysis. The data collected from parents and students in the study is through questionnaires which are mostly structured and where quantitative techniques have been used in this study. However, these questionnaires have open-ended questions as well, and as Scott and Usher (1999) postulate, are quantitative in nature but can still explore meaning. Therefore, the data collected and analysed have qualitative rather than quantitative significance. Johnson et al. (2007) suggested that there are three major research paradigms: qualitative, mixed and quantitative. They expanded their classification by suggesting that there are subtypes of mixed methods research, as illustrated in Figure 5 (p. 117).

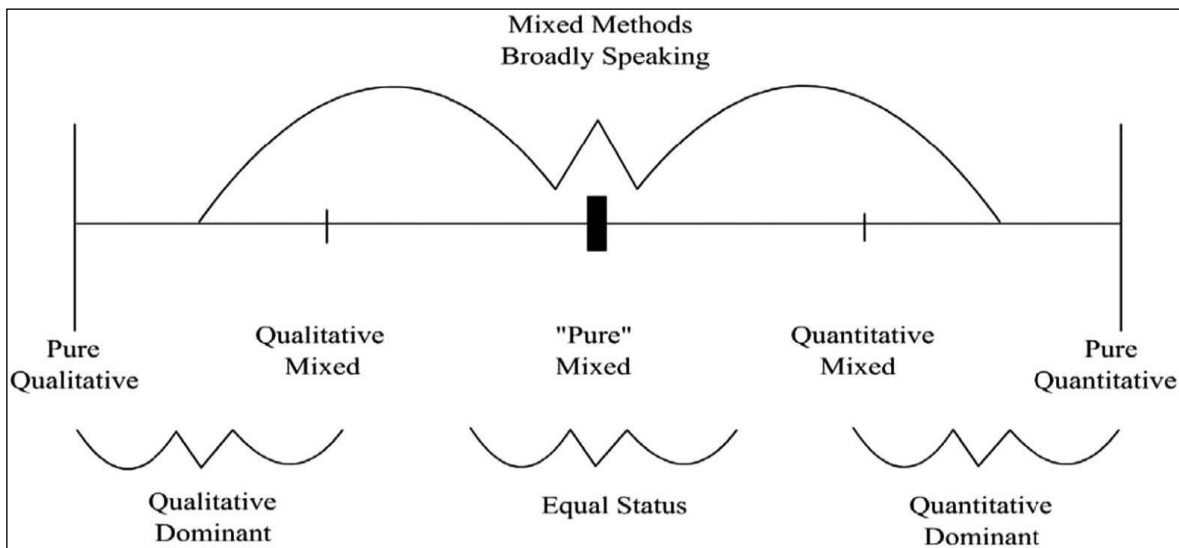


Figure 5: Graphic of the three major research paradigms, including subtypes of mixed methods research (adapted from Johnson et al., 2007: p.124)

Following their classification, this study could be labelled ‘qualitative dominant mixed methods’ research to pursue a better understanding to analyse data. Contrary to quantitative and positivist research, the interpretivism emphasises words rather than numbers (Morrison, 2007), but to analyse some of the data more precisely (as explained ahead in the Data Analysis section), a quantitative approach will be adopted in structured parts of the questionnaires. Having used qualitative research techniques in the broader research design which combines qualitative and quantitative strategies, the research will have a *design triangulation* (as described ahead under validity section below) as well as *explanatory design* where I will collect the qualitative data, followed by some quantitative data from questionnaires to refine the findings (Creswell, 1998; Fraenkel and Wallen, 2003; Morrison, 2007) and to analyse the similarities and difference within practices and claims. This analysis, however, as Beck (cited in Cohen et al., 2007) suggests, may not reveal *ultimate truth* and establish generalisation but

will be helpful for a better understanding as to what extent the LfL is influential for school improvement in Pakistan. Mason (2002) cautioned researchers against such a generalisation because she argues that usage of a little element of quantitative method does not necessarily turn a study into a mixed method research. My study remains basically a qualitative research with some use of quantitative method to analyse some parts of structured questions. My research will follow a qualitative approach as the concept of leadership is difficult to measure and the qualitative research rests upon the researcher working in the natural setting and culture of those being studied rather than testing a preconceived hypothesis. However, the research may generate hypotheses and theories based on the study. Mayall (2000) argues that there is a general consensus among researchers that the research in schools is for and with learners not on them; my research is resonant with students' voice as well. They, along with other stakeholders, have an active role to play in the process of learning, a concept that is prevalent in literature within the co-constructivist approach of LfL where moral purpose, context and agency directly impact the five principles of LfL, as well as within enactivism in interpretivist research (Niessen et al., 2008). The research questions, therefore, were developed with a focus on the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study with a strong consideration of context (in which schools work in Pakistan), moral purpose (how leadership and learning is conceptualized in Pakistani schools) and agency (what happens in schools in terms of leadership and learning, who is involved and at what level and capacity in schools of Pakistan).

Based on the interpretivist approach, the central aspect of the research is to conceptualize the subjectivity of the process of LfL as it is understood and experienced in schools in Pakistan. The study is qualitative in nature and looks for meanings created by the practitioners in the schools of Pakistan that might also inform the direction of future research and policies. To be able to analyse whether ‘truth’ is co-constructed through interactions among different stakeholders in the process of LfL in schools of Pakistan, being one of the pioneer projects in Pakistan, the research aims to achieve rich data for meaning and better understanding. Therefore, the case study approach is considered appropriate because it accommodates all of the desired diversity of perceptions. Geertz’ (cited in Cohen et al., 2007) description of a case study as “... *to catch the close up reality and thick description*” (cited in Cohen et al., 2007: p.254) supports the research objectives. The next part of the chapter discusses the features of the case study that will help the study to investigate all research questions effectively and followed by the choice of sample and data collection methods:

*“This emphasis upon the uniqueness of events or actions, arising from their being shaped by the meanings of those who are the participants in the situation, points to the importance of the ‘case study’”* (Pring, 2000: p.40).

Case studies are considered as a useful research approach by many researchers in the qualitative paradigm as they allow them to observe the case that can be an individual, a group or a sector, closely and in depth using multiple sources of data collection some of which may be quantifiable (Pring, 2000; Cohen et al., 2007). Robson (2002) suggests that in a case study the focus is on a case in its own right and taking contextual details into consideration; a claim

that goes well with the conceptual framework of the study. Case study is often emphasized as “*enquiry based*” but in a “*real life context*” (Yin, 1993: p.123). This emphasis on context given in the case study approach is in line with the claims and objectives of my research study. Yin (1993) highlights three important characteristics of the case study approach as being an empirical enquiry that:

- *Investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context; when*
- *The boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which*
- *Multiple sources of evidence are used.* (Yin, 1993: p.123)

The research aims to gather a holistic view of the prevalent situation in the schools of Pakistan in terms of the concept of LfL. The research is located in the conceptual and humanistic knowledge domains, where the focus is to investigate what the practitioners know and need to know, what is worth knowing (conceptual domain) and moving to how they decide what to know, how to know and practice that knowing and who does the knowing (humanistic domain). This approach to knowledge, knowing and knower as Gunter (2005) describes is multi-level: first, technical where I focused on the actual practice regarding what activity and actions take place; second, illuminative as interpreting the meaning of practice regarding how and why activity and actions take place; third, critical questioning about power relationships within and external to activity and actions; fourth, practical as the research might be able to recommend some improvements in activity and actions; and fifth, positional where I will align my position with particular knowledge claims about activity and actions (for example in terms



of participant schools, staff). With this approach, what Yin (1993) identifies as multi-level embedded case study design, the study has multiple units of data and analysis within the same case study and presents opportunities for extensive analysis through the linking of stakeholder perspectives.

Yin's evolving work, however, highlights many advantages and disadvantages of using case study as a research strategy (cited by many: Bassey, 1999; Cohen et al., 2007; Stake, 1995). Evidently, there is a strong emphasis on triangulation of data to support this approach. He reinforces the need by giving examples from both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. Using more than one strategy or mixed methods approach will ensure design triangulation that helps to increase validity in this multiple paradigm research. I collected data using multiple tools (details given ahead in the methods section) and from different levels of stakeholders (details given in the sample section). Literature cautions of the pitfalls of using case studies for establishing validity and reliability especially when examined using a positivist standpoint. It is argued that developing theories from uncontrollable data in single and multiple case studies is difficult (Bassey, 1999) and can give distorted and uncontrolled information if used in quantitative domains where truth is constructed in an experimental context-independent environment; whereas the present research explores the 'truth' in a context-dependent environment. The selected multi-level embedded case study approach that I used in the study, through different sources of information to collect data with a mixed method approach, also brings in triangulation in my research design and data. Triangulation of data strengthens my selected approach and presents a fuller picture of the

prevalent conditions in the schools of Pakistan in terms of the concept of LfL as I collect and compare data from five different sources being headteachers, teachers, parents, students and documentary analysis in every single case (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1995).

To be able to know the reality as it exists in the participating schools of Pakistan in context of the research topic, and to investigate whether the initial area of research interest could yield important and valuable information, the study was conducted in two parts: the pilot and the main study. Considering the research aims and questions and my own philosophical stance, the research has a qualitative case study methodology in both parts of the research. Merriam (1988) classifies case studies as descriptive (narrative), interpretive (developing conceptual categories to investigate initial assumptions), and evaluative (judging and explaining). Similarly, Yin (1993) identifies three types of case studies in terms of outcomes as exploratory (as pilot to other studies), descriptive (providing narrative accounts) or explanatory (generating or testing hypothesis). I have used an exploratory case study at this stage. The pilot study investigated the first two of the research questions and explored how leadership and learning is understood in Pakistan. How headteachers perceive and exercise their role in context of LfL. Two schools were selected (details of the selection process given ahead in the sample selection part). Interviews and documentary analysis were the main tools in the pilot study. The main study also has case study methodology, where data was collected through interviews, documentary analysis and questionnaire. The pilot study is considered useful as it guided the main study in many ways and also helped in understanding the boundaries for this study.

The pilot study was undertaken in two schools in Lahore (one public and one private) and involved two headteachers, four teachers, the school development plan for the years 2008 and 2009 and the school logbook, newsletter and calendars of the following years, 2009 and 2010, that reflected on the implementation of the development plan (Appendix 4, p.402). Given the small group of participants involved in the pilot study, it is important that the researcher maximises the possibilities that the sample may render and avoid any unnecessary use of resource and time. This pilot study also ascertains that the research moves in and identifies the right direction through the situation analysis about the general understanding of the concept of LfL in the public and private secondary schools of Pakistan. It also assures that the following main study is designed and developed appropriately. The selected approach in the pilot study gave a useful portrayal of leadership and learning in its real settings in the selected schools and provided the right direction to the following study. It has been defined as the study of an instance in action designed to illustrate a more general principle (Nisbet and Watt 1984; Yin, 1981 and 1993; Stake, 1995; Gillham, 2000a and b). The outcomes of the pilot study enabled me to explore and understand how leaders and learning are conceptualized and experienced in schools in Pakistan.

The first two research questions explored in the pilot study were phrased as a result of the literature review and sought to refine and ascertain the main study research questions. The interviews were semi-structured so as to enable comparisons between scripts and to focus the direction of the interview, but they were not so rigid that respondents were not allowed to offer their own personal insights or to discuss further topics. The main focus of these

interviews probed responses with regard to the present conditions in terms of leadership practices, learning process and involvement of different stakeholders in the process at school. The pilot study allowed the researcher to come to several important conclusions regarding the concept, research questions, methodology and respondent group to be used in the subsequent study. These were:

- Given the way leadership and learning is conceptualized differently in the public and private schools, it was decided that data from both of the sectors would be collected in the main study to have a wider picture of the prevalent conditions in schools in Pakistan.
- Given that the teaching staff and leadership responses had yielded comments linked to leadership ability and style of leader and its impact on staff motivation, professional development opportunities and contribution of different stakeholders in general but that of parents in particular, parents' feedback would also be included as part of the sample during the main study and research questions were refined accordingly
- Given that the data highlights the importance of establishing a learning dialogue between students, parents and school as a need as well as a big challenge to develop co-constructivism in LfL, the main study probed the idea further and research questions were refined accordingly.
- Given the usefulness of documentary analysis, the researcher would use school calendars, log books, newsletter of the current academic year, school development plan and lesson plans as a research tool in the main study.

- Given the benefits and scope to get rich and in-depth data, the main study also followed a case study approach where interviews, documentary analysis and questionnaires were the main tools; hence the study has a mixed method approach to collect data.
- Given the discussion and the pilot study outcomes, representation of students will also be included in the sample as they are considered an important stakeholder with schools in Pakistan (Appendix 4, p.402 and sample selection part).
- Given the accessibility constraints and restrictions in some schools, the researcher will use questionnaires as a secondary tool to collect data from students and their parents.
- Given the lessons learned from the pilot study outlined above it is now possible in the next section of this chapter to explore the methodology that will be used in the full research study.

## **5.5 Research Methods**

The research follows a mixed method strategy where different research tools were used to collect data which was analysed using the qualitative and quantitative approach appropriately. During the main study, six schools were selected (selection details given in the “sample” part ahead), the research employs semi-structured face to face interviews with one headteacher and five teachers, and sixty questionnaires for students and for parents in every school. The interview questions and questionnaires were piloted among two headteachers, four teachers and five students of the secondary schools in Lahore to avoid any pitfalls in the design and contents. Piloting also allowed an opportunity to ask questions and reflect upon the responses

given in terms of whether the question accurately elicited the type and style of response that had been anticipated. This then enabled a detailed analysis of questions asked, therefore leading to a reformulation of the types and style of future questions. Such an approach is supported by Cohen et al. (2001) who recommends piloting since it allows the researcher to test the procedures and techniques used and wherever possible increase their reliability, validity and practicality in order to produce worthwhile results:

- to allow for the checking, removing of any ambiguities or difficulties with wording the sequencing of the questions in the research tools;
- to highlight and take away any redundant questions;
- to gain feedback upon the type of questions and their format;
- to check the time taken to be interviewed;
- to identify commonly misunderstood or non-completed questions;
- to determine the boundaries of the research.

As Kvale (1996) suggests, learning to interview only takes place by interviewing and practice is the only means by which to master the craft. Piloting had a further benefit for the researcher in so much as it allowed for more confidence in asking the questions, and this in turn placed the interviewee more at ease when answering questions. It weeded out any inappropriate, deficiently or over emphasized items in the following main study. Access was obtained meeting all of the ethical requirements (mentioned ahead in the Access and Ethics sections). Based on the findings, the methods and procedures were refined.

### 5.5.1 Interview Instruments

The use of interviews in educational qualitative research reinforces my epistemological stance that individuals involved are subjective and may not be manipulated and interpreted in form of numbers and decimals only. It provides a chance to know the human subjects as they generate data and knowledge through conversation (Kvale, 1996). Interviews are considered a means of direct transfer of pure information (Cohen et al., 2000). However, there are certain disadvantages besides advantages that are associated with interviews. They are called conversation with a purpose (Rubin and Rubin, 2005). Table 1 presents an overview of some of the advantages and disadvantages of interviews.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Flexibility allowing for adjustments to further develop and control direction of the discussion in terms of research questions	Interviewer effect, if not balanced may contaminate data with personal bias
Direct transfer of pure information and knowledge	Danger of interpreting the unsaid
Valuable depth of information and experience	Invasion of privacy
Can be a rewarding experience for the informant especially reflecting time about their or organizational practices	Time consuming, taking an appointment, travelling, transcribing and coding
A lot of data coming from one source	Data analysis of open-ended questions is difficult

*Table 1: Advantages and Disadvantages of Interviews (adapted from Denscombe, 2003)*

As the study is a mixed method multi-level embedded case study, the interview method provided a chance to get rich data directly from the practitioners who were involved in the process of leadership and learning in schools. Considering the theoretical framework and focus of the study, semi-structured interview was considered appropriate (Bryman, 2008). There are different types of interview, for example, telephonic and focus group. I have used face to face interviews. The research explores the LfL concept which is a broad area so for each of the interviews one hour of time was requested. The model which the researcher draws upon is the *interview guide approach* (Patton, 1981 cited in Cohen et al., 2000: p.271) as it encourages the interviewee to speak with clarity on the issues which are raised by the interviewer (Denscombe, 2003). Interview questions were scheduled considering the research aims in mind and were a mix of open-ended to semi-structured questions (Appendix 3, p.400). The sequence of the questions was the same as discussed by Denscombe (2003) and Cohen et al. (2000). In the first section of the interviews, descriptive questions were asked. Gradually the idea was made to comment, advocate or condemn. All of the ethical issues were duly considered before, during and after the interviews (details given in the ethical considerations section).

Interviews were conducted on a one to one basis according to the agreed schedule. The procedure began with the formal letter for obtaining the consent of the informant to participate in the project. An estimated time of one hour was kept for every interview with little variation as interviews were semi-structured. The interviewees' consent was obtained to tape record the interviews in addition to taking field notes. The interviews were conducted at the work place



of the participants. Based on the outcomes of the pilot study and in the light of the literature review, main study interview questions were scheduled. A semi-structured approach was used in the interviews. This gives an opportunity to the interviewee, as compared to structured interviews, to elaborate points of interest in terms of the research study (Denscombe, 2003). Interviews were tape recorded with permission and transcribed later on (Appendix 11, p.427 ).

### **5.5.2 Questionnaire**

The field of questionnaire designs is vast and holds many types of questionnaires. It is the traditional supplementary instrument used in a case study as it gives easy access to a wider audience. There are potential advantages associated with questionnaires such as being inexpensive, quick to administer (as compared to observation or interview) with easy processing and comparison of answers, and being convenient for the respondents (Bryman, 2008; Cohen et al., 2007) making it a useful tool to collect data from parents and students in this study. Many researchers warn of the problems which a new researcher may encounter if the questionnaires are not handled or designed properly (Cohen et al., 2000; Bryman and Bell, 2007). To avoid this, the questionnaires were piloted among five students of a secondary school located in Lahore. Table 2 (p. 130) illustrates the process of questionnaire development as informed by Churchill and Iacobucci (2002) and Maylor and Blackmon (2005).

The questionnaires for the parents and students used in the study mirror each other and are divided into three sections (Appendices 9, p.413 and 10, p.420). Section 1 is about

biographical information. Section 2 has five research questions with twenty structured questions on a five level Likert scale which was categorized as ‘strong disagreement, disagreement, neutral, agreement and strong agreement’. Data was interpreted based on the number of participants selecting these categories respectively (details given in the data analysis part).

<b>Step 1</b>	Specify the information that will be sought
<b>Step 2</b>	Determine the type of questionnaires and the way to administer
<b>Step 3</b>	Contents of individual components
<b>Step 4</b>	Determine form of response
<b>Step 5</b>	Select wording of questions
<b>Step 6</b>	Determine sequence of questions
<b>Step 7</b>	Finalize layout of the questionnaires
<b>Step 8</b>	Re-check from step 1-7
<b>Step 9</b>	Pilot test questionnaire
<b>Step 10</b>	Administer the questionnaire

*Table 2: The process of questionnaire development:  
Source: Churchill and Iacobucci (2002); Maylor and Blackmon (2005)*

The last section has three open-ended questions that allow more narratives about different issues, challenges that parents and students face in school, the practices they appreciate or any recommendations. Sixty questionnaires were distributed among the students in every participating school of the public and private sectors with a purposive sampling strategy

(details given in the sample section). The instructions of the British Educational Research Association (BERA) (2004) were followed. The questionnaires were structured and semi-structured. The questionnaires were anonymous.

The ordering of the questions is important in terms of a response, as early questions set the tone and mind set of the respondents. The sequence of the questions is in accordance with the sequence of the research questions that intends to explore different aspects and levels of LfL from a definitional aspect to an analysis of practical implications. This format gives data a systematic and organized shape, and develops the interest of the participant by increasing the level of the question from understanding to reflection and review of the roles and procedures involved in the concept of LfL. As Oppenheim (1992) comments, the covert purpose of every question is to maintain the interest and co-operation of the respondent. Furthering this point, Cohen et al. (2000: p.257) say that the most important thing is to avoid creating a “*mood set or mind set early on*” of the respondent. Any leading questions with an option of only one answer that might affect the validity of the responses in the questionnaires were avoided. The questionnaires were piloted among five students of the secondary schools to remove any errors in the content of the questionnaires. Moreover, complex questions and difficult terminologies were removed. Efforts were made to keep all the questions accessible and to the point but without being directive or leading. The appearance of the questionnaires is made with an easy approach in mind. The questionnaires were designed to allow straightforward access and completion.

### **5.5.3 Documentary Analysis**

Documentary analysis is considered an important method of collecting the data in qualitative case study research. It helps the researcher to identify the significant features of the process, event or organization with regards to the study. It helps explore the things which have already happened or are yet to take place in an organization. It may be used for validity in the research interpretations (Fitzgerald, 2007). However, Scott and Usher (1999) caution the use of documentary analysis as the only method in the research. They suggest that the documents should be examined and interpreted in the context of other sources of data in the same research. Agreeing with Scott and Usher (1999), the documentary analysis was used with interviews and questionnaires. School logbook, newsletter and calendars and development plans of the last two years were analysed in the pilot study and school calendar/activity calendars, log books, lesson plans and newsletter of the year 2010-11 were reviewed in the main study. School development plans indicate the future direction that the school intends to move towards. It also provides details of the strategic plan and framework for action. It reflected on the delegation and distribution of leadership in school, decision-making process and level of involvement of different stakeholders. The log book and newsletters carry records of all of the important events, important days, functions, school achievements and growth over the specific period of time. The school development plans accessed were of the year 2009-10.

Table 3(p. 133) provides an overview of the advantages and disadvantages of the documentary analysis as a research method. This documentary analysis helped to elucidate the focus of the school as to what is the concept of leadership and learning in the school, whether it is a

number and exams oriented school, is there any evidence of student led activities (in and out of class), is there any evidence of celebrating success and achievement and what is the evidence of parental involvement in school? What is shared with parents and others through newsletters?

Advantages	Disadvantages
May provide information that an interview or questionnaire may not cover	May not be accurate as documents can be altered or made as per requirements
Can be accessed at a time convenient to the researcher	Documents may confidential, or unavailable or incomplete
Allows a researcher to gather data from the words of the participant	Documents may be subjective
Contains vast data which may not be available elsewhere, for example, school results, names of the students, attendance record	May be difficult to locate, may be incorrectly catalogued, kept in several record rooms or in different locations
Use of electric tools to store and analyse data makes it easy for the researcher	Can be time consuming

*Table 3: Advantages and Disadvantages of the Documentary Analysis  
(adapted from Fitzgerald, 2007)*

## 5.6 Characteristics of the Sample

To ensure trustworthiness and reliability in research, it is extremely important to take careful decisions at all stages of research and particularly at the time of selecting and finalizing sample size and type. The design and specifications of the sample and procedure strengthened the findings of case study. Purposive sampling as recommended by Cohen et al. (2007) has been applied in this research, as the cases were selected keeping fitness for purpose in view

and in order to access the “*knowledgeable people*” (p.115). Each case in this research was selected on the basis of a few parameters and characteristics, in accordance with the theoretical framework, scope and aim of this study. The role of different stakeholders with a focus on context, moral purpose and agency within five principles of LfL was the underpinning factor for the justification of purposive sample selection. This sampling strategy is often used in qualitative research to select the cases based on specific purpose, type, context or criterion in mind. Researchers try to select the participants and samples in a purposeful manner to best understand the social phenomenon (Bryman, 2008). Being a non-probability form of sampling, generalization to a population remains confined and difficult (Bryman, 2008; Cohen et al., 2007). There are two main sampling strategies being probability or non-probability sample (Cohen et al., 2000). In my research, a limited number of schools were being accessed so it belonged to a non-probability sample. I used a cluster sampling method since the schools are widely dispersed across the country making it difficult to access all of them within a specific period of the study (Cohen et al., 2000). This method is widely used in small scale research.

Pakistan is a big country where education is provided by public and private education providers:

*“Where private providers play an important role in the education system, they may or may not receive public funding; and they may or may not be required to meet certain standards such as the provision of a set curriculum or the professional and academic training requirements for their teaching staff. Pakistan is an example of a country that has both public and private sector educational institutions, which has a larger proportion of its youth attending private*

*institutions than in many other countries. As a result, it is important for Pakistan to obtain comprehensive data from both of these types of schools on a regular basis, to ensure that policy development is based on knowledge of the entire education system” (Lynd, 2007: p. 24).*

In addition to being able to have knowledge of practices from both sectors, it is considered important to include representation of public as well as private sectors in this research, that explores the concept of LfL that appreciates diversity of context and its impact on agency and purpose within the procedures linked with leadership and learning. Moreover, the pilot study highlights that leadership is understood differently in these two sectors. It is considered important to include both sectors so that the study may contribute knowledge for future researchers and policy makers in the relevant areas within Pakistan and in other countries with similar conditions.

The schools were selected in three different cities being Lahore, Islamabad and Faisalabad. The reason behind this selection was that these cities have slightly different societal culture and environment which might have influence on the environment in school. Lahore is a big metropolis where people come from all parts of Pakistan, and has a rich evolving mix of different cultures that has an impact on teaching, learning and leadership style and ability of all involved. Faisalabad is a big industrial city where the mobility rate is not very high and has a well-established culture of its own. Islamabad is the capital of Pakistan and has a population mix of both local and people from in and out of Pakistan. Public and private sectors mark

clear divisions of two types of schools in Pakistan which have different rules and regulations. It was decided to include voices from both sectors. The inclusion of private and public schools in this project is considered important as it became prominent during the pilot study that the scope and understanding on the meaning of leadership and learning is practiced and understood quite differently in public and private schools. In public schools, it appeared to be more about roles and quantifiable results. It helped me and others interested in this area to find the differences linked with the concept of leadership other than the material infrastructure and resources. The inclusion of schools from different areas and from the public and private sectors made this study of potential importance to the leaders, teachers, researchers and policy makers in the field of education in Pakistan.

The population was six interviews with the headteachers, thirty interviews with the teachers, sixty questionnaires among the students, and sixty among parents in each of the six schools besides documentary analysis that comprises of one academic/school calendar, school activity calendar, log book, newsletters and five lesson plans in every school (Table 4).

<b>Schools</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Interviews Carried out</b>	<b>Questionnaires received back from 60 parents/ per school</b>	<b>Questionnaires received back from 60 students/per school</b>	<b>Documents Reviewed</b>
<b>Public School 1</b>	Lahore	Headteacher (Male) 5 Teachers (Males)	51	53	5 Lesson Plans, School Log Book, School Development Plan, Calendar
<b>Public School 2</b>	Faisalabad	Headteacher (Male) 5 Teachers (Males)	49	46	5 Lesson Plans, School Log Book, School Development Plan, Calendar
<b>Public School 3</b>	Islamabad	Headteacher (Female)	50	53	5 Lesson Plans, School Log Book,



		5 Teachers (Females)			School Development Plan, Calendar, Newsletter
<b>Private School 1</b>	Faisalabad	Headteacher (Male) 3 Teachers (Males) 2 Teachers (Females)	55	54	5 Lesson Plans, School Log Book, School Development Plan, Calendar, Newsletter
<b>Private School 2</b>	Islamabad	Headteacher (Female) 3 Teachers (Male) 2 Teachers (Females)	43	47	5 Lesson Plans, School Log Book, School Development Plan with Calendar, Newsletter
<b>Private School 3</b>	Lahore	Headteacher (Female) 1 Teacher (Male) 4 Teachers (Females)	52	47	5 Lesson Plans, School Log Book, School Development Plan, Calendar, Newsletter

*Table 4: Sample Description of the Main Study*

The questionnaires were administered through the schools. In the beginning, permission to access these schools was requested from The Regional Director of the private school system and Secretary/Director Public Schools, Punjab, through a letter to allow access to the public and private schools to participate in the study. Physical resources are considered a very important factor to determine the quality of learning outcomes by some of the teachers and school heads in public schools in Pakistan (Javed, 2005). They consider that if the schools have similar resources in public and private sectors, the performance could be at the same level. Therefore schools were selected on the basis of certain similarities in terms of student population, number of staff, physical resources like building and infrastructure, for example playground, labs, computer labs, geographical location and level of the school (secondary) so that the concept of LfL may be analysed in context of the schools without any major differences in terms of resources. In Pakistan, most of the secondary schools are single sexed

in the public sector whereas the private sector has co-education as well as single sexed schools. The schools were selected without any gender differences in view. However, consideration was given to their geographical location. All of the schools were selected from the bigger cities of Pakistan: Lahore, Faisalabad and Islamabad. The selection of the schools was made considering their catchment areas, number of students and level of school. Secondary schools with a minimum of five hundred student strength were selected. Time selected for the interviews was from September to April as the public schools in Pakistan follow an academic year which begins in April. Punjab is the most populated province of Pakistan. Schools were selected from three big cities: Lahore, Faisalabad and Islamabad. Sixty questionnaires were distributed among students in each school in the main study. As per the teachers' and headteachers' responses in the pilot study, it was also decided to include parents' perception as well in the main study, so sixty questionnaires per school were distributed among parents. In order to include students' voice, data was collected from high schools as it is considered that the senior school students may be able to participate with a maturity of thought and perception about the leadership and learning. Thirty teachers in the main study and four in the pilot study were interviewed. Five teachers from each of the six schools were interviewed during the main study. Participants (teachers, students and parents) were selected through school administration after seeking permission from the senior management (Appendix 1, p.395). In every school, one teacher was a newcomer in the field with less than two years of experience and the others with at least six years of experience. It helped in understanding to what level and extent co-operation, induction and professional development of newcomers and those working in that school takes place. Six headteachers in the main study and two in pilot study were interviewed.

## **5.7 Access**

Access to the practitioners was considered an important issue that may have a direct impact on the entire project. The selection of schools is a difficult decision for the case study. Access to the schools was obtained through proper channels. Permission to access these schools was obtained from The Regional Director of the private school system and Secretary/Director Public Schools, Punjab.

Headteachers were contacted well ahead of time to ensure their availability. Sometimes leaders are reluctant to give free access to the staff and particularly to their students and parents. The situation in my case was very encouraging as all of the six schools agreed to participate in the study. Working with different universities and training institutes in my previous roles, I have noticed that a culture of research is developing in educational institutions in Pakistan with a focus to improve learning. Moreover, working with a big private education system in Pakistan which owns almost two hundred schools in Pakistan and five different countries in the world, I found it easy to access different private school leaders from the same and some other systems (their identities cannot be revealed keeping the ethical issues in view, and these are referred to as Private School 1, 2 and 3 in the main study). However, the leaders of the schools had no direct link with the researcher other than belonging to or knowing the system in which the researcher worked. Most of the public schools also participated without any reluctance. However, almost all of the schools were reluctant to allow direct access to students and parents, therefore questionnaires were administered through the school. The distribution of questionnaires was made through the

headteacher's office and that also maximised the return response rate contrary to the postal questionnaires that usually have a low return (Robson, 2002; Cohen et al., 2007). Using emails for parents was not a good option as not all parents in Pakistan have access to the internet or use emails. The questionnaires were distributed after the round of interviews was completed. The BERA (2004) code of ethics was followed before accessing the participants.

## **5.8 Ethics**

Research is a form of disciplined inquiry with its core principles and structure aiming to *“contribute to a body of knowledge”* (Busher and James, 2007: p.106) *“as carefully and as accurately as possible”* (Pring, 2000: p.143). The process must follow a framework based on some code of practice or ethics establishing a commitment to honesty (Sammons, 1989). *“The understanding of ethical conduct by a researcher is central to this framework. Ethics embody individual and communal codes of conduct based upon adherence to a set of principles which may be explicit and codified or implicit, and which may be abstract and impersonal or concrete and personal”* (Zimbardo, 1984 cited in Cohen et al., 2000: p.58). The role of researcher is very important in qualitative research in the context of the process and the outcomes of the research. The process of data collection and data analysis in qualitative research involves continuous reflexivity and self-scrutiny (Pyett, 2003) to maintain a balanced and unbiased stance of the researcher. Personal reflexivity helps determine one's personal values and beliefs whereas epistemological reflexivity helps analyse and refine the research questions, design and methodology in terms of the objectives of the research. Creswell (1998) cautions that within a study, role and close distance between the researcher and the

participants may have implications for bias. It is therefore considered central to maintain a neutral, non-assertive stance during the entire phase of data collection and analysis. Efforts were made to ensure that participant schools should not have any former familiarity with the researcher. As Denscombe (2003) argues, personal identity and acquaintance with the researcher may contaminate the data with biases.

However, I do acknowledge that I have been working in sphere of education in different capacities for more than seventeen years. I am still working with one of the largest private education systems in Pakistan and have been working as a consultant with the Directorate of Staff Development, Government of Punjab that is a teacher training institute for the public schools in Punjab, so there may be a chance that some of the respondents may consider me an insider. To this extent, I feel that it is very difficult to keep oneself completely aloof from the ethos and context of same field in which the subject and the object of research are located (Scott and Usher, 1999). Therefore, the researcher's role can be defined as in between the insider and outsider researchers. According to Morrison (2007: p.32) reflexivity "*is the process by which researchers come to understand how they are positioned in relation to the knowledge they are producing*". Hammersley and Atkinson (1995: p.19) assert that one should "*abandon the idea that the social character of research can be 'standardised out' or avoided by becoming a 'fly on the wall' or 'full participant'*". This argument makes the role of a researcher who is professionally and culturally an insider very clear. This self-awareness and positioning in relation to the intended research is useful for producing critical, systematic and skilful accounts (Morrison, 2007). Special attention, however, was given at the time of

sample selection, that the participating schools should be the ones where the researcher has not been involved in any capacity. Further to this, to minimise the effect, the design triangulation and a mixed method approach proved to be useful. The chosen design permits for a larger number of participants to be included through questionnaires, rather than interviews, at a particular point in time that *“has the attraction of anonymity, non-traceability and confidentiality for respondents in it”* (Cohen et al., 2007: p.207). Moreover, documentary analysis of a period of two years also added depth and clarity to the data.

Work of many researchers highlights the importance of ethical considerations in any type of research (Butler, 2002; Shaw and Bryderup, 2008; Dominelli and Holloway, 2008). BERA (2004) is a reference point for the community of researchers from all over the world who want to conduct any research in the UK completely or partially. It is expected to inhabit and exhibit a culture of ethical awareness, ensure ethical approval before the commencement of the research, and demonstrate awareness of the ethical issues and their consideration throughout the research. Confidentiality and anonymity of the participant data is given high priority (BERA, 2004). Participants are given the entitlement to privacy, confidentiality or to withdraw at any stage of the research. The present research was undertaken in Pakistan and was submitted in the UK for an international audience. The data is collected from Pakistan. The ethical guidelines of BERA (2004) and those followed in Pakistan are reviewed and followed. The code of practice contains similar requirements in both countries. Confidentiality, anonymity and consent to participate and right to withdraw are available to the participants in the research. Bailey (1996) comments:

*“Ethical researchers need to inform those in the study whether the research is anonymous, confidential or neither. Research is anonymous when the researcher is unable to identify the participants in the study. In a confidential study the researcher knows or could know the identity of the participants but does not reveal who they are” (p.11).*

So, all of the participants who participated in the questionnaires are free to maintain privacy and complete confidentiality was offered to them. Consent was obtained with respect to all of the methods employed in the study to collect data (Appendices 1,p.395, 7, p.409 and 8, p.411).

The participating schools were given the codes as follows:

- School A (Pilot Study)
- School B (Pilot Study)

Schools in the main study were given the following codes:

- Private School 1
- Private School 2
- Private School 3
- Public School 1
- Public School 2
- Public School 3

Headteachers and teachers are also given a number from 1 to 6 in participating public and private schools as per the order they were approached. A request letter was sent to all the prospective participants before starting the fieldwork (Appendices 1, p.395, 2,p.398 and 6).

The case study methodology constitutes the research where the researcher worked in close or direct contact with the children and young people. Being in the list of vulnerable groups (BERA, 2004), the consent was obtained from all of the participating students, staff, school heads and parents of the students before collecting any data. Students and their parents were not accessed directly. Questionnaires were used for them which were administered through the headteacher's office and returned in sealed envelopes. These envelopes were given with the questionnaire. The interview timings were finalised at the convenience of the participants. Interviews were tape recorded besides taking field notes. The interviews were transcribed. The raw data will remain with the researcher for three years after the completion of the research study. None of the documents were taken out of the school premises, however, notes were made on observation in accordance with the research questions.

## **5.9 Validity and Reliability**

Validity and reliability are two important factors which determine the quality and scope of any research outcomes. The authenticity of any research depends upon the procedures carried out to address validity and reliability. Their meanings in regard to their design and process may change according to the epistemological stance of the researcher which also has a direct link with the research design. Moreover, some researchers argue that the concern for reliability is central in quantitative research, as in qualitative research the social realities are considered to be constantly changing (Marshall and Rossman, 2010) so qualitative researchers should not worry about whether their research tools measure accurately (Silverman, 1993). Reproducibility or reliability of a qualitative research outcome and process is considered



irrelevant because in qualitative research, the focus is mostly on practices that are strongly bound to context (including time and place) (Moret et al., 2007). As the sample size is small, the reliability or the external validity is problematic if applied to the whole of Pakistan or any other country with similar conditions. Though not generalisable, the findings will be of value to let others, for example schools in similar conditions, reflect on their practices with school improvement in mind with better understanding of the concept of LFL.

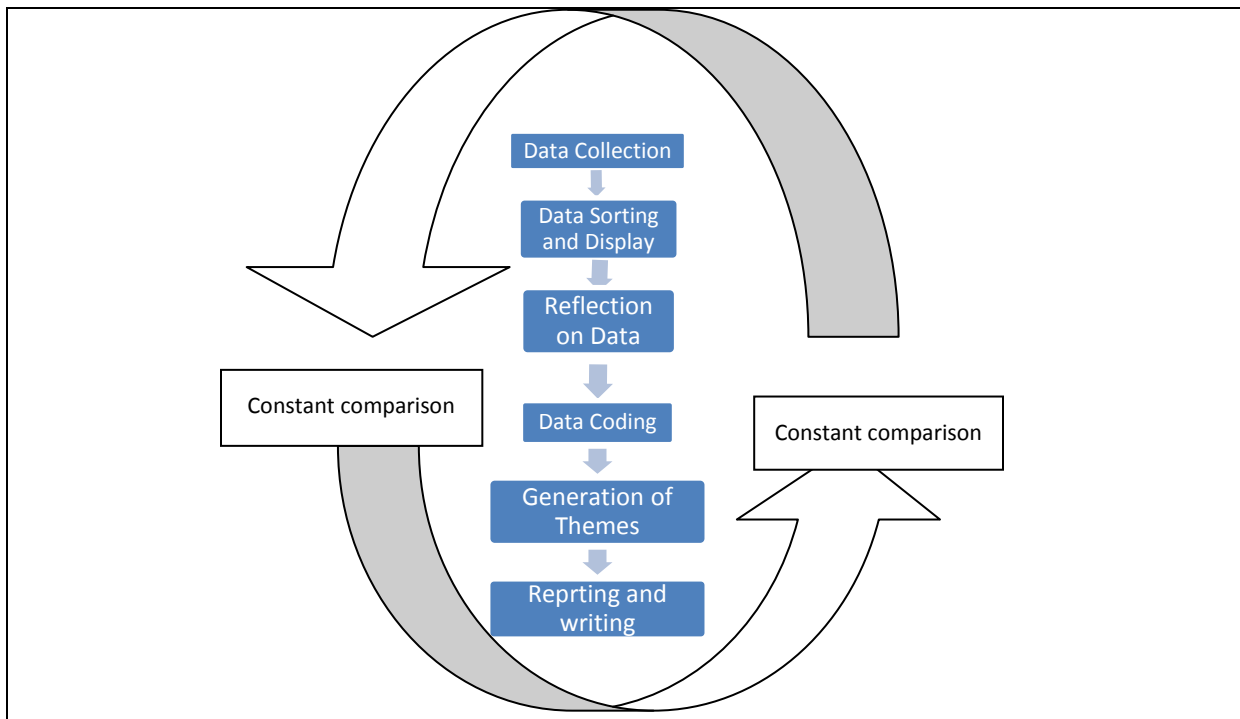
Concerns with the issues of validity in qualitative research have increased with the popularity of the approach in social sciences (Cho and Trent, 2006). Many argue that the high validity in research may lead to high quality of every type of research (Bush, 2008; Cho and Trent, 2006; Cohen et al., 2000; Maxwell, 1998 and 2005), however, I agree with Cohen et al. (2000) who suggest that understanding is a more suitable term than validity in qualitative research in terms of the outcomes as it is highly contextual. They believe that data is derived from participants and research findings emerge from that data. Hence, reality revealed in this manner remains the reality of that participant group that a researcher must be able to explore. Many researchers, on the other hand, are proponents of the importance of validity in qualitative as well as quantitative research (Hammersley, 1989). Using a mixed method approach to obtain data, the research design of the study has a clear focus on validity. The literature suggests that a pilot study is used to refine research tools and approaches to data collection, in foreshadowing research problems and questions, in “... *highlighting gaps and wastage in data collection, and in considering broader and highly significant issues such as research validity, ethics*” (Sampson, 2000, cited in Marshall and Rossman, 2010: p. 49). The case study

approach uses multiple sources of information, for example, heads, teachers, parents and students. So it ensures design triangulation using a multi level embedded case study approach (Morrison et al., 2007). Through this approach multiple methods are used to collect data and sometimes the same method is used to collect data from different groups within the same organization, process or concept, for example interviews with the school heads followed by the interviews of teachers. Bush (2008) defines it as the concept of validity to determine the accuracy of research in terms of the description of process that it is intended to describe. The research design, methodology, methods and conclusion of the research all should ensure validity of the process. The participants were not familiar with the researcher so that no biases would affect the participation and opinion of the respondents. The interview questions and questionnaires were piloted among five students and four teachers to ensure structure and format and language efficiency and validity before using them in the study.

### **5.10 Analysing the Responses**

The study is an interpretivist mixed methods multi-level embedded case study with a qualitative approach. My task in the study remains to achieve a thick description and originality of the responses (Denscombe, 2003). As Bassey (1999) describes, what data analysis is “... *about is an intellectual struggle with an enormous amount of raw data in order to produce a meaningful and trustworthy conclusion which is supported by a concise account of how it was reached*” (p.84).

The main approach in the project (pilot study as well as the main study) to organize data and generate themes drawing out from the main research questions by all the stakeholders responses is through the “*constant comparison*” (Thomas, 2009: p.198) analysis which looks for ‘patterns and processes, commonalities and differences’ and draws out themes accordingly. The six element model introduced by Watling and James (2007) combined with the constant comparison method were followed to analyse data as one of the main models, however, the researcher made some changes according to the requirements of this study (Figure 6, p. 148). For example, instead of testing a theory, I explored the Carpe Vitam LfL concept in term of emerging themes which emerged through constant comparison under design and respondent validity in focus. Interviews were tape recorded (after obtaining the consent of the interviewees) and fieldnotes were taken. The interviews were transcribed. Data was analysed following a straightforward systematic approach question by question. No data reduction was done from the pilot study as it identified the research questions for the main study. Miles and Huberman (1994) describe how coding can ‘differentiate and combine the data’ with reflections on the information gathered (p.56). Coding (Fielding, 2002; Saldana, 2008) was used as a basic technique to analyse interviews, documents and semi-structured parts of the questionnaires and patterns were identified in the structured parts of the questionnaires.



*Figure 6: Six elements of qualitative data analysis with constant comparison  
(adapted from Watling and James, 2007 and Thomas, 2009)*

Although ‘Nvivo’ or ‘Code-a-Text’ was available, I completed the coding manually as reading the script developed understanding and gave me a chance to do a constant comparison with direct interaction in this small scale research project. Anselm (1987) argues:

*“Any researcher who wishes to become proficient at doing qualitative analysis must learn to code well and easily. The excellence of the research rests in large part on the excellence of the coding” (Anselm, 1987: p.27).*

Responses from participants were entered in a matrix (Figure 7) and a process of coding, categorisation and theme identification (Saldana, 2008) was applied (Figure 8, p. 150) to find meanings, similarities and differences of opinion as emerged from the data.





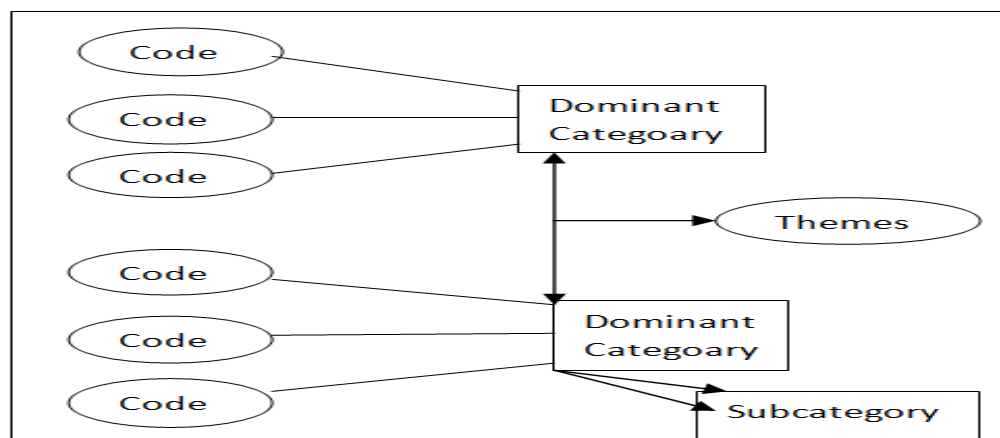
CODING KEY									
					(Majority and mostly)				
					(Few)				
					(Very Few)				
					(Occasional)				
Research Questions	(T1)	(T2)	(T3)	(T4)	(T5)	Key words	Dominant Category	Subcategory	Theme

Figure 7: Matrix of Responses

Using the systematic and constant comparison approach, the study uses the coding procedure (Figure 8) recommended by Saldana (2008). During analysis, coding helped to do multidimensional analysis of data across research questions and respondents. First of all, keywords/codes were identified with a similarity and difference/addition approach with reference to the theoretical framework of the study (Merriam, 1998) and based on the frequency of responses (Table 5, p. 151). These codes were applied and reapplied to codify and helped to identify main categories. This process of constant comparison permitted data to be “*segregated, grouped, regrouped and relinked in order to consolidate meaning and explanation*” (Saldana, 2008 p. 12). Coding enabled organization and grouping of data into categories “*because they share some characteristic*” (Saldana, 2008) similar, that helped identification of themes. Some categories contained clusters of coded data that “*merit further refinement into subcategories*” (Saldana, 2008: p.11). These categories were compared with

each other and consolidated together leading to emerging themes. Based on this procedure, colour coding was done on the data that were put together on a matrix, and categories were identified from where themes emerged (Figure 8, p. 150). Documentary analysis was done according to the codes and themes that emerged from interviews and open-ended part of the questionnaires. For example, if the head was asked about the importance of extracurricular activities and sports in the school routine, the presence of evidence in terms of any achievements, celebrations or organization of events in or out of school in the logbook, newsletter and calendars where the students participated, were given the same code as being used in the interview or questionnaires.



*Figure 8: Process of Coding, Categorisation and Themes Identification  
(adapted from Saldana, 2008)*

Based on the number of participants under each code and in the questionnaires under five given scales, terminology of most, majority, some and few was used to present and analyse data with percentage-wise illustrations for each of the terms. The key for the terms is as shown in Table 5 (p. 151). In the result records, Microsoft Word was used to record, represent and

analyse data. The questionnaires had twenty structured questions. These were represented on a graph using Excel, based on the percentages categories shown in Table 5 with regards to the Likert scale (described in the questionnaire section).

<b>Terminology/category</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Most	More than 75%
Majority	Between 50-75%
Few	Between 30-50%
Very Few	Between 10-30%
Occasional	Less than 10%

*Table 5: Percentages of the Categories of the Commonality in Data*

I have also provided a graphical overview of the data collected from the Likert scale questions in the Findings chapter ahead. The patterns were observed to identify and highlight grids. In analysing the questionnaire data, Munn and Drever's (1990) advice was to put it into a more manageable form. Conclusions were drawn on all of these responses and emerging themes to illustrate points made in the study. The research aims for patterns and themes across the study so data analysis is done question by question instead of case by case.

## **5.11 Critique of the Approach**

Based on the findings of Carpe Vitam Project and the ‘principles’ of the concept introduced by MacBeath et al. (2009), my research explores the concept in schools in Pakistan. It is claimed in the LfL Project that these principles are important components of the concept. However, here the principles can “... *lay claim to an impact, help chart a new course or set the narrative off in a new direction*” (MacBeath et al., 2009: p.223). These principles were used throughout the study to guide my data collection tools and questions. Contrary to Gage (1989) who says that the interpretive researchers draw upon the “*phenomenological perspective of the persons behaving*”, Erickson (1986) claims that behavioural uniformities are not considered in interpretivism “... *as evidence of underlying, essential uniformity among entities, but as an illusion - a social construction*” (Erickson, 1986: p.126). The people may differ in their responses to the same or similar situations. Thus, interpretive researchers argue that individuals are able to shape and phrase their own social reality, rather than having reality always be the determiner of the individual's perception (Cohen et al., 2000). According to Erickson (1986), interpretivists can do research without any hypothesis. They are not “*standard*” researchers in their “... *theoretical presuppositions about the nature of schools, teaching, children, and classroom life, and about the nature of cause in human life in general*” (Erickson 1986: p.125). He disagrees that the teaching and learning is a mechanical or chemical or biological concept which may be completely standardised and structured, rejecting the assumption of uniformity in nature. He questions the assumption that the same phenomena may occur in the same way in different places and times. Some people challenge this notion and introduce the concept of ecological validity. The ecological validity investigates if the known similarities or dissimilarities of one setting established through in depth study are “... *generalizable in substantial degree to those in other settings*” (Spindler,



1982: p.8). They claim that the findings of in depth studies may be generalized if the actions take place again in the similar conditions and some sort of common agreement can be established. For example, a common belief about the correlates of effective schools or education may be generalised. Therefore, my research tries to find out if these principles are applicable in Pakistani schools or is there any change required according to the specific context?

In my research, the subjective experiences of the human beings are important. The main focus in this project is not to invent or frame a universal law or establish generalization, like it happens in the positivist approach, rather it is concerned with the way in which the individual creates, modifies and interprets the world around him/herself (Cohen et al., 2000) and to contribute to the knowledge through population and ecological validity (Hammersley, 1979a and b; Spindler, 1982; Evans, 2001; Vulliamy and Stephens, 1990). Indeed, Cohen et al., (2000) suggest “*understanding*” is a more suitable term than validity in qualitative research. So, although the research is not generalizable, trends and issues will emerge to inform and answer my research questions and contribute to the ongoing research agenda.

My research is positioned with an epistemological assumption that reality is not out there as an amalgam of external phenomenon waiting to be revealed as facts, but a construct in which people understand reality in their own different way (Morrison, 2007). I am focussed that the entire research design and process leads to a useful analysis and findings as more than one method has been used to reach to that. It is important to consider its limitations. Though the

sample is not very big to attempt generalizability, I think the internal validity is established through the piloting of instruments, respondent triangulation and methodological triangulation. Moreover, the data was collected from different cities of Pakistan to have a wider inclusion. This is the first study of its kind in Pakistan to explore the concept of LfL. Its findings may set the direction of any future research that may be conducted with a more in depth and rigorous long term project, taking an action research approach as participant or non-participant observer to develop a strategy and scheme of works as a bench mark of performance of LfL in the schools in Pakistan. Anyhow, the selected sample and the data obtained provide a comprehensive picture of the extent to which the concept of LfL is prevalent and may be developed in the schools of Pakistan.

## **5.12 Summary**

This chapter navigates through the entire process beginning from an ontological and epistemological consideration to a realistic analysis of the research design, highlighting the limitations of the research. The description of the entire research design has been provided with a link in context of the research objectives and with justifications of selecting the specific research methods. Being in two knowledge domains, I find that my research objective can be achieved best by adopting an interpretivist, qualitative methodology with a mixed method approach for data analysis. The researcher tries to justify the reliability and validity factors and ethical issues within this qualitative study. The data analysis process has been explained in detail to give a clear idea about the authenticity of the findings. The chapter tries to establish the validity of the entire research design as being an appropriate one for the selected

study. The research design and the entire process involved, from selection of tools to selection of sample, and from data collection to findings and analysis and then to drawing conclusions, have been made considering fitness for purpose; such is the complexity of the design process. After considering various aspects of the research design, the epistemological, methodological and ethical issues, methods and limitations, the next chapter presents the findings based on the data collected through this research design.

## **PART FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **CHAPTER SIX: FINDINGS**

#### **6.1 Introduction to Findings**

The chapter presents findings of the data collected from six schools. Including both public and private schools in the sample helped to include voices from both sectors that make important contributions in education working within quite different contexts and structures (Lynd, 2007). Data from these sectors highlights many similarities as well as differences towards the concept of LfL. It also revealed different levels of dialogue for learning among different stakeholders that exist in both sectors. The structure of this section stems from the research questions which provide a framework for the entire research project. My aim is to make the findings logical and accessible to my audience, as Flick (2002) suggests that making your work clear and coherent involves a consideration of audience. The conceptual and humanistic approach in my research, as Gunter and Ribbins' (2002) work on knowledge domains suggests, enables communication not just to the research community, but to policy makers and practitioners. I have collected data from headteachers, teachers, students and parents from six schools using interviews and questionnaires and documentary analysis as methods. Data has been divided into themes connected with the research questions. Data has been analysed question by question as the main aim of the research is to conceptualize how leadership and learning and their interplay is understood by different stakeholders in Pakistan in comparison

with how it is explained in the LfL Carpe Vitam Project. So the findings chapter will focus on the thoughts and meanings shared by the research participants to draw out better understanding in relation to the research questions. Though the complexity and diversity of the settings poses a challenging task, the interpretative approach of the research design and processes in this project has been useful to generate a shared understanding arising out of social situations. The data gathered is vibrant with diverse and dynamic concepts, opinions and practices and is presented in a manner that portrays these explanations clearly and appropriately. The findings are presented question by question with a constant comparison approach across the entire data to look for deeper insight and meaning. The findings from the questionnaires, documentary sources and interviews have been grouped around the central stakeholders involved in the study providing a ‘voice’ for each set of respondents. These voices have been categorised into groups as:

- The first is the *headteachers*; this group includes headteachers from all six schools,
- the second is the *teachers*: this group is formed of teachers from all of the participating schools,
- the third group consists of *students and parents* who participated in the study from these schools.

The research, therefore, looks for a range of perspectives for collective and shared meanings rather than presenting the data case study by case study.

This chapter of findings focuses on the five research questions:

- How is leadership and learning understood in the schools of Pakistan?
- How do headteachers in schools in Pakistan perceive that they influence teaching and learning in their schools?
- To what extent are headteachers, teachers, students and parents engaged in a dialogue for learning in their schools in Pakistan?
- To what extent do teachers perceive themselves to be part of a learning community in their schools?
- To what extent is student voice a contributory factor for improvement in teaching and learning in schools of Pakistan?

At the end of each section of the findings that is linked to each research question, a brief summary is given. Based on the findings chapter, an overall analysis and comparison of the data is made in the next chapter. The summary given at the end of each section in this chapter provides identification of the emerging issues and themes which will be discussed and analysed in the next chapter.

A pilot study was the first part of my research that informed the main study. The first two questions were explored in the pilot study and the findings helped in shaping up and refining the other research questions in the main study. The data was collected from two secondary school settings in Lahore. One school was public and the other was private. Public school (referred to as School A) was affiliated with the Lahore Board of Intermediate and Secondary School and had secondary school certificate (SSC). It is the local education system of

secondary school examination in Pakistan. The private school (School B) was affiliated with Lahore Board and with the Cambridge International Examination and therefore was offering SSC as well as GCE 'O' Level curriculum. Before focusing on the main research questions, the next section briefly highlights some substantial findings from the pilot study which streamlined the subsequent data collected from the stakeholders involved in this research.

## **6.2 Pilot Study**

During the pilot study, two headteachers and four teachers from two schools were interviewed. School development plans for the years 2008 and 2009 and school logbook, newsletter and calendars of 2009 and 2010 were analysed. Semi-structured interviews took place using the interview schedule outlined in Appendix 3, p.400. These interviews were carried out following the ethical guidelines outlined in the chapter entitled 'Research Design'. The comments from respondents were subsequently recorded and then transcribed for better analysis of the emergent themes from the comments made which then in turn informed the future study. Keeping the design triangulation in view within this small scale pilot study, documentary analysis proved to be a useful tool. It was conducted after the interviews. The frequency of events and existing situation was interpreted in terms of the scale given in the Research Design chapter. The same scale was used to make analysis in the documentary evidence.

From the responses given about roles and responsibilities of teachers and leaders, distribution of works, and the decision-making process, it became evident that a general consensus existed among all the participants that the leaders should involve staff in the decision-making process. However, there was a difference of opinion between teachers' and headteachers' responses when it came to implementation and sharing of leadership as a routine practice in schools. Both of the headteachers said that this was a routine practice and the majority of the teachers said that it was rarely done. Headteachers defined leadership more as a role not as a capacity whereas teachers expected the leader to be a mentor who would work to maximise the institutional capacity through teamwork and creating opportunities. Documentary analysis exhibited that School B had a professional development strategy in their school development plan whereas school logbook, newsletter and calendars did not provide evidence of any professional development practices in the respective year.

Analysis of student leadership made it evident that the answers related mainly to decisions from leaders or teachers and showed a lack of depth of understanding about the concept. School Councils were present in the schools but their role was mostly around doing small administrative tasks. They were not involved in the decision making in School A. However, little evidence was found in School B of their participative role. Parents' role was considered important. Students' performance and learning was linked with their results mostly. Both the schools claimed to have a collaborative learning culture but very little was found in the documentary analysis. Teachers' responses show that leadership was mostly busy in administrative tasks and did not have any direct interaction with the students in classes.



Leaders' responses reconfirmed this information but said that they interacted with students and kept themselves updated about classroom practices in the light of students' perspectives whenever possible. However, no specific format of these informal meetings or interaction was evident in the school development plan or logbook, newsletter and calendars. However, it was considered important by all to consider students' opinions and needs to enhance learning outcomes. The concept of learning was defined mostly in terms of students' performance in exams. The performance of schools which have good results in the subjects leading to good prospects in future was considered commendable. School A participants considered that students and their parents were only interested in studying the few subjects that lead to highly paid jobs. They felt that project work was considered wastage of time and money and other resources. However, the headteacher of School B told that the strategy of community involvement, projects and creating internship opportunities for students in different industries and markets, enhanced learning outcomes. Documentary analysis also supported this information as a common practice in the senior school. School A participants also agreed that there should be a well-defined policy where community, market and parents should all be actively involved in the process of learning at schools. Schools should promote a culture of learning that prepared students for real life challenges. The pilot study highlighted the importance of parents and market representatives as significant stakeholders with schools in a country like Pakistan that faces extreme economic constraints. It is considered important to include parents as part of the main study.

### 6.3 Presentation of Findings

My research project is within the paradigm of qualitative research with a case study approach. As Robson (2002) expressively emphasizes, a case study approach may not subscribe to a particular system of data analysis, however, as he recommends and according to Miles and Huberman (1994), qualitative analysis can deal with a complex network of contextual relationships and connections. I have applied their definitions of three concurrent “... *flows of activity; data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification to generate, describe and analyse data*” (p.10). However, I have not undertaken any data reduction and have used a six elements process to analyse data (Figure 6, p.148) as described in the data analysis part in the previous chapter. Data analysis took place throughout the research process using a constant comparison approach. In the chapter, under each research question emerging themes have been labelled with pertinent subheadings. Interviews and responses in the open-ended questions were inserted on a matrix with a coding approach to identify keywords, main and subcategories and emerging themes (Figure 8, p. 150). A summary of the findings is presented at the end of each research question. Based on the evidence and responses, terminology of most, majority, few, very few and occasional is used to present and analyse data with percentage-wise illustrations for each of the terms. The key for the terms is as shown in Table 5 (p.151) in the Research Design chapter. However, at places in the findings, data have also been described after combining two categories together, for example the majority of those who agreed and with those who strongly agreed, to have category-wise comparison, for example between those who agree and those who disagree.

#### **6.4 Research Question One: How is leadership and learning understood in Pakistan?**

##### **6.4.1 Theme One: Examination skills make the most important part of learning process besides social and moral skills in schools in Pakistan**

The findings connected to this theme explore how learning is conceptualized in the schools of Pakistan. The overwhelming majority of respondents in all groups mentioned the importance of examination results as the indicator of quality of learning but emphasis was also given to social skills.

##### ***Headteachers***

In this first area most of the headteachers acknowledge the importance of examination results for better future prospects as one of the indicators of good learning, but all of them speak about learning to be a social process which offers learners an experience and opportunity to understand their role and responsibilities in the world that exists outside the school. The majority of this group spoke of the learning to be a process that caters to the social and cognitive skills and needs of the learners but equally important is the skill for their professional life. Four out of six respondents believed that the learning process in their school was a blend of all of these processes. It is considered important that teachers have knowledge of students' emotions but it is also important that teachers have knowledge of their own emotions as these are passed on to the students through their excitement and motivation to teach. This in turn promotes a cognitive learning environment where the teachers are simultaneously bringing in real-life experiences to make the learning process more compatible

with society. Hence, according to these respondents, learning comprises of these processes: social, intellectual/cognitive and emotional and professional (future prospective).

It is shared by the headteachers that schools in today's world have to work very hard on many other areas than examination results only:

*'Now schools that emphasize the development of the student personality and educate him to be responsible citizen and at the same time, meet with the ever increasing pressure from the parents and students about not only having high grades in the examination but also to prepare them for their future endeavours really make a difference in society'.* (Headteacher Private School 2).

The headteachers of the public schools also highlighted the importance of the examination results as one of the most important aspects of learning and share that:

*'Most of the students and parents consider that the most important task of the school is to prepare their children for exams. Most of the families have severe economic conditions and they want to make sure that the future for their younger generation is bright... sometimes parents start complaining if they find their child busy in other co-curricular activities, they think these activities may waste their child's time and he may not be able to score high grades in exams'.* (Headteacher Public School 2).

## ***Teachers***

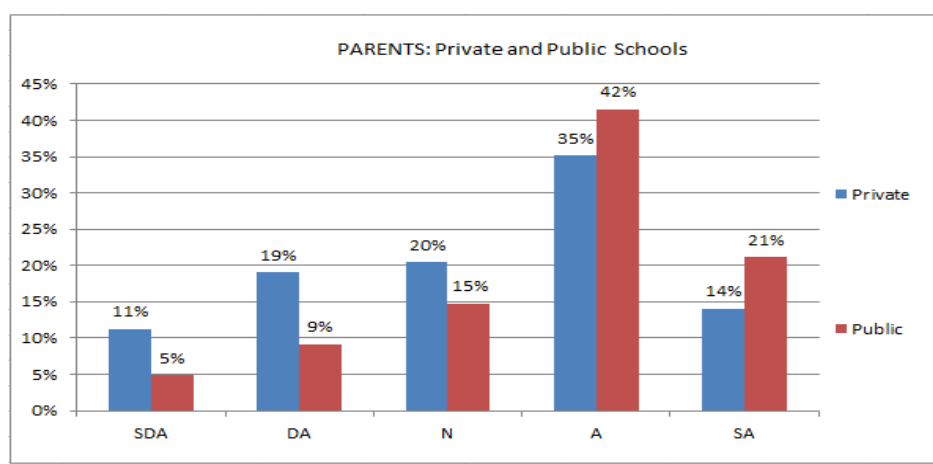
All of the respondents were of the view that learning was a combination of social, cognitive, emotional and real world experiences. Most of them (28/30) considered that schools which offered this type of learning experience to the students were distinguished as effective schools. They also attributed this kind of learning environment to the ability of leaders to the extent they are ambitious and willing to delegate authority to their team to inculcate this culture. The more the teacher is involved emotionally, better the understanding of the social and real life skills and subject knowledge s/he would transfer in her/his students. Their motivation and excitement would make the learning process really effective.

*“Knowing your students from inside, their social, emotional and intellectual personality is as important as knowing that they are physically present in class”.* (T 12 Public School 3).

At the same time, all of them spoke about the pressure of examination results and said that good results were considered the main indicator of their performance and quality of learning in the senior school. 26 out of 30 teachers mention that the pressure of examination results kept the majority of the teaching learning practices exam oriented and they could not give sufficient time to the social and emotional development aspects of their students. However, private school teachers maintain that their schools have a lot of emphasis on social and emotional growth and grooming of the students as learning remains incomplete without this focus.

### *Parents and Students*

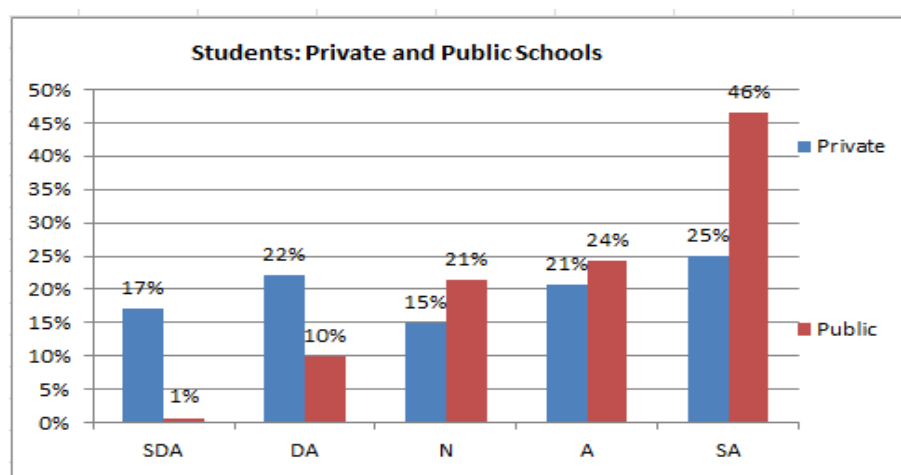
Parents' responses from public and private schools indicate that 63% and 49% of the parents respectively express that the highest expectation from the school is to prepare their children for exams (Figure 9).



*Figure 9: Good Results- Parents biggest expectation from Schools in Pakistan*

Learning in schools, according to them, is mostly about exams. However, 11% of parents of the private schools feel that schools should have a focus on other aspects such as social, moral and professional skills among students and they strongly disagree with the concept that the main purpose of learning is to prepare students for examinations.

The vast majority of the students (70% of the public and 46% of the private school students) state that their highest expectation from the school is to prepare them for examinations (Figure 10, p. 167).



*Figure 10: Students' biggest expectation from schools in Pakistan is to have high grades in exams*

Only 11% of the students from public and 39% from the private schools disagree/strongly disagree with this concept.

The school logbook, newsletter and calendars highlight the examination results as performance indicators. Three schools have included examination preparatory activities as an important part of school development plans (two public and one private school). Two of the schools have mentioned activities and achievements of students under different clubs and societies (both were private schools).

#### **6.4.2 Theme Two: Less of leadership and more of management in schools**

##### ***Headteachers***

All of the participants highlighted the importance of mutual trust, respect and collegial relationship between the leader and the team to be effective in their roles as leaders. Only two of them mentioned that leadership was a skill, not a role and as a headteacher, they must ensure a flow and development of this skill across the school (Headteachers Private School 2 and 3).

*“The concept of leadership is changing; it is more about having a collegial relationship based on trust and respect for each other with a shared belief that we can make a difference”.* (Headteacher Private School 3).

Two out of six headteachers mentioned the value and belief system of the team members and the head to understand the role of leaders in schools.

*“All stakeholders influence effectiveness of school through their style of interacting with each other that determines the way a school works. The most important is that how team members understand and appreciate their own and each other’s capabilities and how they try to enhance these”.* (Headteacher Private School 3).



The following two roles (leadership and management) have been identified as two important roles as emerged from data collected from the headteachers. The headteachers mention that they are usually busy in administrative and strategic matters. Using well established divisions between leadership and management responsibilities (Kotter, 1990), the Table 6 (p. 170) gives a description of some of the responsibilities of the Administration/Management Role and Leadership Role by these headteachers. Two out of six headteachers also referred to the “*considerable autonomy*” (Private School 2 and Private School 3) that they have in leading their schools. Whereas two other participants suggested that “*more autonomy*” and “*decentralization*” should be in practice in schools (Private School 1 and Public School 1).

One of the public school headteachers complains about “*power*” to be “*extremely limited, I consider myself more like a ‘chokidar’ ... a gatekeeper only*” (Headteacher Public School 2). Headteachers from the private schools in the sample are happy to have more “*managerial freedom*”. As a result headteachers have “*more responsibility and ownership of all aspects of the school*” (Headteacher Private School 2). “*Authority*” delegated to school leaders and subsequently to teachers is considered an important factor by the majority of the headteachers to improve their “*ability*” that results in improved learning outcomes.

Leadership Roles	Administration/Management Roles
Leading by example	Meeting the targets
Setting the agenda	Financial issues
Creating a culture that promotes learning in school	Safety and crisis management
Staff development	Troubleshooting
Performance management of staff	Communicating Policy matters
Managing change and transition	Record Keeping
Listening to staff issues and recommendations	Resource management
Recruiting to targets	Retention targets
Development plan for school to classroom	Seek to influence broader strategies
Improve effectiveness of learning outcomes	Ensure improvement in results
Ensure progress and growth of school	Being available to staff, students and parents
School Image Building	

*Table 6: Description of some of the responsibilities of Headteachers as Administration/ Management Role and Leadership Role*

### ***Teachers***

Teachers have a whole range of opinions about the concept of leadership. They talk about the role of headteacher as being “*busy in administrative matters most of the time*” (T 10 Public School 2), although “*headteacher has an open door policy, but it is very difficult to find such a time when she can really give you time*” (T 16 Private School 1). The majority of the public school teachers (12/15) say that “*authority*” that lacks “*ability*” to “*appreciate*” and acknowledge teachers’ efforts to improve learning results in “*power distance*” (T 4 Public

School 1). Similarly “*frequent changes in the rules*” (T 12 Public School 3) are disapproved as well.

*“Everyday more and more rather rigid and difficult rules and policies are being imposed on us, lots of paperwork, big class sizes and no facilities ... very low salaries and ... no one to pay attention to our problems ... we don’t know where to go”* (T 9 Public School 2).

The data from the private schools demonstrate that teachers have a mixed perception about the role of headteacher but the majority of the participants (11/15) consider that the headteacher is “*visionary, knows her job and is great admirer and strong believer of teamwork*”. However, few of the respondents’ opinions resonate with that of the public school teachers in the sample when they find that the headteacher is “*bureaucratic and authoritative*” (T 17 Private School 1), who is good at giving “*unrealistic deadlines without any support*” (T 19 Private School 1) and with “*deficient knowledge of academics*” (T 20 Private School 1), “*... no appreciation of work results in poor motivation and low aspiration to work among teachers*” (T 19 Private School 1).

### ***Parents and Students***

15% of the parents from the public schools strongly disagree that headteachers like to lead the process of learning and constantly try to know what parents feel about the quality of teaching and learning in the school (Figure 11, p. 172).

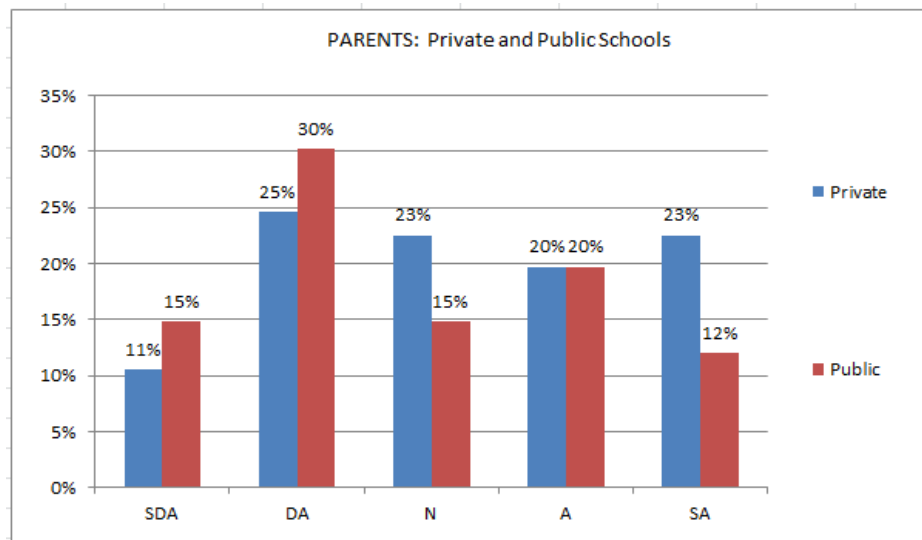


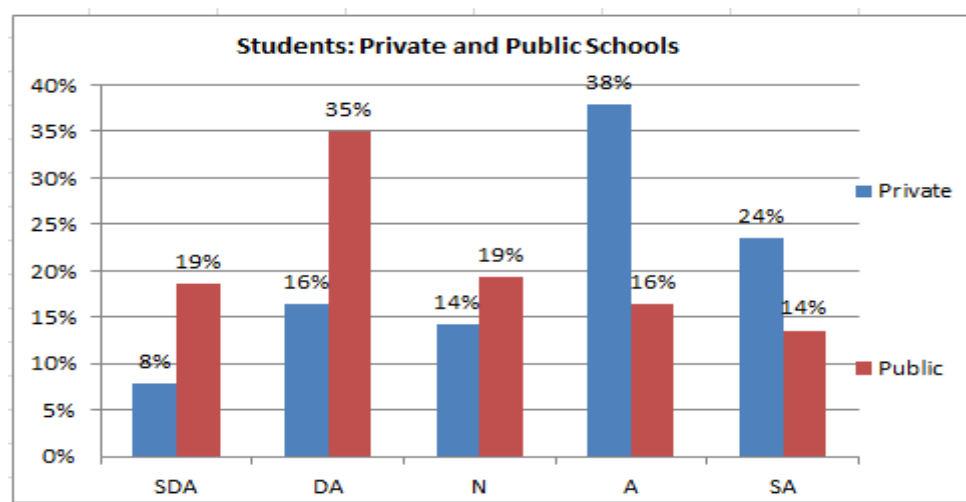
Figure 11: Parents' response if Headteacher likes to know their opinion about the quality of learning offered in the school

Another 30% of parents from the public school also disagree whereas a total of 36% is of the same opinion from the private schools. In the open-ended part of the questionnaire, parents from the private schools appreciated *“the headteachers efforts to bring improvement in the school practices”* (50/150) and for being available to them (40/150) however few from the private schools (30/150) and more from the public schools (60/150) seem to be unhappy because of the bureaucratic approach of the head. They find it difficult to access the headteacher to discuss matters related to their child's progress. 110/300 parents (from total population) feel that mostly they find headteachers busy in some sort of *“paper work and administrative issues”* whenever they go to school.

## *Students*

*Students'* responses resonate with the parents responses in the area.

Almost 24% and 54% of the students from the private and public schools respectively feel that the headteacher does not like to know their parents' opinion about the teaching and learning conditions of the school (Figure 12).



*Figure 12: Students' response if Headteachers' like to know their parents' opinion about the quality of learning offered in this school*

A vast majority of 63% from the public school participants have chosen option A given in the open-ended/semi-structured questions that state the headteacher in their school is mostly busy in administrative affairs. In the private schools the response is 45% for the same option. School development plans are approved by the headteachers in all of the schools. School logbook, newsletter and calendars and school development plans in four of the six

participating schools have no evidence of any such projects, plans or activities where headteachers have been involved actively in leading any learning activity in schools. However, approval of all of the co/extra curricular activities in four out of six schools is at the discretion of headteacher.

### **6.4.3 Theme Three: School offers learning for all**

#### ***Headteachers***

All of the participants claim that their school is a place where everyone is a learner. The school “... *has a culture that promotes learning at all levels, from headteacher to support staff everyone is a learner*” (Headteacher Private School 3), and they “*like to learn from their mistakes*” (Headteacher Private School 2).

“*Over the last fifteen years, I have realised that unless we as teachers and headteachers be willing from inside to understand that there is so much to learn, every school may become an ‘old’ school - our younger generation may consider it obsolete*”. (Headteacher Private School 2).

All headteachers of the public schools also agreed that school was not a place of learning only for students. Headteachers and teachers “*should*” be engaged in the process of learning throughout. These headteachers appreciated the government arranging training programmes for the teachers and school heads. However, they also shared that most of the contents were

about the practices that they “*already are doing*” and “*already know it*”. School-based training, reflective practitioners or the concept of learning organization seemed to be unknown to them. Contrary to this, headteachers of the private schools talked about “*monitoring and evaluation*” (Headteacher Private School 1), “*quality assurance*” (Headteacher Private School 2) and “*INSET*” (Headteacher Private School 3) as regular practice. 2/3 headteachers of the private schools also mention the rewards and benefits offered to the teachers for enhancing their qualifications. Headteachers’ ability to keep staff motivated through appreciation of any initiative they take to improve learning outcomes is considered important by the majority of the headteachers. They consider that “*challenging*” existing practices and providing “*support*” to experiment new things in classrooms make schools a learning place for all. The data, however, reflects that the concept of headteachers’ professional development and reflective sessions is not a common practice, particularly in public schools. The school calendars mention different meetings where headteachers have to attend, but on investigation it was informed that these meetings are to share certain changes planned at the senior level in the government offices or in the head office of the private schools. However, private school headteachers appreciate that the policy makers do take their recommendations into consideration. Two of the private school calendars also mentioned ‘Heads’ Conference’. The headteachers appreciated such initiatives that provided them a platform to share and learn from each other.

## ***Teachers***

Majority of the teachers (18/30) talked only about learning opportunities for students in the schools. However, the majority of the teachers from the private schools (11/15) also appreciated the way school encourages learning at teachers' and students' level. This learning takes place through "... *formal and planned courses*" (T 18 Private School 1), or through "*daily experiences*" (T 22 Private School 2), through "*discussion with fellow teachers who help as critical friends*" (T 27 Private School 3) or through "*reflective practice*" (T 26 Private School 3). Headteachers' ability to create this environment with a "*no blame culture*", "*proper acknowledgement in form of appreciation letters*" is considered one of the main factors by the majority of these teachers. When a school has this learning environment, "*learning takes place in and out of classrooms, in curricular, extracurricular and co-curricular activities*" (T 24 Private School 2).

Public school teachers who talk about the learning experience in terms of learning for students mostly evaluate the learning outcome in terms of examination results. They consider it important that most of the learning activity is linked with the exam results. To enable students to get good results in exams, teachers must have up-to-date knowledge (T 9 Public School 2, T 13 Public School 3).

*"Teachers show commitment towards their profession and work with their students to improve their grades, meanwhile learning themselves too, an atmosphere of mutual learning is created".* (T 11 Public School 3).



Interestingly none of the participants mentioned any formal learning activity for the headteachers in their school. However, the majority of the private school teachers (9/15) and few of the public school teachers (5/15) acknowledged the role of headteachers to promote and create an environment of learning for all of the students and teachers. Teachers' lesson plans in all three private schools have a space to evaluate the lesson at the end of the class. However, one of the participants says:

*“The lesson should be evaluated right after the delivery of the contents, but teachers have to run from one class to other, and additional workload to substitute teachers on leave is also given. Then copy checking and different type of paper work ... sometimes I feel guilty, am I doing justice with my real role?”* (T 19 Private School 1).

School calendar and logbook, newsletter and calendars indicate spaces for ‘curriculum review meetings’, ‘subject co-ordination meetings’ (Private Schools 1 and 3). There is deficient evidence in the public schools of any such activities.

### ***Parents and Students***

There are no findings directly linked to this area at this part of the questionnaire, however, relevant and important information arises from questions 2 and 3 of the questionnaire. 55% of the students and 48% of the parents from public schools disagree that teachers try out new things to improve learning outcomes in schools. 55% of the students and 49% of the parents from the public schools disagree that teachers or headteachers like to know and develop

learning and leadership skills among students. Whereas 54% of the students from the private schools agree that teachers and headteachers are keen to discuss how to make learning outcomes better. Parents from the private school have a different opinion and 43% disagree here. The documentary analysis, school log books, calendars have very little evidence of any such activity in all three public schools other than results days when parents can come to collect reports. In the private schools, all three schools have parent teacher meetings scheduled in calendars. However, these meetings are more examination result oriented. Two of the private schools have seminars for parents and students on career counselling and subject choices. One of the private schools has a monthly school newsletter, which gives up to date information on different initiatives and relevant activities.

#### **6.4.4 Summary of Findings of Research Question One**

The findings demonstrate that headteachers and teachers have quite similar notions about the concept of learning, it is considered as a process that contributes and caters to the emotional, social and cognitive needs with a focus on the future prospects of the learner. Expectations from schools are becoming more challenging for the practitioners. It is expected that schools should enable students to have good grades, provide career counselling and prepare for real life experiences. The understanding is more towards quantifiable objectives in life. However, because of the pressure of good grades and tightly structured curriculum, most of the classroom activities are examination focused. Although it was stated that students' and their parents' perceptions about learning are examination focused, many of the parents and students consider that learning is more than having only good grades in the exams and they consider it

a moral and emotional process. In terms of leadership, though most of the headteachers in the sample explain it as a skill that should be prevalent in the entire organization, many of the teachers, students and parents consider it role bound. It is evident from the data that whatever way learning is interpreted and conceptualized, headteachers' ability, the way they challenge the status quo, provide support, delegate authority among team members and appreciate their efforts, have an impact on outcomes and performance at micro to macro levels in schools. All of them expect that leaders should develop their teams and feel that their working is improved if they are working in an environment where self-esteem and trust are common features. Teachers feel stressed to work in an environment where leaders are not 'accessible'. It is also highlighted that most of the participating schools have a deficient support system for teachers and students and the concept of mentoring and coaching is underdeveloped and explored here. Learning is a task for students mostly and the majority of the schools lack proper training programmes for both leaders and teachers. Power distance results in demotivation and poor implementation of policies. Parents and students express a strong desire that schools provide students with the opportunities and experiences where they could learn real life skills and influence people in and out of school.

## **6.5 Research Question Two: How do headteachers perceive that they influence learning in their schools?**

### **6.5.1 Theme One: School leadership's influence on learning process**

All of the headteachers in the study agree that leadership and learning outcomes are interlinked and leadership efficacy has an impact directly or indirectly on school efficiency,

effectiveness and quality of learning. The headteacher who is aware of the efficacy of his/her role, can enhance performance of all of his/her team, students and the entire school. *“Headteachers set direction; they have a vision for their school”* (Headteacher Private School 2), *“the schools progress if the headteacher is passionate about it”* (Headteacher Public School 1).

Public school headteachers mention the words *“resource manager”*, *“more resources”*, *“better facilities”* for *“better learning”* as they have a *“link with learning”*. So it is considered that the headteacher’s ability to get more resources and funding approved for the school will affect classroom conditions accordingly. They also highlighted the conditions of schools in the smaller cities and towns of Pakistan. If the headteacher is vigilant and the school has sufficient resources, learning outcomes will be better. Adding to this point is the data from the private schools 2 and 3, according to the headteachers in those schools, headteachers’ personality should *“...have a feel of his/her presence in the school, based on a relationship between the learner and the content that is to be studied and taught”*... *“Physical resources may not always guarantee better learning outcomes, though these are essential but cannot replace human factor”*.

The headteachers of two of the public schools mentioned that their role is not only about ensuring high quality of teaching practices in classrooms but also to arrange for a learning experience that is more than daily *“...taught contents of the written syllabus”*. Creating opportunities *“and providing support”* for students to learn real life skills, providing teachers

with a chance to develop professionally and coming up to the expectations of all makes their role important and challenging. They find that headteachers in this era must keep themselves abreast with the pace of change, their *“willingness to be a learner themselves and motivate others is a must do agenda in their role”*. Similarly, they cannot ignore ground realities which emphasize importance of exam results in the education system in Pakistan.

*“We need to understand that Pakistani context and the economic challenges that we have faced ... majority of the children in the public schools come from very low income families ... parents want to ensure if the school will enable their child to go ahead in life with success”*.

One of the headteachers (Headteacher Public Shool 2) shared her experiences from her childhood as a student and mentioned how she used to be inspired by her school head, *“so headteacher’s role is important and leaves long lasting effects”*. The other heads also expressed similar thoughts:

*“How can a headteacher know all of the subjects offered in school? But you need to give this confidence to your teachers that they know their subjects, and we are all to support and promote learning. You will see a difference in their performance by just being with them, you will have to spend time out of your office, into real school”*. (Headteacher Public School 2).

## ***Teachers***

All of the teachers agree that there is a relationship between leadership and learning. The headteacher has an influence on the quality of teaching and learning. However, 18/30 teachers are of the opinion that the majority of the parents and students are only concerned about the examination results and career counselling in school. For most of the students and their parents, “... *better learning means better grades that guarantee better future for their child ... they have hopes and expectations*’ (T3 Public School 1). So the majority are of the opinion that the extent of relationship between the students, teachers and parents is limited to the students’ progress in examination results or related to their future prospects. The teachers from private schools (8/15) shared that the expectations from schools are changing, students and their parents want a lot more than simple examination taking tips. However, 7/15 teachers from the same private schools also feel that examination results are the most important performance indicator. Mostly headteachers also give prime importance to examination results. “*In the senior school, pressure of examination and results keep students and teachers busy in examination preparation and many of us are usually under stress*” (T 21 Private School). But contrary to this, more than 60% of respondents from the private schools appreciate their headteachers’ “*willingness, ability and resourcefulness*” in the process of learning who “*always appreciates efforts of his team*” and is always looking for better opportunities to improve further for the students and staff with keen interest in the process of learning.

### ***Parents and Students***

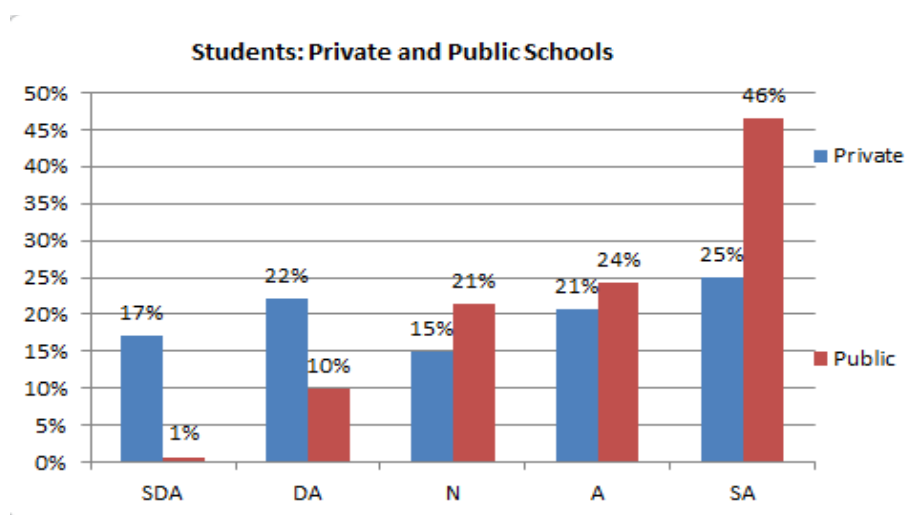
The majority of the parents feel that the headteacher's role has the most important effect on school to determine the quality of teaching and learning. However, 45% of parents from the participating public schools indicate that headteachers are not interested to discuss how learning can be improved in the schools, whereas 36% of the parents in the private schools also second this opinion. They feel that most of the time they find headteachers busy in office/administrative work. Only 11% of the parents feel that headteachers are actively involved in the process of learning and are often seen outside his/her office, taking rounds or talking to teachers or students about academic related issues.

45% of the parents suggest that teachers and headteachers should work together as a team and create a learning environment that prepares their children for real life challenges. 78% of the parents from the private schools and 57% of the public schools consider it very important that school leadership should encourage the activities which prepare students to take responsibility and influence people inside and out of school. This data clearly negates the opinion of the majority of the teachers who feel that parents are only interested in examination results. In the open-ended part of the questions, the majority of the parents feel that they have not observed any change in the teaching and learning practices of the school since the time their child has joined the school. It also indicates that parents do not see headteachers actively involved in the process of learning, however, they consider his/her role very important as one of the parents writes:

*“I appreciate steps taken by the new head, she has introduced many activities that give students a chance to participate. My daughter likes her school now; her results are improving as well”.*

## **Students**

Students’ opinion from public schools is quite close to their parents’ views where the majority of them (70%) (Figure 13) feel that the headteachers’ role has a direct effect on the learning process, but 54% of the students from public schools feel that headteachers scarcely make an effort to know how to improve learning.



*Figure 13: Students’ opinion: Headteacher’s influence on the process of learning*



In the private schools only 24% of the students have the same opinion. However 62% of the students from the private schools agree that headteachers are keen to discuss with them about how to improve teaching learning practices. 64% of the students from the public sector feel that headteachers try to inculcate citizenship among students whereas 62% of the students from the private schools feel that their understanding of citizenship has become clear as their school provides them good opportunities. 55% of the private school students say that they find their headteachers mostly busy in talking to the teachers. 70% of students from the public schools find their headteachers busy in the office and administrative work.

#### **6.5.2 Theme Two: Importance of shared leadership and responsibility**

Limited evidence of shared leadership and responsibility to improve learning is prevalent in schools but data strongly highlights the importance of this concept as an effective way to improve schools.

##### ***Headteachers***

All of the school heads agreed that learning conditions in schools can be improved by delegating authority and empowering teachers and students. They are of the opinion that human resource is the biggest and the most important resource in their schools that needs to be utilised and developed to its maximum for the best outcome. It was mentioned that to be a headteacher of a secondary school is a challenging task. Two of the private school heads repeatedly highlighted the importance of delegation and distribution of leadership.

*“No single person is capable to handle and lead a complex organization like schools. It is extremely important to engage all stakeholders and particularly teachers in the process; this in return generates a feeling of ownership, belonging and empowerment among staff; leaders must be ready to share and delegate authority among team members but quality of outcomes may depend on leader’s as well as team’s ability, readiness and willingness”.* (Headteacher Private School 2).

All of the heads expressed inescapability of change and showed positive attitudes towards it. Three of the headteachers consider that *“challenging status quo is important but can be useful only if proper planning, analysis and support system is available”*. However, the school development plans indicate that only two schools have proper change management procedures and appropriate strategies to bring improvement in their schools, including changes in the classroom practices. However, it is here that the practices between those who thrive on change and those who have to struggle through it, begin to diverge. Headteacher Private School 2, for example, joined this school with a clear mission; she articulates a clear vision and values which she tries to instill in her school both through direct modelling and discussion; and she repeatedly says *“I do like experiments ... I am strong admirer of experimentation at every level in school and I think my seniors are also happy with my way of working”*. However, the challenge she faces is the staff commitment and willingness to develop new pedagogical activities for their classes and students, and deficiency of systems for shared accountability and team members’ ability to know themselves and others as reflective practitioners. The headteacher from the Public School 1 agrees that teachers should

try to use different teaching and learning activities but the biggest challenge in the public schools is the scarcity of resources, centralized and fixed rules and regulations and “*no appreciation*” of any initiative taken at school level that has “*negative impact on staff motivation and aspiration*”.

*“The higher authorities must help us by appreciating and acknowledging the models of good practices. But that encouragement is not there ... no appreciation ... but anything goes wrong, headteacher will immediately be held accountable ... at the end of the day its only me who is responsible”.* (Headteacher Public School 1).

When asked what can be done or has been done as headteacher to improve conditions at school level he shared that when he tried to discuss with his staff the “*... importance of innovation and new ideas and of improving pedagogy, they always ask for rewards, no sense of ownership that I am doing it for the betterment of the students, and that’s why I am here*”. A relationship of trust and mutual respect, clarity of vision, an environment of confidence where schools can take the risk of experimenting with new ideas without a feeling of fear is considered important to enhance efficacy at macro and micro level in schools. Inter and intra personal skills of teachers are considered important by all headteachers in order to establish a collegial and collaborative learning environment in schools.

Three headteachers (Public School 2, and Private Schools 2 and 3) mentioned “*the ability to distribute leadership as their biggest achievement*”. The headteacher from public school says

that in public schools, heads “*have limited authority*”, they cannot add or delete any of the curriculum content, but can “... *reinforce it by improving classroom practices*”, by engaging more students and staff directly. However, they must “... *empower their staff and appreciate their efforts*”. He mentioned different achievements of the school in curricular and co-curricular projects. “*I think this is what leadership is all about*”.

### ***Teachers***

A mixed response about the concept of being empowered, engaged in the whole school issues, trying new teaching methods and acknowledging diversity of talents and abilities from the teachers was prominent in the data. Most of the responses have clear inclination towards the idea that the quality of school improves if teachers are empowered and are engaged actively in school affairs and in decision-making with clarity of how, why and what is to be done.

*“If we take ownership, recognition is given accordingly, and appreciation and tolerance for each other’s opinion is prevalent, team work and professionalism would flourish. An issue with student Z doesn’t remain his or my issue only, it becomes ours”.* (T 23 Private School 2).

In private schools teachers apparently have good ideas for school improvement. They understand and appreciate the importance of shared vision and empowerment for improving teaching and learning. However, it is suggested that “*some formal structure*” (T 28 Private School 3), “*meetings or platform to sharing, planning and implementing*” (T 19 Private

School 1) can make the process more effective. Besides the benefits, some concerns were also highlighted.

*“I agree that teachers can make a difference. Whole staff recommends something with a shared vision and the level of ownership and enthusiasm is undoubtedly different, but do we have that shared vision?”* (T 17 Private School 1).

However, the teachers who have the opportunities to come up with new ideas or get involved in different projects appreciate the working environment. They consider that this type of working conditions supplements learning from individual to community level. They give the credit to their school leader - the headteacher. In the public schools, the majority of the participants (9/15) talked about time constraints, pressure of examinations, lack of opportunities and no appreciation for the work done, lack of trust and ability to work in teams. Some of the teachers mentioned that headteachers had all the power and *“our head knows it all”*. Headteachers’ authority and ability is mentioned by many teachers. Most of these teachers are of the opinion that they are doing their job as is expected from their head, parents and students.

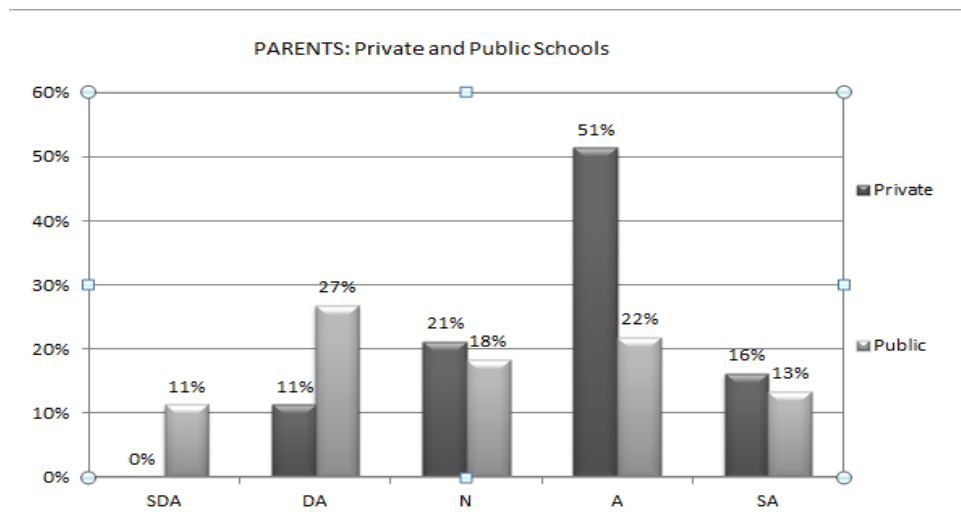
*“I am clear about my role in school, my head expects that I should complete my syllabus on time and give good results to school. I think I am doing my job nicely. Our examination system is tightly structured, I don’t see any room to bring in innovation, and why, at the end of the*

*day, you are expected to give good grades. So I keep myself focused on the real goal*". (T 8 Public School 2).

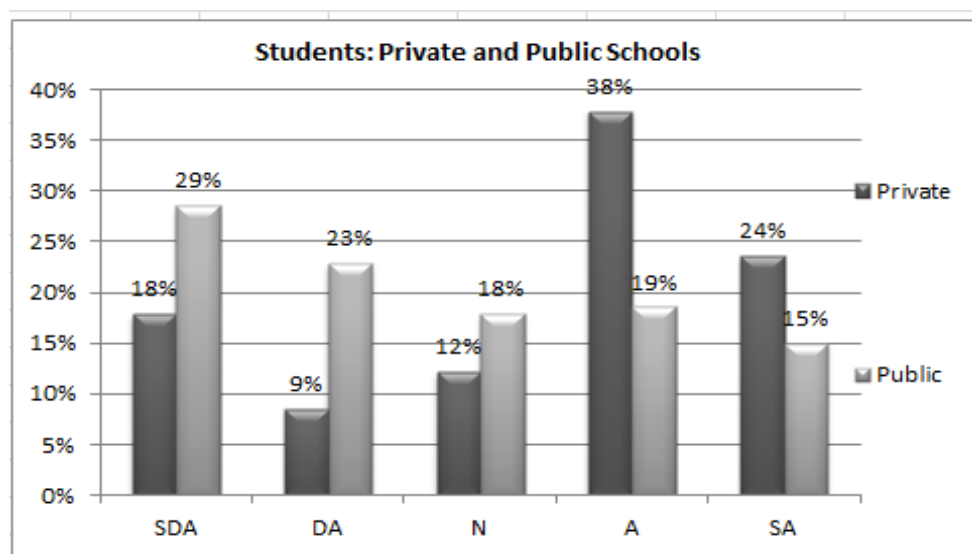
The data also indicates that not all teachers in the sample were clear about the concept of distributed leadership. Many of the participants misinterpreted the concept with "*distribution of administrative work*" and duties, "*delegation of work*" and "*extra burden*". They wanted to know why teachers should be involved in administrative issues, "*...we have a lot on our plate already*".

### ***Parents and Students***

The majority of the parents and students consider the headteacher has the most important effect on school to determine the quality of teaching and learning. However, the response given by the parents and students in the study from private schools is quite similar in terms of teachers being willing and trying different things to make learning interesting. 67% of the parents and 62% of the students from private schools agree/strongly agree with the statement. 38% of parents and 52% of the students in the public schools disagree that teachers make learning interesting by using different techniques (Figures 14, p. 191 and 15, p. 191).



*Figure 14: Parents' response about teachers' practices of using different teaching methods to make learning interesting*



*Figure 15: Students' response about teachers' practices of using different teaching methods to make learning interesting*

A bigger group of parents (53%) as compared to students from the private schools disagree that the headteacher has created a no blame culture in the school and gives freedom to

experiment new ideas in classrooms. If we look at the overall response rate, the biggest group of participants (parents, students from all six schools in the sample) has disagreed on the role and involvement of headteacher as an academic leader and as a motivator to encourage creativity and innovation for better learning in school. Documentary analysis of the newsletter (available in private schools only) carries no information for the parents on the relevant issue. It talks about a few projects in which schools have participated but no direct information is given.

### **6.5.3 Theme Three: Headteachers' time and activities as academic leader in school**

#### ***Headteachers***

All six participants have been in the field of education for more than six years and started their career as a teacher. Becoming a headteacher required the participants to expand their horizon from the small sphere of the classroom to the larger school where they have learnt a lot through every day experiences. Their roles and responsibilities change with the change in designation. All of them, however, claim that their commitment to bring improvement in learning outcomes is even more than they had as a teacher. The small classroom allowed direct relationships with their students with a freedom on how to work with them. All of them agreed that as headteacher their role had more scope as they could shape up the direction of school. All of the headteachers talked about time constraints and excessive paper work for different administrative issues.



*“Being a headteacher is a difficult task because you have to take care of the day to day stuff. Meet visitors, plan daily and monthly budgets, get the routine repair work done, and many more. And then you are head of teaching and learning as well. This part of your role can easily get shoved to the side”.* (Headteacher Private School 3).

A brief description of time utilization of the headteachers in a routine school day, as discussed during interviews, is provided in Table 7.

Two headteachers of private schools mentioned that they have ‘academic co-ordinators’ as a support in schools to *“monitor and strengthen”* the teaching and learning activities in the schools. The public school headteachers (1 and 3) have a routine practice of checking *“lesson plans”* and *“randomly selected notebooks of the students”* every week.

<i>Headteachers’ Time Utilization in a Routine School Day</i>						
Activities	Private 1	Private 2	Private 3	Public 1	Public 2	Public 3
School/classroom visits	20%	15%	30%	10%	15%	5%
Leading teaching related discussions/activities	10%	10%	10%	10%	5%	10%
Visitors	20%	20%	15%	25%	20%	30%
Deskwork	30%	35%	25%	30%	35%	35%
Students	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	10%
Travel to Head Office	15%	15%	15%	20%	20%	10%

*Table 7: Headteachers’ Time Utilization in a Routine School Day*

The ‘checked’ lesson plans had headteachers’ signatures on them as an ‘evidence of checking’. However, they shared that most of the lessons plans in the schools are evaluated with the sentence *“lesson went very well, all the objectives were achieved”*. The statement was verified by Heads’ signatures. Although the school development plans were available in all of the schools, relevant documentary evidence of implementation was missing. None of the headteachers is involved in the curriculum designing phase; they receive instructions from the head offices to implement changes. However, most of these changes are examination related.

*“We don’t have the authority to bring any changes in the course contents, recommended books are considered as text books not resource material and therefore we find it difficult to motivate and convince our teachers to bring in new ideas and creativity in their classes; they are teaching the same topics with structured summative assessments mostly”*. (Headteacher Public School 3).

*“As we are registered with CIE, so we have to follow the pattern set by them, but students have a wide range of subject choices available and we keep on changing the list as per students demand and interests”*. (Headteacher Private School 2).

Private school headteachers have considerable freedom and authority to enhance creativity and empower teachers accordingly as compared to public school heads. Two private schools and one public school have well defined clubs. In the private schools, most of these clubs are managed by the student council whereas in the public school, teachers are patrons of these

clubs. The headteacher's office in the public school (Public School 2) displays many of the trophies and cups that the school has won in different competitions. All six participants take pride in the achievements of their students at every level. School log books have records of these achievements.

### ***Teachers***

9/15 teachers of the private schools and 6/15 from public schools believe that their headteachers do plan activities or other programmes for the improvement of both the students and teachers.

*“Headteacher takes care of the teachers and conducts various workshops to enhance the learning of the teachers both experienced and new”.* (T 24 Private School 2).

Headteachers encourage the teachers *“... to come up with their suggestions so that if it is favourable and beneficial for the institute they would implement”* these.

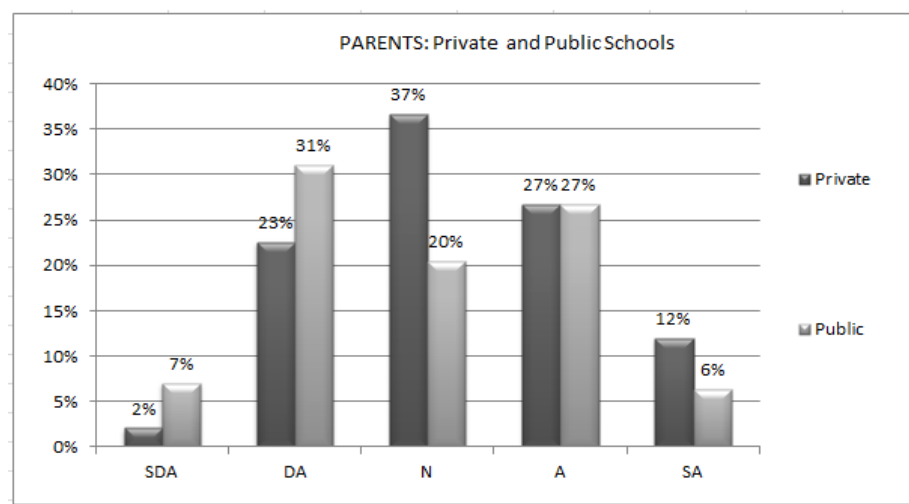
Whereas one of the respondents says:

*“Headteacher's role is very important but unfortunately our Head doesn't have any prior experience of being a co-ordinator or head elsewhere. And because of her deficient knowledge and ability as a head, teachers are losing motivation and interest”.* (T 19 Private School 1).

Almost all of the teachers do acknowledge that “... *headteacher has an important role as academic head of the school*” (T 16 Private School 1) and the quality of “... *overall school performance and what happens inside the classrooms is influenced by the leadership, its vision and ability to empower others, appreciate their aspirations and provide support*”.

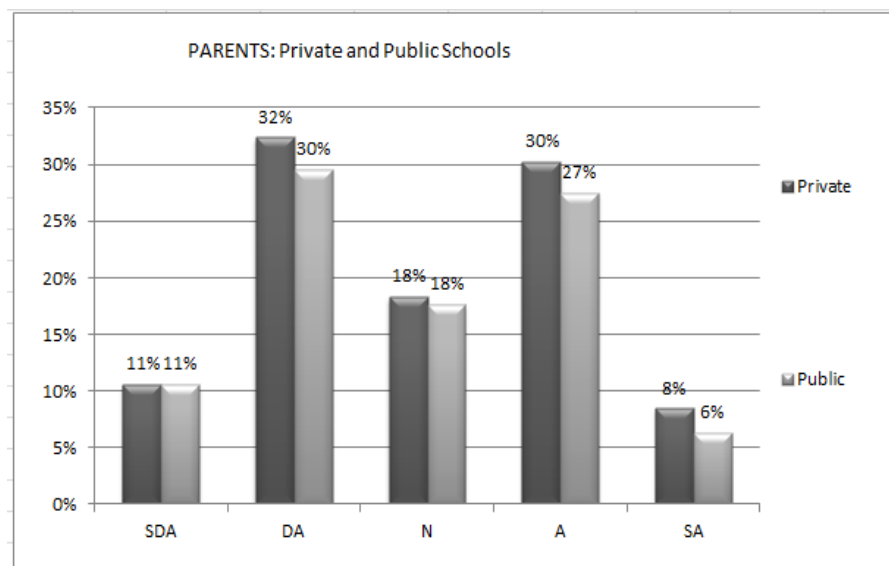
### ***Parents and Students***

When asked if the headteacher’s role is the most important factor in schools to determine the quality of teaching and learning, a mixed response was given by the parents (Figure 16).



*Figure 16: Parents’ response about the importance of headteachers’ role to determine the quality of teaching and learning*

39% of the parents from the private schools and 33% from the public schools agreed/strongly agreed. A high percentage of 37% from the private schools has expressed their opinion as being neutral indicating that they are not sure or aware of any initiatives taken by the head in this regard.



*Figure 17: Parents' response about the headteachers' role to have a vision to create a learning environment*

Linked with the previous question, when it was explored whether the headteacher, according to the parents, has a clear vision and understanding of how to create a learning environment for students in this school, 38% of the parents from private schools and 33% from the public school agreed/strongly agreed with the statement (Figure 17). It shows a consistency in the opinion. However, almost an equal percentage of the parents disagree with this statement. It highlights the need to further develop this area of relationship and engagement between the schools and parents. In the open-ended part of the questionnaires, parents have strongly

recommended that headteachers should keep parents informed and updated about any changes in the school, future directions and students' activities.

### ***Students***

Students in the private schools feel that headteachers have the most important role to shape teaching and learning quality in school. 54% of them agreed and strongly agreed to the statement. Contrary to this, 43% of the students from the public sector disagree and strongly disagree with this. 53% of the public school students feel that the headteachers do not have a clear vision about the school and are deficient in the skills to create an environment that fosters learning. The data demonstrates a consistency in the responses and design validity in these questions verifies the validity and authenticity of responses.

#### **6.5.4 Summary of Findings of Research Question Two**

The findings resonate that there is a clear link between the leadership and learning in schools. Headteachers' ability to delegate authority and appreciate team members is a prominent category in the data. All of the participants agreed however, due to certain constraints, the focus of the headteacher is more towards resource management or other administrative issues, particularly in the public schools. In the schools where the headteacher is an academic head as well, the school has a different level of learning activities, and a high satisfaction level is prevalent among all of the participants. Distributed leadership is appreciated and considered important for the development and flow of leadership and better learning outcomes. However, there are many challenges associated with it that keep its scope quite limited in the schools of

Pakistan. It is evident that teacher empowerment is dependent on leaders' ability and willingness to do so. Better performance through recognition, appreciation and empowerment is considered important for school improvement. Data also highlights that students and their parents in the study are not informed about the headteachers' role and involvement to improve learning by empowering others and by including their opinions.

## **6.6 Research Question Three: To what extent are headteachers, teachers, students and parents engaged in a dialogue for learning in their schools in Pakistan?**

### **6.6.1 Theme One: Feedback and discussions for learning among teachers, leaders and students**

#### ***Headteacher***

All of the participating headteachers were convinced about the importance of a dialogue among stakeholders to improve learning in schools. However, the data indicates that the style and willingness of leadership is not the only factor in Pakistan to determine the level and extent of dialogue among different stakeholders. Mostly, the dialogue is about giving information to teachers about certain policies and decisions. Teachers share exam related information with students. Headteachers talk about diversity of ground realities, contexts, expectations and ability to engage in some kind of academic and professional discourse that is highly variable from school to school. This kind of professional relationship is subject to many other factors, for example, demographical characteristics of a school, economic conditions of the families involved, family background of the parents, type of resources available in school, willingness of the team members and student culture. Two of the

headteachers from private schools mentioned that school engages students and involves parents in all of the learning related matters and decisions are taken with a shared vision.

Headteachers repeatedly talk about the type of students, level and range of classes being offered in the schools, and whether it is a girls' school, boys' school or co-education. Many of them give a similar response to this one, *“my door is always open for students, I like to give time to them as much as they want, and welcome suggestions from them”* (Headteacher Private School 1).

Headteachers (Private Schools 2 and 3) mentioned different meetings and discussion forums organized by the schools to discuss important academic related affairs or to create awareness among students about certain national and international issues. The activity calendars and newsletters mentioned details of some of these activities. For example, seminars on university admissions, guest speakers to discuss different issues, such as pollution, health related matters and water scarcity threat in Pakistan.

*“All of these activities create an environment of learning and generate a productive dialogue for learning among different stakeholders”*. (Headteacher Private School 2).

Headteachers in the private schools highlighted some challenges which they face when they try to initiate this dialogue, as many of the parents belonging to *“elite class”* usually do not come to attend the parent teachers meetings and mostly *“students' private tutors, friends or*



*house maids come to collect result*". Many of the private industries, businessmen and entrepreneurs usually do not *"respond to any such correspondence which is purely academic related and is about the whole school improvement plans"*. There is very little evidence in one of the public schools that any such initiatives are taken. However, all of the school heads mention that they have regular meetings with the teachers to discuss how learning can be improved. The private school calendars show subject co-ordination meetings twice yearly. These meetings give teachers a chance to sit and plan in their subject area accordingly. The school calendars and newsletters in the private schools provide evidence of seminars and meetings providing an opportunity to students to get involved in this dialogue for learning.

### ***Teachers***

The majority of the teachers (26/30) say that they discuss their subject related issues in formal and informal meetings with their colleagues. They find these meetings very useful.

*"We meet with other teachers from different branches of the school in August for yearly subject co-ordination meetings. We discuss, plan and sort out all relevant issues. We also make recommendations in the book lists and add or remove some resources and contents"*. (T 17 Private School 1).

However, some of the teachers feel that there should be a clear *"agenda"* and teachers should come prepared *"to make the meetings more productive"* (T 19 Private School ??).

Teachers feel that students can come and discuss all related issues whenever they want. However, sometimes because of their very busy timetables, it becomes really difficult to give them extra time to explain some topic again and again. They feel that schools should have proper support systems for students who require extra help and teachers' daily timetables should have less workload enabling them to facilitate in this regard.

Private school teachers mention many activities where school invites guest speakers from different spheres of life.

*“I appreciate that headteacher always facilitates and encourages to arrange useful educational activities, invite speakers and conduct seminars, he extends support and always appreciates our efforts. I think these activities enhance interest, social skills among students and are very informative. We should have more of these activities”.* (T 24 Private School 2).

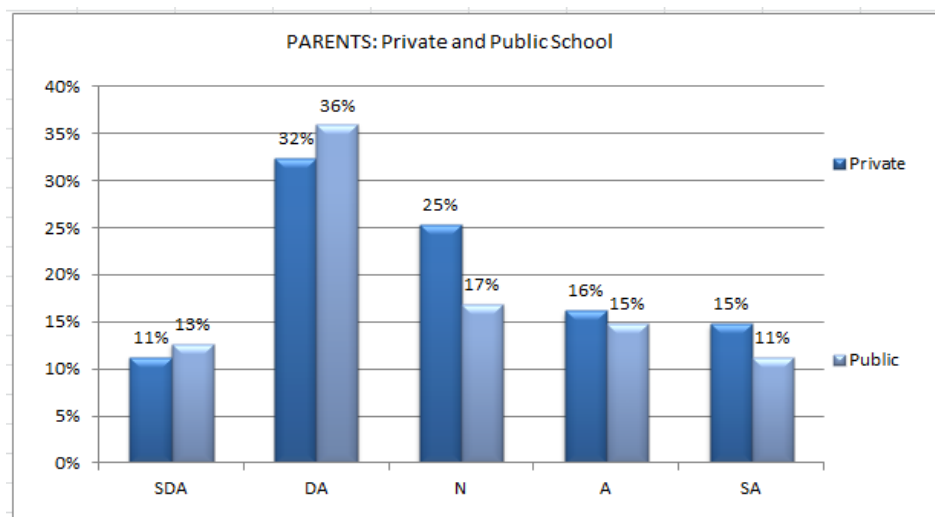
Teachers in the public schools (6/15) suggest that there should be more formal meetings among teachers to discuss, plan and co-ordinate their subject related issues. However, many of them (10/15) mentioned that decisions were made by the government officials and *“we have no say ... and feel frustrated”*. (T 3 Public School 1).

Teachers in public and private schools say that taking feedback from students and discussing academic issues with them to bring improvement is not a routine practice as *“students will be interested in exam related issues only”, “their suggestions will always be different from each*

othe”. However, in private school, according to teachers from two of the participating private schools, students sometimes recommend certain changes or give suggestions which “*may not be practical*”.

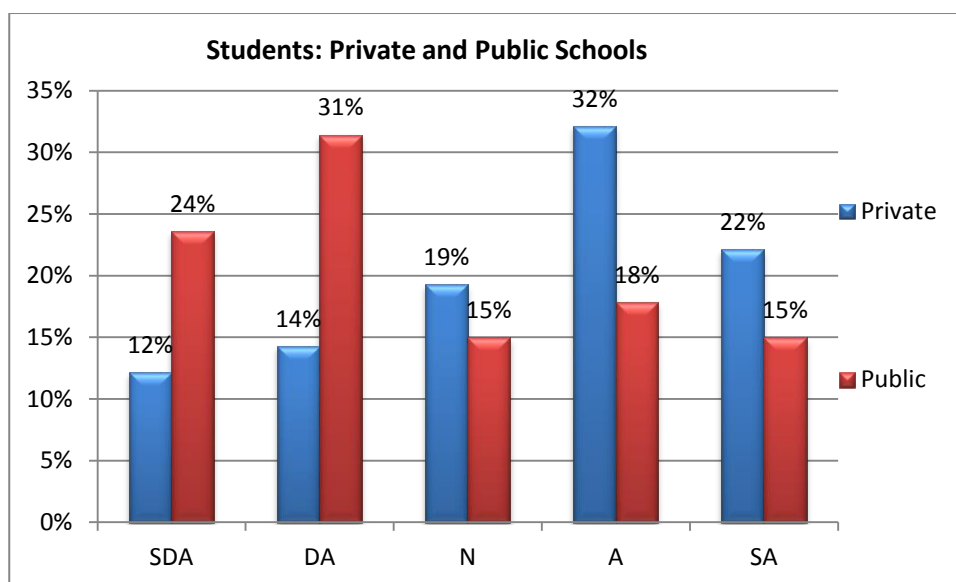
### ***Parents and Students***

A comparison of parental responses with that of students on the question of whether teachers, headteachers, students and parents often discuss among themselves things which can improve learning in school in formal or informal meetings is quite similar in the public schools where the majority of the students (55%) and their parents (49%) disagree/strongly disagree with the statement (Figure 18).



*Figure 18: Parents’ response: discussion for improving learning among parents, students, teachers and headteachers is a routine practice in schools*

A difference of opinion in the responses of parents and students from the private schools is noticeable. 43% of the parents feel that there is no practice in school where teachers, headteachers, students and parents often discuss among themselves things which can improve learning in school in formal or informal meetings. 54% of the students agree with the statement (Figure 19).



*Figure 19: Students' response: discussion for improving learning among parents, students, teachers and headteachers is a routine practice in schools*

In the open-ended questions, students from two private schools appreciate that they can go to their teachers any time they want to discuss issues. The public school students, like their parents, feel that teachers and the school head do not give importance if they make any recommendations.

### 6.6.2 Theme Two: Parents' involvement in schools

#### *Headteachers*

The attitude of headteachers towards parents' role and involvement in school is very different in public and private schools. Public school headteachers feel that parents' involvement in schools may create "interruption" or "unnecessary interference" as they come with their own "interests". They can create unnecessary "tension" in the school so *"I think there should be some distance"* (Headteacher Public Schools 1 and 3). The third headteacher's opinion is slightly different from the other two:

*"I respect parents and value their opinion but most of the time their expectations and demands are unrealistic and beyond my capacity and control. They usually come to discuss financial issues or asking for their child's promotion to next class who could not get good grades in exams"*. (Headteacher Public School 2).

Headteachers of the private schools are *"more positive and welcome parents' contributions"* and *"feedback"* about the school performance. Most of them consider them as a *"useful resource"* and try to *"involve"* them whenever possible in school activities and arrange *"special days, informative seminars for them and invite them as guest speakers"* as per their forte and expertise.

*“We try to come up to their expectations; they have shown total trust in our capabilities by selecting our school for the most precious asset in their life - their child, why shouldn’t we value and honour their opinion? They do matter”.* (Headteacher Private School 3).

The school calendars, newsletters and log books in the private schools show days and seminars specially arranged for parents. However, to what extent their opinions and feedback brings changes in school is not evident in the interview responses or in the documents.

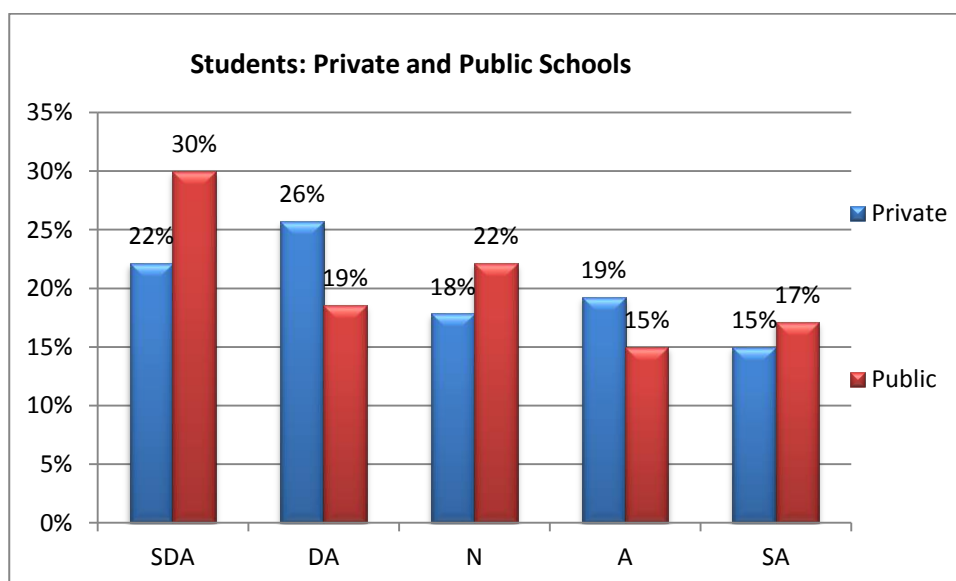
### ***Teachers***

Opinion of the public school teachers resonates with the opinion of their headteachers. They also feel that parents come with unrealistic and very high expectations. They pressurise teachers to pass their child in the exams. Some of them also expect that teachers should give their child some kind of “guess paper” before exams. They also expect that they should be given direct access to classrooms whenever they want to visit and meet their child’s teachers. Some of them complain that school is not strict in discipline and if we check their child, they complain that we are very strict. It’s very difficult to keep them happy and satisfied.

Many of the private school teachers also have similar feelings. They say that parents try to interfere where they should not and when we expect them to come they don’t show up. Few parents come to attend and collect their children’s results on the Parent Teacher Meeting (PTM) in many of the private schools in the study.

*“Unless there is a real emergency, we have made it a rule now that results will be handed over only to parents on PTM. Some of the parents, who are educated, make really useful contributions. They give constructive feedback with a positive approach, we value them”.*  
(T 21 Private School 2).

### ***Parents and Students***



*Figure 20: Students' response: parents are encouraged to get involved in different activities in school to improve learning*

49% of the students (Figure 20) and 47% of the parents from public schools feel that parents are not encouraged to get involved in different activities and projects in the schools. In the open-ended questions they mentioned that school does not give any value or importance to their opinion. Some of the parents also mentioned that there was no interaction with the

headteacher throughout the last academic year. Another parent writes, *“I hardly go to school, what for? I don’t want to waste my time as I know no body is interested in knowing what I as parent feel and want to say. I cannot pay the fee of private schools, so I cannot change the school of my child now”*.

41% of parents from the private schools agree that schools try to give them the opportunity to get involved in different ways. Some of these parents appreciated the initiatives taken by the school to invite them as guest speakers. The visitors’ book at PTMs is also appreciated. However, 30% of parents in the private schools disagree with the statement and feel that only a few parents are given more importance. Their voice is not heard. 48% of the students also disagree with the statement and feel that parental involvement is not encouraged by the school.

### **6.6.3 Theme Three: Networking and collaborative projects in and out of classrooms**

#### ***Headteachers***

In general, the data collected from the headteachers indicate that interschool networking and collaboration can foster a culture that promotes creativity and learning. All of the headteachers express that schools should have useful partnerships to create meaningful opportunities for students that help them understand and appreciate diversity of skills, capabilities, intellect and culture, and the importance of team work.



Documentary analysis provides evidence that all of the schools in the sample, both in the public and private sectors are engaged in some form of networking and collaboration. However, the understanding of the nature and scope of this collaboration is variable and highly contextualized where stakeholders' ability, willingness and resourcefulness are quite important factors, but headteachers' ability to motivate the team through shared vision and appreciation is of extreme importance here. It is also obvious that there is no specific policy in any school that ensures effective planning or implementation of networking or collaboration among schools or with other institutes:

*“Embracing collaboration becomes really difficult because of many questions that are still unanswered in our school policy. Time, space and resources, all are big challenges and then the enthusiasm starts fading away, but it doesn’t mean that my school is not engaged in any of such activities”.* (Headteacher Private School 1).

The understanding and the scope of collaboration is diverse. However, Table 8 (p. 210) presents a summary of examples of collaboration and networking in the senior schools as informed by the headteachers. The interview data reveals some level of *“distrust”* and *“suspicion”* that pervades relationships between schools, particularly in the private sector where they consider each other as *“competitors”* (all three headteachers from the private schools). However, schools within a bigger system have inter-branch collaborations. The collaboration between public schools and private schools is not common:

*“We follow different curriculums, so educational partnership is not possible. However we invite all schools, private and public, to participate in different co-curricular activities and competition arranged in our school”.* (Headteacher Private School 1).

Activity	Private School 1	Private School 2	Private School 3	Public School 1	Public School 2	Public School 3
<i>Pupils of one school taking GCSE or GCE A'/Matric level subjects in another school, or vice versa</i>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<i>International Collaborations</i>	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
<i>Sport Activities</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>Sharing resources/ staff</i>	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
<i>Community Service</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
<i>Student Internships and Placements</i>	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
<i>Links with Universities and other vocational training institutes</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No

*Table 8: Activities - Networking and Collaboration in Schools*

The headteachers of the public schools (1 and 3) state that *“the divide between the public and private school is a dominant factor”*.

*“Sometimes we feel that the private school staff and children are privileged and think that we are inferior because they are reluctant to collaborate with us or invite us on any activities”.* (Headteacher Public School 1).

The newsletters, log books, clubs and societies' records and school activity calendars indicate that two private schools have well established themes and plans which promote collaboration between their schools and other institutes. For example Private School 2 has a strong dramatics society and produces an annual play. The club works in collaboration with a liberal art university and a theatre company. This club with the citizenship society of the school did fundraising for flood affected areas in Punjab and Sindh provinces in Pakistan during 2009 and 2010. The headteacher mentions many other similar projects:

*“Indeed, the collaboration challenges narrow and outdated approach to education. It brings a change in the school that influences everyone including me. But there are challenges and hurdles ... time, roles and sharing responsibility when there is no clear policy and guideline available ... and a lot of competition, it is not easy”.* (Headteacher Private School 2).

Four headteachers (all three from private and one from Public School 2) emphasize the need for careful planning and “*monitoring*” when teenagers from different backgrounds are working together. The environment must be “*neutralized*”, free of any marker of “*differentiation or biases*”.

*“Sometimes students have differences with students of a different school. These differences between them can damage and contaminate the entire purpose behind the project and may create unpleasant situation”.* (Headteacher Private School 1).

## ***Teachers***

All of the teachers are convinced that collaboration and networking can offer a better learning environment to the students. However, like headteachers, their ability and understanding about the scope of the concept is variable. The majority of the teachers in the public schools (12/15), talk about collaboration within school, where different teachers can work on one subject. Most of these activities are exam related. Some of them also mentioned co-curricular activities and sports where their students compete against other schools and have won prizes. Teachers from Public School 2 appreciate their headteacher's support to prepare and send the students for such activities. The role of headteacher was also considered important by the teachers in all three private schools.

*“The headteacher’s attitude, ability and perception towards any such activity in the school has a trickle-down effect. I have seen a clear change in this school since the time this head has joined”.* (T 21 Private School 2).

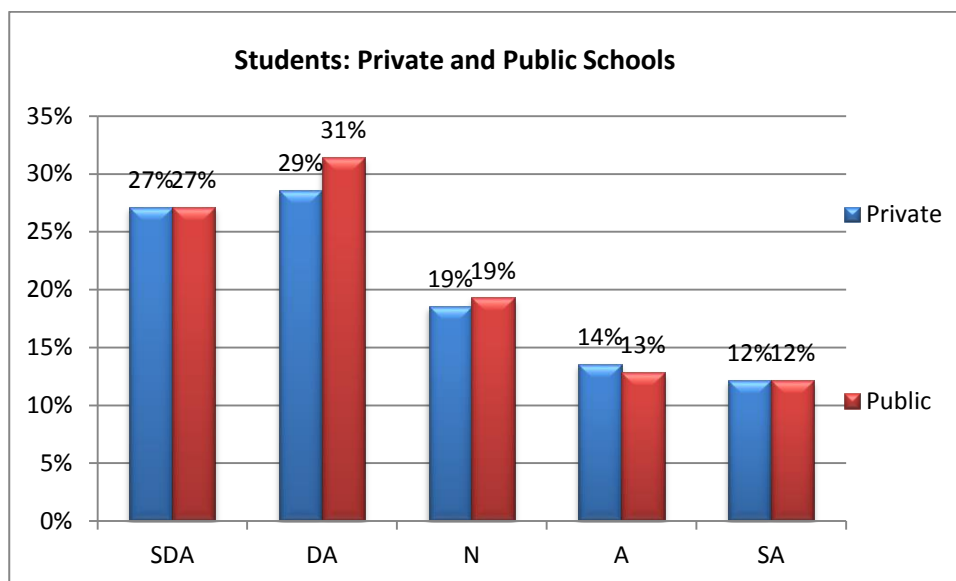
Another teacher says:

*“I don’t think that we can do it unless the leadership is convinced and willing ... leader’s ability, readiness, and resources ... all are contributory necessities supported by well defined policies”.* (T 17 Private School 1).

Teachers also highlighted the challenges and issues related to this concept. All of the private school teachers say that there is an overemphasized and unnecessary feeling of competition between different private schools. They feel that “*pressure of examination and accountability for results, for completing the syllabus on time, parental expectations in terms of grades*”, availability of “*sufficient resources and opportunities*”, time and support make it really difficult to get engaged in this type of activity. Teachers also mention that keeping students “*under control and disciplined*” is a big risk factor involved.

### ***Parents and Students***

A resonant factor in the data collected from the parents and students is their dissatisfaction as school does not engage in the activities related to collaboration and networking that could promote leadership, teamwork and real world skills among students. 58% of parents from the public schools and 42% from the private schools are of the opinion that schools do not invite any visitors or guest speakers from different schools, universities and from other fields at the school to exchange useful information with students. A similar high trend is obvious in response to the statement that the school often works with other schools and different organizations on different projects that help improve learning, leadership skills and teamwork among students and teachers. 44% of parents from the public sector and 49% from the private sector disagree/strongly disagree with the statement. From the students’ responses, 55% from public schools and 54% from private schools disagree that visitors are invited to their school. 56% of the private school students disagree that they or their teachers are engaged in the collaborative projects with other institutes (Figure 21, p. 214).



*Figure 21: Students' response: School often works in collaboration with other schools that help improve learning, leadership skills and teamwork among students and teachers*

In the open-ended questions, students and parents from private school have strongly recommended that schools must provide exposure to real life situations, workplace skills and inculcate leadership and teamwork among students by engaging them in more hands on activities, by interacting with role models from different spheres of life. *“I want that school should teach my child the skills essential to excel in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which are more than having only A grades in exams”*. (Parent Private School 2).

Another respondent appreciates the way school organizes different activities:

*“I am happy to see that my child can do much more than what I could do at her age, she knows a lot and understands world better than me. I find her busy in different projects which I*

*think is making learning a very interesting process for her. I am thankful to all of her teachers and this school for all of the support”. (Parent Private School 3).*

#### **6.6.4 Summary of Findings of Research Question Three**

Data indicates that the importance of a dialogue for learning among different stakeholders and other institutes is appreciated at all levels. However, the scope and extent of the dialogue is subject to many contextual factors and leadership input is one of the most important. Headteachers’ readiness, willingness and ability to engage stakeholders determine the extent and type of dialogue as one of the main factors. To ensure purposefulness and effectiveness of the dialogue, policies are considered a big resistance factor as they are finalized away from schools. Although schools claim to consider parents to be important stakeholders and try to involve them in improving learning outcomes, the majority of the parents on the contrary feel their schools do not involve them. The majority of them seem to be unaware of many initiatives schools claim to take to enhance collaboration. Networking and collaboration is prevalent at different levels in public and private sectors but a need to expand all such activities is highlighted. Besides other constraints, many of the participants shared their apprehensions about students’ behavioural issues during such activities. There is no clear policy to explain the scope of networking and dialogue for learning in any of these schools. Public schools have a limited scope because of the predetermined policies and school structure.

## **6.7 Research Question Four: How do teachers perceive themselves to be part of a learning community in their schools?**

### **6.7.1 Theme One: Enhancing instructional effectiveness through reflection, discussion and feedback**

#### ***Headteachers***

Most of the headteachers talk about the benefit of “*collaborative teams, collegiality, and professional learning communities and culture*” to improve learning for all in school. The data resonates that creating the commitment among staff to develop and maintain a collegial, creative and collaborative working environment is a challenging and important task.

“*What teachers know and how they deliver that knowledge and what they know about learning process makes a significant difference in what students learn*”. (Headteacher Private School 2).

The headteachers of two of the private schools (Private Schools 2 and 3) appreciate many of their teachers’ willingness to work together as “*critical friends*”. Their staffrooms are “*learning centres*” for the staff where they “*share their practices*” with each other, do “*lesson planning and share best practices*”. One of the headteachers (Private School 3) considers that through his strategy of encouraging teachers to develop a corner of best practice has developed a culture of research, sharing and reflective practice in school. Teachers also post a question of the day in the staffroom where teachers can discuss challenging situations from



their classes. One of the headteachers from a public school also appreciates his teachers' ability to work collaboratively. He mentions that:

*“Teachers work as a team. They understand their responsibilities and their commitment always brings very good results, I try to give them all possible support and appreciate their efforts”.* (Headteacher Public School 2).

The two headteachers of the other public schools talk about the issues that teachers face. They think that teachers are under pressure, their schools are not equipped with necessary resources and students are from less privileged families. The headteachers of the private schools (2 and 3) think that physical resources matter but more important is the readiness and resourcefulness of the mindsets of all stakeholders that makes a difference. They feel that teachers require freedom to experiment and their efforts are appreciated. Only one school had some level of evidence available in the school development plan about introducing peer observations and discussion forums among teachers for better learning outcomes.

### ***Teachers***

Most of the teachers said that the relationships between students and teachers have a direct impact on learning and the quality of learning depends most of all on the character and type of culture that the teaching community has in every school. Private school teachers mention that they have regular co-ordination meetings with their colleagues to discuss the course topics

contents, resources required, distribution of courses over the period of the year and examination paper settings. However:

*“Sharing each other’s expertise and resources, working on collaborative projects is not a routine practice as leadership support and efforts are deficient in this regard”.* (T 19 Private School 1).

All of the participating teachers and particularly those from the public schools say that teachers work under pressure. There is no recognition and status in society for teachers, which causes demotivation. Pressure of examination results keeps most of the activities of teachers examination focused so very limited scope of creativity is left for the teachers, and learning becomes a structured process (8/15 teachers from private and 12/15 teachers from public schools). The teachers’ timetable is tightly packed and there is hardly any time available for reflection. In the free periods a lot of copy checking and other paper work is to be completed making it difficult to think about any other activity (11/15 teachers from private schools and 13/15 teachers from public schools). There is no proper structure, policy and procedure to evaluate and revise courses and the curriculum on a regular basis where teachers’ input is directly included (6/15 teachers from private schools and 12/15 teachers from public schools).

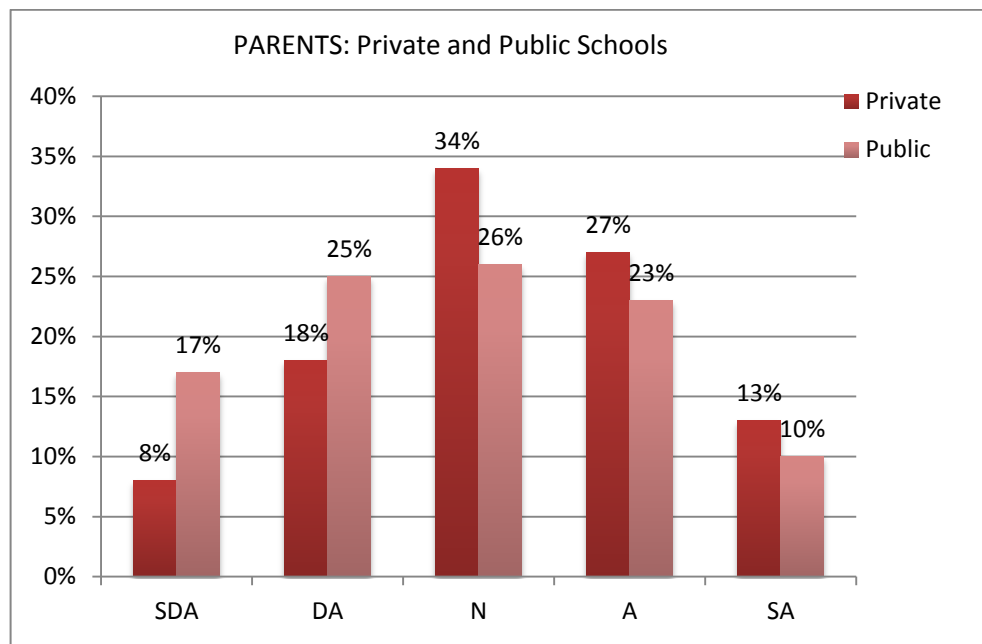
Willingness to work in teams is not a common feature in schools. Teachers are hesitant to share their success stories or challenging situations with each other; they like to give the impression to all that all is well (7/15 teachers from private and 9/15 teachers from public

schools). Trust deficiency and fear of being blamed for not being able to handle difficult situations makes many of the teachers reluctant to share their experiences with their colleagues and seniors (9/15 teachers from private schools and 12/15 from public schools). The headteachers' role as motivator and facilitator is considered important in order to promote an environment that appreciates learning through sharing. Parents and students also want a quick shortcut to high grades in the senior school (6/15 teachers from private schools and 11/15 teachers from public schools).

Sometimes teachers are not ready to realize that they need to learn and improve. They consider themselves as 'the best' (6/15 teachers from the private schools and 10/15 teachers from the public schools).

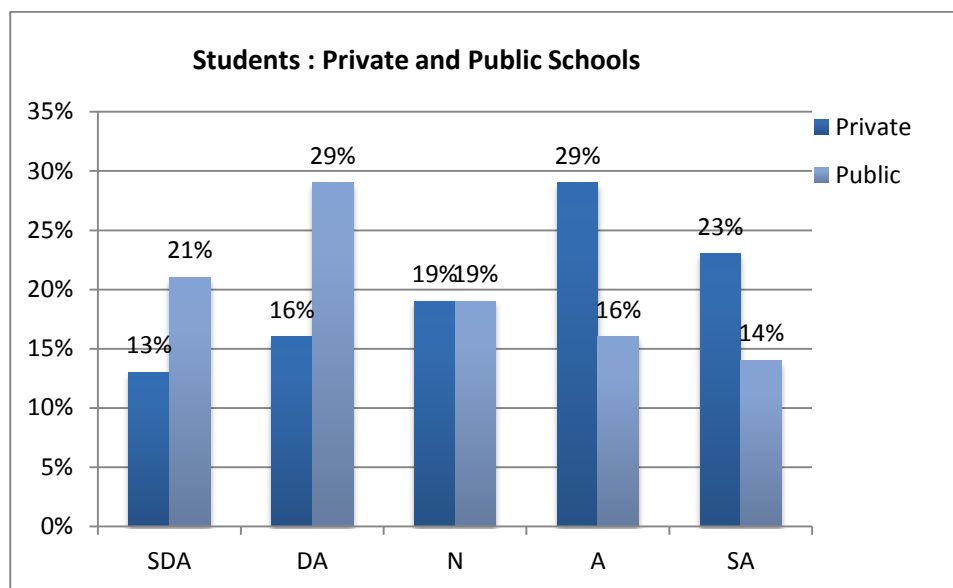
### ***Parents and Students***

Figure 22 (p. 220) presents parental responses in this area and indicates that 40% of parents from the participating private schools and 33% of the same from the public schools agreed/strongly agreed that teachers often work in teams on different collaborated projects in this school as compared to 26% of the parents from private schools and 42% of the same from public schools who disagreed/strongly disagreed with this statement. 34% of parents from private schools kept their opinion as neutral.



*Figure 22: Parents' response: Most of the teachers often work with other teachers on different collaborated projects in the school*

Looking at the students' responses, 41% of students agreed/strongly agreed (out of total participating students) to the statement and almost the same number (40%) disagreed with it. The overall trend in the private schools indicated a clear high of those who agreed with this statement and found their teachers competent, working in teams on collaborative projects within schools or outside school with the students and other colleagues (29% of agreeing and 23% of strongly agreeing students) (Figure 23, p. 221).



*Figure 23: Students' response: Most of the teachers often work with other teachers on different collaborated projects in the school*

Interestingly almost the same response is of those students who disagreed with the statement from the public schools (29% disagreeing and 21% strongly disagreeing). It is also interesting to note that 19% of students, each from the participating public and private schools were neutral.

In the open-ended questions, some of the data indicates students' concerns about teaching methodologies as being “old”, “obsolete”, “typical” and “boring”.

## 6.7.2 Theme Two: Training and professional development

### *Headteachers*

The research question inquired if there was an emphasis and practice on providing teachers with proper preparation and professional learning programmes to create schools as centres of the learning community. Headteachers said that teachers' work was a *“technical work”* and it was expected that teachers should learn a *“prescribed set of skills and techniques”*. However, due to *“overemphasized pressure of exam results”*, other *“financial constraints and other contextual circumstances”*, the urge to learn and to develop professionally has been *“fading”*. However, all of the participating headteachers of the public schools appreciated initiatives taken by the government in the area of teacher training. Two of the headteachers of private schools (2 and 3) highlighted their structure of professional development for the teachers. According to them they have a proper programme in place that provided professional development opportunities to all levels of practitioners at school including new teachers to senior leaders. One of the headteachers from a private school (Private School 3) mentioned that the training programmes were designed keeping fitness for purpose in mind and led to different career pathways in school. Private school headteachers also mentioned that teachers got certain incentives, special increments when they completed their trainings. However, headteachers from public schools highlighted certain *“unfortunate conditions”* prevalent in public schools. These headteachers mention *“poor condition of building”* and many lacking *“basic facilities, poor hiring criterion for teachers, no control of the school heads over hiring quality, very low salary”*, as major hurdles where teachers' and headteachers' priorities change and *“drift away from their core business of school-learning”*.

According to two of the headteachers (Private School 1 and Public School 1), even if the opportunities were available, most of the teachers were not convinced at heart to become learners again. And in the daily routines, many of them were hesitant to discuss among themselves how to become better practitioners and how to be a support for each other in this regard. However, one headteacher (Private School 3) feels that as leaders of learning in schools, headteachers have to be role models for others and encourage them to enhance their abilities through challenging the status quo and providing support to them. Headteachers (Private Schools 2 and 3) were appreciative of their staff's ability and willingness to work in groups as "*reflective practitioners*". The documentary analysis indicated that only two schools (Private Schools 2 and 3) had schedules of professional development programmes in their calendars.

### ***Teachers***

All of the participating teachers agreed that professional development played a key role in improving and strengthening teachers' quality as a professional. The majority of the teachers from the private schools considered the headteacher as the key promoter of professional development programmes in school. However, in general, it was evident from data that teachers were not aware of the potential range of the informal, school-based professional development opportunities. Many of them talked about the "*inefficiency*" of these programmes that are all "*theoretical and very different from ground realities*". They feel that attending formal training programmes was good but after the formal training and as a routine they might also need "*on the job support and guidance, which is lacking in these lecture-*

*based training sessions*". The responses of the teachers from one private school (3) indicated a practice of ongoing informal professional development sessions. The majority of the teachers talked about formal training programmes and evaluated their usefulness in term of *"rewards", "recognition", "incentives", "promotions and financial gains"*.

*"No appreciation, no reward system, no incentive ... why to do professional development or attend courses?"* (T 7 Public School 2).

*"I don't see why should I attend professional development, I know my subject, my students are happy with me ... and at the end of the day, I am a teacher and after any course ... I will still be a teacher"*. (T 3 Public School 1).

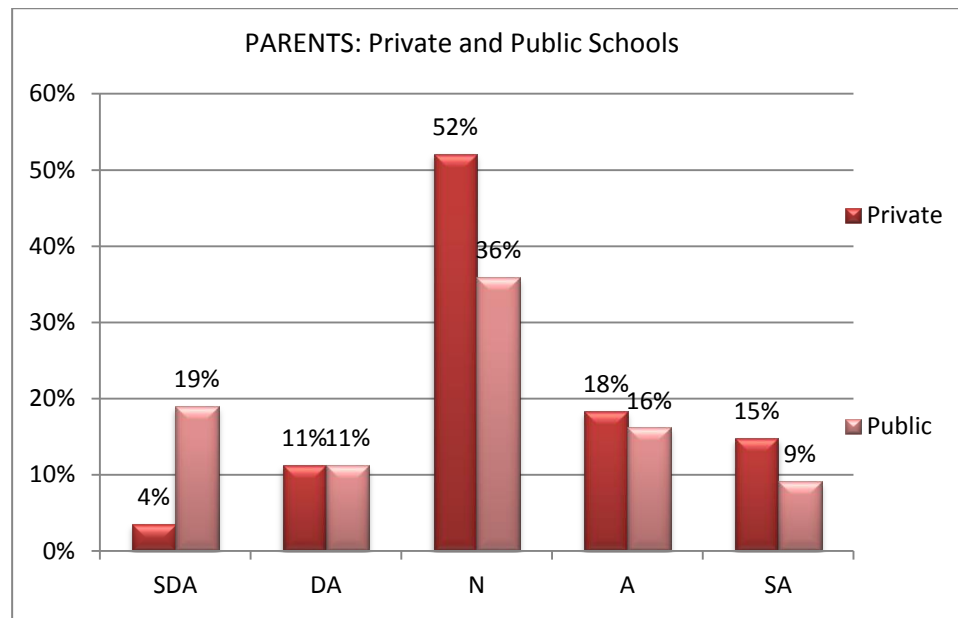
Similar thoughts were expressed by the private school teachers. Some of them also shared their frustration as they could not implement the skills learnt on the course into their schools because *"the leadership in school was not ready to let them experiment anything new"*. Whereas, teachers from Private School 3 were appreciative of all opportunities of formal or informal professional development programmes provided by their school head.

Financial constraints were also mentioned by many of the private school teachers who had to use their personal funding completely or partially on these programmes, while time and willingness to attend the training programmes was an evident theme from the public schools where teacher training programmes were funded by government or other agencies.



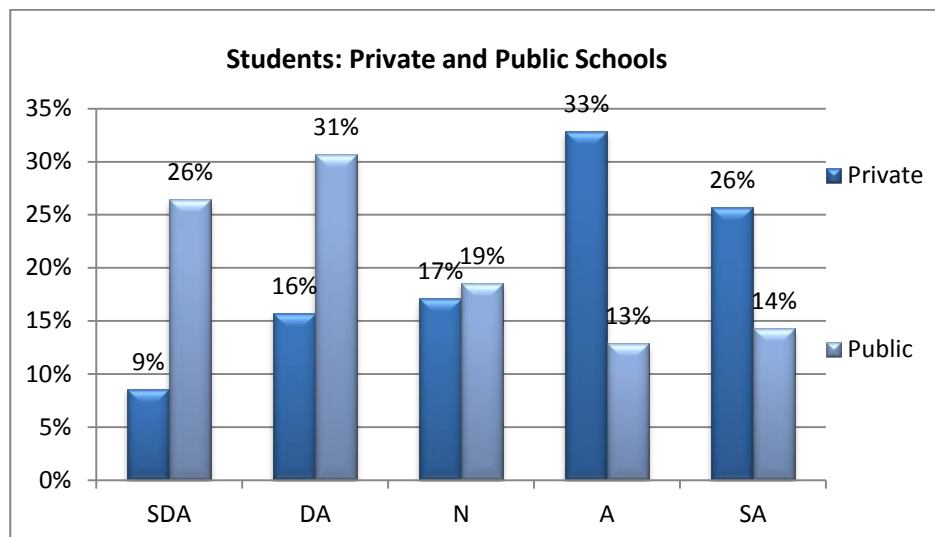
### *Parents and Students*

The questionnaires have a direct question that investigates if the school calendar shows days for teachers' professional development.



*Figure 24: Parents' response: School calendar indicates teacher training programme*

Parental response indicated that 52% of parents in the private schools were neutral and 33% of parents agreed/strongly agreed that school had teacher training days shown in the calendar. 36% of parents from public schools were neutral and 30% disagreed (Figure 24).



*Figure 25: Students' response: School calendar indicates teacher training programme*

57% of the students from the public schools disagree/strongly disagree that the school calendar had days assigned for teacher training whereas 59% of students from private schools agree/strongly agree with the statement (Figure 25).

### **6.7.3 Summary of Findings of Research Question Four**

Collaboration among teachers is considered important but it is more in practice in the private schools as compared to public schools, where teachers face many other constraints like heavy timetable, few resources, pressure of exams. Headteachers' aspirations, readiness and ability as a motivator, mentor and role model to promote and develop an environment that supports learning at all levels through support and appreciation is one of the key factors here that has an impact on the extent, level and outcome of learning activities. Most of the practitioners complain about a lot of administrative tasks assigned to them affecting the quality of academic

and real learning in school. The teacher training is also more need-based in private schools although public schools have opportunities of training available for them but they feel that the training contents are not as per their needs. Most of them are reluctant to attend these programmes and the effectiveness is questioned for being theoretical and without any support and coaching system available after training. Many of them feel that teachers are not motivated and are quite complacent of their conditions. Students and parents are mostly not aware of professional development opportunities in these schools. There is a need to expand and explore the scope and willingness to share resources and practices with each other in the schools with a focus to learn more about improving the learning process.

## **6.8 Research Question Five: To what extent is the student voice a contributory factor for improving learning and teaching in schools of Pakistan?**

### **6.8.1 Theme One: Student involvement and student leadership**

#### ***Headteachers***

Data shows that understanding and scope of the concept of students' voice is interpreted very differently depending upon ability and the way it is conceptualized by headteachers. Mostly it was interpreted as feedback, involvement and leadership. It is also described as "*students' concerns*" over some incident about which students are "*unhappy or upset, performance indicator for school, sets priorities of school development plan in future*".

*“Students’ voice is a buzz word in schools nowadays and I think it’s the driving force that controls many initiatives as well as the process of development and evaluation in my school’.*  
(Headteacher Private School 3).

But two of the other headteachers cautioned that students’ voice was important but it had to be unbiased and logical as students sometimes might tend to get over excited and may exaggerate or underestimate a situation or matter. However, one headteacher (Public School 3) had a different point of view and believed that students in the world of today might be very mature and could understand a situation better than compared to the students who were there around twenty years ago. Headteachers (Private Schools 1 and 2) feel that the bias factor must be ruled out before taking decisions based on students’ voice. Having limited or no authority over teaching and learning practices and assessment criterion, the curriculum is considered unfavourable for incorporating student voice. In the public schools, headteachers felt that students’ voice was important, however, tightly structured policies did not give them any room to bring in changes as suggested by the students.

*“I find it very difficult with very limited authority given to me to bring changes as recommended or expected by students ... but I keep on looking for ways wherever possible to hear and respond accordingly. Though school policies are pre-defined and do not have much flexibility, I try to involve students wherever possible. Mostly it is in extra-curricular activities and I try to provide opportunities”.* (Headteacher Public School 2).

## ***Teachers***

All of the participating teachers considered students' voice very important, although the scope was subjective to many other factors where authority and aspiration from the leadership was "*pivotal*". It was considered important to improve classroom and whole-school situations. According to many of the participants, the basic function and purpose for every single school was to cater to the learning needs of students, so it was important to know what the students feel about the quality of learning being offered to them in the school.

Teachers from the private schools (12/15) said that they used to collect and evaluate their teaching in terms of students' responses and feedback which they achieved directly or indirectly using formal or informal methods to collect data. Teachers from Private School 3 feel that their school has a "*culture that values students' voice in their school*" They are encouraged to share their opinions on "*different aspects of school life, in and out of class*" and wherever possible, "*their suggestions are implemented*".

Teachers from Private Schools (1 and 2) and all of the public schools were appreciative of the concept but were apprehensive of a few factors that might influence the outcome in a positive or negative manner such as headteachers' willingness and ability, students' maturity and resources in the schools to facilitate students' voice.

According to these teachers, a careful approach should be adopted towards analysis and taking decisions accordingly based on this voice otherwise it might lead to distrust and poor performance in school conditions. It was also considered important that headteachers did not believe in everything students said about teachers as some of them went with a hidden agenda and whatever they said was only to target some teacher. Headteachers should “*give teachers a chance*” to clarify his/her point of view as well, not being able to do so results in “*trust deficiency*”.

### ***Parents and Students***

Parents and students were asked whether the students had opportunities to shape the ways school worked, and secondly, if they were happy/proud to be associated with this school as a student or parent. In response to the statement about the opportunities to shape the way school worked, 48% of the parents from the private schools disagreed and 22% remained neutral. The data represented almost the same picture in both sectors and the difference was not well defined here. 45% of parents disagreed and 20% remained neutral there. In terms of the satisfaction level of the parents on being associated with this school and by selecting this for their child, the number of parents which remained neutral increased to 29% in the private sector and 25% in the public schools. 39% in the private schools and 38% in the public schools agreed that they were happy to be associated with this school.

The trend of the public school students' response on the statement about giving opportunities to the students to shape the way school works was higher towards disagreement with 55% (disagree strongly disagree) as compared to that of 43% in the participating private school students. The students who remained neutral were almost the same in both types of schools, 21% from the private sector and 20 % from the public school. The students who agreed with the statement were 35% in the private sector, a figure higher than that of 28% of the public school students (Figure 26).

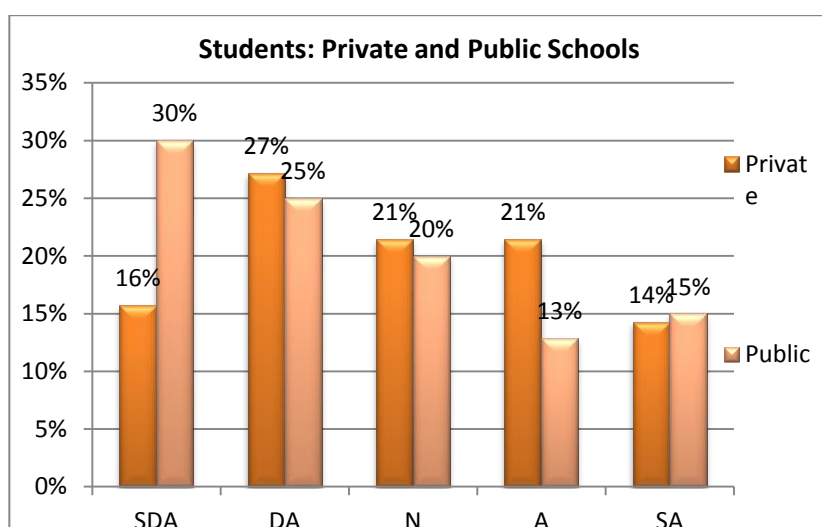


Figure 26: Students' responses: students' opinion matters to shape the way school works

In response to other statements about the satisfaction level, the difference between the response of the private sector students and public sector was remarkable. Only 33% of students agreed/strongly agreed in the public schools as compared to 55% of the private

school students who agreed. On the other hand, 45% of students from the public and 25% from the private sector disagreed that they were proud to be a student of this school.

### **6.8.2 Theme Two: Students as stakeholders to improve classroom practices**

#### ***Headteachers***

There emerges a general agreement among all of the participating headteachers that if students' opinions and feedback were taken into consideration, it could result in better pedagogical approaches and challenging curriculum design. Students' perspectives and experiences could be used for enhancing learning outcomes by modifying what was taught and how it was taught. The headteachers' of two of the private schools (2 and 3) strongly advocated the idea of students' as partners in the process of learning. They felt that listening closely to what students' said about the school might give school administration and leadership a future direction. However, the data collected from the other four schools reflects that headteachers have certain apprehensions about making the students partners in the process of learning. One of the headteachers shared a concern of "*imbalance of power and authority*" between teachers, management and students. Contrary to this, the other respondent said:

*"I think considering students as partners to improve learning in schools has reduced my worries. I could see more precisely how learning takes place in this school and how all of us can work together to improve it".* (Headteacher Private School 3).



From the data it was inferred that the extent to which the students' were considered partners was linked with the "*classroom-based practices and school activities*" in all three private schools. In the public schools, the concept was understood in terms of having a school council which contributes towards "*school discipline*". Although it was shared in one of the public schools that students' feedback was appreciated, no specific plan or strategy to collect this feedback was discussed. In terms of classroom-based practices, two of the private schools shared their practices of gathering feedback through evaluation forms towards the end of the term. The data was analysed and certain changes were incorporated. These schools have introduced "*academic support programme*", "*new clubs and societies*", "*examination schedules*", "*selection of teachers*" for a specific subject. Words like "*friendly relationship, respect, trust, appreciation, ability, empowerment, readiness and role model*", emerged frequently in the data from these schools with a strong evidence of the importance of leaders' ability and interaction with students and staff. Headteachers also shared the evaluation form template used in their schools.

*"The role of Students' Council is quite important as they work closely with school leadership in all areas. We have a well-established procedure of elections and make sure that really capable students are selected. Their feedback is given a lot of importance".* (Headteacher Private School 1).

School Councils and students' representatives are given importance in the public schools as well but their role is more towards assisting school management in organizing different events in schools.

*“We take students as our partners, they help their teachers on different functions, organize assemblies, national days etc...but I think teaching is the job of teachers”.* (Headteacher Public School 2).

### ***Teachers***

The teachers’ response is of mixed views here. Some of the teachers (5/15 in the private schools and 3/15 in the public schools) were strong advocates of the concept, whereas the majority of the teachers’ perceptions were about taking feedback about the quality of their teaching; they considered it important but expressed certain apprehensions (11/15 in the private schools and 9/15 in the public schools). Few of the participating teachers felt that students could not have the maturity at this age to be able to assess their teachers’ performance or to contribute to the learning process as partners (3/15 in the private schools and 6/15 in the public schools).

All of the participating teachers agreed that this kind of working style had an impact on the relationship between teachers and students. Students became more confident when their voice was heard. When they were given a chance to *“speak about how they are doing”* in their classrooms or asked what do you consider *“can make learning more interesting and effective in school?”*

*“I think by providing students with opportunities to become partners in the teaching and learning activities, school actually prepares them to move ahead in life with better planning and analytical skills’.* (T 27 Private School 3).

Two teachers from Private School 3 mentioned that they engaged students in *“lesson planning, revision plans and developing a quiz in the class”*. They felt that students gave many *“innovative ideas”* and *“their participation level increases”* in all such lessons. Another teacher uses a simple, what she calls a *“weekly recap session”* with all of the classes and asked simple questions like *“what worked for them, why and why not”*.

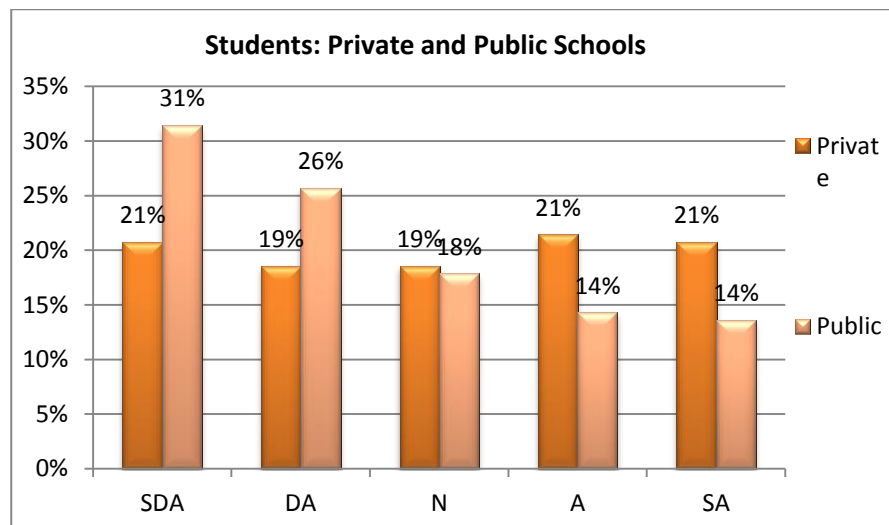
*“We may not have many choices in the public schools where students can really contribute but listening to their views about learning experience reinforces my role as a teacher for me, I realize the impact that every teacher has on students, good or bad”.* (T8 Public School 2).

According to many other respondents (7/15 private schools and 4/15 public schools), this type of working style might require *“close co-ordination and collegiality”* between heads, teachers and students. Close analysis of the teachers’ responses revealed that almost 40% of the participants replied in ways that suggest that students could be a really useful resource to improve learning outcomes when *“teachers delegate them the task”* or, could be misleading, when teachers or headteacher use them as a means of *“off-loading their responsibilities”*.

### *Parents and Students*

Looking at the data collected from parents in this area, it can be noticed that the majority of the parent disagree (34%) or are neutral (26%) on the statement that their child's opinion plays an important role in order to help improve teaching and learning. In the open-ended questions, parents have recommended that school should adopt a policy of “*equal opportunity*” and should provide “*support*” to students who “*need help to improve their learning*”. A parent questions:

*“Is school only for high achievers? They get all the opportunities and appreciation. Nobody notices what an average student is doing. They should consider them part of the school also”.*



*Figure 27: Students' responses: students' opinion matters to bring improvement in teaching and learning practices*

The responses of the students from the private sector marked almost equal division, with 42% agreeing that their opinion was considered important in terms of bringing improvement in the teaching and learning practices in school, and 40% of those who disagreed/strongly disagreed. However, a clear majority of 57% of students from the participating public schools disagreed that their opinion matters in school in terms of teaching and learning practices (Figure 27, p. 236).

If one looked at a consolidated picture of the data from students, it could be inferred that the majority of students disagreed (48%) and 19% were neutral. In the open-ended questions, students enlist a range of ideas where they could contribute in a more effective manner to improve learning in school. Some of these ideas were:

- Conducting a monthly subject and class wise survey
- Generating an “idea bank” to make certain topics and lessons interesting
- Conducting model lessons in junior classes
- Subject clubs to improve learning
- On line resources

*“I wish I could just tell my teachers what many of us think about their class, good or bad, whatever it is”.* (Student from Public School 1).

### 6.8.3 Theme Three: Barriers to students' voice

#### *Headteachers*

While talking about student voice and empowerment, all of the headteachers shared many challenges that they faced while trying to incorporate the change. The most common challenge as emerged from data was to bring a change in the mind-sets of the staff. Most of the teachers had a fear that students' voice was all about launching complaints against them. Barriers in the relationship between teachers and students based on the preconceptions of the roles contaminated any move to promote a culture of inclusion:

*“This is not a simple task, it requires a total paradigm shift and requires willingness and commitment of all teachers, students, parents and leadership ... all of us will have to renegotiate our roles”.* (Headteacher Private School 2).

The issue of trust was resonant in the data. Creating that *“environment of trust and mutual respect”* where teachers have the confidence that students will take their roles responsibly and their opinions would not be biased and students had the confidence that their *“voices would be heard and considered”*, was highlighted as *“a challenge”* by many. However, it was suggested that the creation of a *“shared meaning of leadership and learning”* in the school is essential. More *“explicit dialogue”* between all stakeholders, including students was suggested by the headteachers. Teacher training and counselling sessions for students was also recommended by the majority of the participants.

Two headteachers interpret student voice as a transformation “*from teacher centred approach to student centred approach*”. They consider it a difficult procedure.

“*Although student centredness brings many benefits and changes the entire process of learning in schools but I find myself hard-pressed at times to establish a shared meaning of it and accomplish the goal*”. (Headteacher Private School 1).

The headteachers in the public schools mostly talked about the closely structured curriculum, few resources and pressure of accountability in terms of exam results as the barriers to work on any other areas. The majority of the headteachers also mentioned that most of the expectations of students from school were “*unrealistic*” and were “*constrained by physical or financial considerations*”. Students must consider the “*ground realities*” before making “*their wish lists*”. Many of them also mentioned that not all students were mature enough to be partners in the learning process and it created uneasiness among teachers. So “*including all is not possible*”.

### ***Teachers***

The majority of the teachers express their concerns about the bias factor in students’ voice. They think that students’ voice is mostly about “*complaining against teachers or school*”. Many of them talk about “*teachers’ voice*” in the public as well as private schools. In the public school, they mentioned their problems, lack of resources and poor scales and in private sector they criticised school policy for being over lenient on disciplinary issues of students.

Some of them felt that schools in Pakistan had many constraints in terms of resources, opportunities and education system:

*“most of the time school will not be able to inculcate the changes recommended by students due to many constraints ... and students will be disappointed ... what’s the use of this exercise then?”* (T 12 Public School 3).

*“Limited time”* and *“pressure of examination”* was also considered a big challenge that becomes a barrier for many of the participants. Workload assigned to the teachers in daily timetables was considered over loaded and it did not provide them a chance *“to go back and discuss with the students their experience of schooling”* and then every year *“a new group comes in”* and *“no time to co-ordinate with the previous teacher about her students”*. Teachers felt that they have to keep all of their discussions and direction of classroom practices aligned with the examination requirements.

*“I have a good friendly relation with my students. Many a times, I know that students want to talk to me about different things in school ... but my priority is to cover syllabus ... properly and on time ... and I feel bad but can’t help it’.* (T5 Public School 1).

Some of the teachers felt that students’ voice demanded a cultural shift and a change in the mind sets and also requires many operational and procedural changes in school that should be aspired, developed, implemented and encouraged from top management. It required planning, delegation of tasks and authority, role identification to collect the information through students’ voice.



*“who does what, how students’ voice is recorded, analysed and acted upon... this demands strong aspiration, a lot of planning, authority, resources, time and ability at all levels, at students’, teachers’ and headteacher’s level”.* (T 21 Private School 3).

### ***Parents and Students***

The data from parents and students indicated that access to headteachers and teachers was not difficult in the public schools. However, most of them mentioned in the open-ended questions that their recommendations and suggestions to improve any existing practice were normally not considered. Similarly, students from the private schools appreciated if there was a direct interaction between teachers and students on different issues related to their learning and other activities. However, according to them, teachers were busy and had preconceived notions about any recommendations given by students.

#### **6.8.4 Summary of the Findings of Research Question Five**

Students’ voice is considered important by all in this study. However, the interpretation of the concept and role of students as stakeholders of the learning process is different in these sample schools and particularly between public and private sector. Clarity of purpose, strong aspiration, authority and ability among headteachers and teachers has a direct impact on the way it is interpreted, recorded and utilised. Teachers express different views and some of them are apprehensive that the students’ voice is all about complaining against them or schools.

Students, however, share a range of ideas where they can contribute as partners with the schools to improve learning. However, many of the students also complain that only high achievers' opinions matter and nobody pays attention to the average students. There are many challenges identified by the teachers and headteachers that may constrain the scope of students to contribute as partners to enhance learning outcomes. Limited resources and time, pressure of examinations and tightly structured curriculum make room for students' voice limited. Moreover, trust, honesty and unbiased approach are also integral to making the entire process effective.

## **6.9 Summary of the Findings**

This chapter has presented the findings from the various forms of data collected from the case schools, the headteachers, teachers, students, parents and documentary sources. It has focused on the concept of LfL. It has sought to explore different aspects linked with concept of leadership in schools, how learning is understood in six schools in Pakistan and to what extent leadership and learning are interconnected in the schools of Pakistan. It is also explored whether the students' voice is a contributory factor to improving learning practices in the schools of Pakistan. Common themes, similarities and differences have been highlighted throughout the chapter. The research questions shape the format and structure of the findings chapter.

The data was not analysed case by case, rather patterns of similarities and differences were identified in the cases. The data clearly defines different sets of practices prevalent in the public and private schools of Pakistan. This difference is because of physical resources but more evidently it is considered a result of leadership capacity within a school. The role of leader is considered an important factor that makes a difference and creates a learning environment in school that caters for the social, emotional and cognitive needs of the students and staff alike. Headteachers' willingness and aspirations, ability and resourcefulness, appreciation and readiness, and authority are the keywords which appear frequently in interviews that have strong impact on the entire process of leadership and learning in these schools. However, data is also indicative that schools face many challenges and one of these is the willingness of teachers to work in teams and share their practices with each other, particularly in the public schools. The schools which have a culture of sharing and collaborative working environments also try to create opportunities of networking with other schools and organizations. Students' voice and parental involvement is given importance but data provides very limited evidence of some formal and structured processes of inclusion.

Having summarised the findings and described the evidence generated from my research methods in relation to my research questions, I am now able to develop further meaning to my findings by connecting them to the literature reviewed, and by discussing whether the LfL is a useful concept to improve learning in the schools of Pakistan. Following on from this discussion, tentative suggestions can be made for improving schools in Pakistan. This

approach of analysis and dialogue could benefit not the only the stakeholders and those responsible for reforming schools in the public and private sector, but ultimately the students.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN: AN ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS**

### **7.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides discussion and analysis of the findings presented in the previous chapter. The findings from the previous chapter have been synthesised followed by conclusions and recommendations drawn from the data and related literature. The themes under each research question were examined and synthesized that provided the main structure of this chapter. The chapter aims to find answers emerging from the stakeholders' contextual concepts and practices combined with the relevant issues as identified in the literature review and research design chapters. This strategy has helped in drawing out conclusions as I aspire to make recommendations for the practitioners and other researchers based on the knowledge gained in this study. The recommendations given in the last chapter would be of use to researchers, to those who make policies and to practitioners in schools.

The first section of the chapter presents analysis of how learning and leadership is conceptualized by different stakeholders; this is followed by examination of the interplay of leadership and learning and different levels of dialogue for learning. In the third section, scope of students' voice and empowerment as a contributory factor to improve learning is analysed. The leader's influence upon these factors is debated throughout the discussion leading to the recommendations and conclusion in the next chapter.

## 7.2 Conceptualizing Learning: Impact of Social and Personal Legacies and Pressure of Examination

It is evident from the responses from all participants in this study that the process of learning is highly influenced by the social, personal and examination related skills and factors. Socio-personal legacies may have an impact on the way learning and cognition is conceptualized as well as experienced.

*“I seriously feel that it is difficult to find one definition of learning for the schools in Pakistan ... Let me read Humpty-Dumpty's view in Alice in Wonderland...you may find it useful... 'When I use a word', Humpty Dumpty said in rather a scornful tone, 'it means just what I choose it to mean -- neither more nor less'. 'The question is', said Alice, 'whether you can make words mean so many different things'. 'The question is', said Humpty Dumpty, 'which is to be master -- that's all.' ... Learning means whatever the user meant by it ... his or her own experiences, ability will have an impact on his or her aspirations and achievements ... but considering demands and expectations of all those involved in this process in Pakistan, you can't ignore importance of examinations within this process of learning”.* (Headteacher Private School 3).

Learning is seen as a process to promote examination as well as social and personal skills in these schools of Pakistan. Although there is a lot of emphasis given to quantifiable aspects of learning in schools, it is, however, considered important that learning is not only about the exam results. It should also inculcate social skills among students enabling them to be a contributing team member and a good leader in the real world. This concept highlights the

importance of “social capital” as introduced by many theorists such as Granovetter (1973), Coleman (1988), Putnam (1999), and blends with the same theme in Swaffield and MacBeath’s (2009a ) concept of LfL. It is frequently shared by the majority of the participants that schools should try to link their teaching and learning activities with the social contexts in which they work and which students can relate to. MacBeath et al. (2009) present three forms of this social capital as bridging, bonding and linking which can nurture a learning environment in most of the schools through human agency with a moral purpose. The emphasis on moral and social skills given by the respondents also resonates with Starratt (1999) and Starratt (2004 and 2008) suggesting that learning must provoke a thought of societal and collective interest more than individual quantifiable gains. Phrases like *“learning is the prime focus”*, *“learning centred”*, *“citizens for the tomorrow’s world, problem solving skills”* and *“student centred classroom practices”* echoing in the data from teachers and headteachers illustrate the importance given to the aspects of social, moral and cognitive skills among learners. Research reconfirms that learning is a process of “social activity” as claimed by Bruner (1986). It is quite clear from research findings that the surroundings, children’s background, community and culture play an important role in defining and forming the meanings of learning in schools. As the following statement of a participant demonstrates:

*“How can we define the meaning of learning in isolation, there are so many interactive and interdependent factors and stakeholders ... parents, students, industry, government ... all of them have a direct or indirect influence on the process that in return is linked with meaning of learning in schools”*. (Headteacher Private School 2).

Thus learning becomes an activity that is influenced by many actors from society and the government sector as well. They “co-construct” the meanings of learning. This notion is in line with the co-constructivist approach in the concept of LfL to the extent that the involvement of parents and community is concerned. The importance of pedagogical procedure to shape the meaning of learning is consistently highlighted from the work of Freire (1973) to Rhodes et al. (2009). This study confirms the same again. When a school has this way of working, learning becomes a deep and vast process that is not constrained by examination results and structured curriculum, but prepares citizens for the world of tomorrow. However, the data is not only indicative of a strong influence of the government policies and limited resources, particularly in the public schools that confines the scope of this social activity aspect in learning in schools of Pakistan, but also reveals the importance of how school leaders and teachers conceptualize leadership and learning. It seems extremely important to have a capable and motivated team of practitioners in schools to make learning a process about more than only good grades in examinations. Although a clear understanding is expressed by the majority of the participants that learning is a social, moral and cognitive process, this concept is not largely in practice. Data evidently establishes that examination results are emphasized a lot.

The majority of students, parents and subsequently teachers and headteachers’ responses confirm that examination results are the prime performance indicator for them. Therefore, examination-taking skills are one of the most important components and highest priority in the learning process in schools in Pakistan. The school calendars and newsletters give special



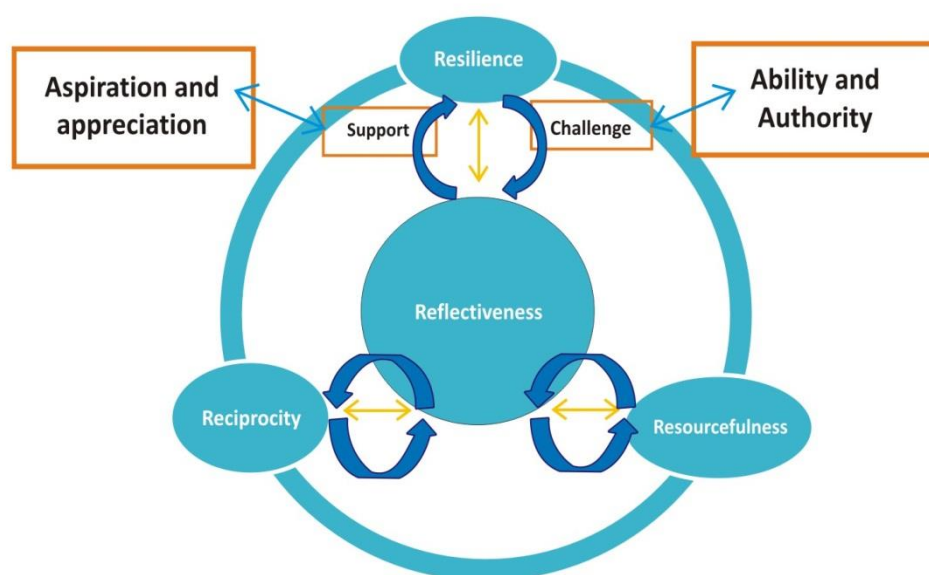
importance to the examination related activities, revision sessions, special classes, workshops and results. Most of the classroom practices, as mentioned by many participants, are only about examination skills under controlled conditions and “*limited time and room to work on the social and moral part of learning*”, which Illich (1971), Gardner (1993), and LeDoux (1996), consider anti-learning. Yet, there are some sector differences from the respondents in this study. Many participants say that learning is more concerned with quantifiable objectives as parents and students in Pakistan are more worried about their future, about getting admission in a reputed institution that leads to their market value. Learning is a moral and social aspect but it is equally an economics related activity. In a country like Pakistan where almost 90 million people are living below the poverty line (assessed for the year 2010, [www.pakistantoday.com](http://www.pakistantoday.com)), the biggest expectation parents have from schools is to give a better future to their child by enabling him/her to have good grades in examinations and by learning real life skills. Schools that are able to maintain a balance between examination skills and other emotional, moral and social skills make learning a rich interactive experience. The schools which are not able to determine the importance of this combination of skills into their daily practice adopt an approach that is contradictory to the true essence of the co-constructivism aspect of LfL. The learning becomes more quantifiable and students and staff are usually busy in creating a meaning of learning that is more about examination results only. The level of learning is more like what Watkins (2003) claims to be about quantity and transfer of facts and knowledge from one source according to predefined targets; learners are passive. The classroom activities echo with the “rote” learning in school (Alexander, 2004) and “recitation script” (Tharp and Gallimore, 1988) of the teachers, as informed by a participant:

*“most important and pressurizing for me is to complete my syllabus ... prepare my students for exams ... all is well that ends well ... I am so hard pressed of time and examination pressures that I really don’t have time to discuss anything else with them in my daily interaction with them, but I agree that things should be different ... more freedom and less pressure would make learning enjoyable for all of us”.* (T6 Public School 2).

This type of learning results in teacher led classroom activities, and students find it *“boring”* and *“typical”*. It is clear in this study that the meaning of learning as understood by the majority of headteachers in schools is the same as propagated in the concept of LfL, however, it is obvious that because of severe economic conditions, effectiveness of learning is interpreted by parents and students mostly in terms of quantifiable achievements, good grades that lead to admissions to a reputed university or help in getting good jobs in future with better workplace skills. Effective learning in Pakistani schools is a combination of examination and workplace skills through a process of social, moral and cognitive engagement. It is encouraging to see that the majority of the participants understand that excessive pressure of examination results constrains their learning which turns into a structured phenomenon, and needs to be changed. As Claxton describes in the four Rs model (2002), the majority of the participants’ resilience and reflectiveness towards conceptualizing learning as a social and moral skill, demand for a change in the pedagogical procedures in schools.

The study highlights that the role of school is to provide learning for all, not only to students. A learning-centred approach is adopted in schools and many agree that ‘leadership and

learning’ are relevant concepts and the quality and process is subjective to many other factors. The model that emerges for schools as a learning place for all suggests the addition of 4 As (appreciation, aspiration, ability and authority ) within the Claxton’s (2002) model of learning, with four Rs as resilience, resourcefulness, reflectiveness and reciprocity.



*Figure 28: Suggested Model of Learning Process from Micro to Macro Level  
(adapted from Claxton, 2002)*

Based on the findings of the study, the model suggests that the 4Rs are interlinked and dependant on 4As within leaders.

*“Leaders’ ability is not only about having right kind of qualifications and experience; it is more of right kind of behaviour, mindset and attitude that not only challenges his own capabilities but also appreciates others’ initiatives and efforts ... but the question is to what*

*extent learning can be a totally self directed and controlled activity? As leader of school, we are responsible and accountable against certain target and standards ... so we must use authority with a lot of careful consideration being mindful of the difference between authority and dictatorship and its impact on learning”.* (Headteacher Private School 2).

Data indicates ability, authority, appreciation and aspiration as four important factors that have an impact on learning outcome at all levels. Ability is described as the right skillset, capability and willingness to develop a learning environment in schools. Authority is considered important not only for leaders but for teachers as well. It is described as being resourceful and empowered not only within their roles but also to be willing to empower others. This may have a strong impact on the morale and satisfaction level within all involved in the process of learning. They appreciate others and motivate to keep their aspirations high by providing support and assistance. Based on data these four can be defined as:

**Ability:** Individual or organizational capacity and competence to lead and develop individuals, organizations and teams.

**Authority:** Power, agency and skill emerging from ability, skill and being resourceful to take decisions individually or as a team.

**Appreciation:** Acknowledging individual, team and organizational efforts and initiatives in a manner that moves them to further action, strengthening their confidence and self-esteem.

**Aspiration:** Goal and targets that individual, team or organizations set for their progression and growth.

These 4As along with 4Rs influence the learning environment and process at all levels in schools. Most of the private schools in the study follow a similar pattern of learning as suggested by Claxton (2002). However, their model is slightly different, instead of following a sequential model from step one (resilience) to step four (reflectiveness) in the 4Rs model (Claxton, 2002), their practices indicate that these schools have three Rs (resilience, resourcefulness and reciprocity) in an incremental or cyclic process where reflectiveness is a constant ongoing practice at each level (Figure 28, p. 251). In the private schools, resilience factor is dominant and schools provide opportunities for teachers, students and headteachers to engage in the process of learning as per need or desire. These schools have a flexible and supporting environment where learning at any level and extent is appreciated. The schools have sufficient resources and structures are in place. Considering the interplay of leadership and learning, the four As of leadership roles have been identified that have a direct impact on the learning process at all levels in schools.

Two of the private schools have regular and structured training programmes offering opportunities of learning and professional development to teachers and headteachers in schools. These schools have a clear vision for learning and as Sergiovanni (2002: p.8) claims, these schools *“know who they are and have developed a common understanding of their purpose.”* The concept of “human agency” as difference through *“self-conscious strategic actions”* (Frost, 2006: p.20) is prevalent in the majority of the private schools in the study. Their responses confirm that the *“curriculum document is reviewed”* on a yearly basis and *“teachers evaluate lesson plans”*. In one of the schools, the concept of *“peer observation”* as

mutually agreed is also in practice. Teachers try to use different pedagogical approaches to improve classroom practices. The schools have a practice that reflects on their yearly activities and streamlines their future directions in their school development plans. As per Southworth's (2004) model of six levels of learning, these schools have reached up to level three and four mostly, and two of them are moving towards level five and six where they have networking and collaborative projects in place. Their practice is quite similar to what is suggested in the wedding cake model of LfL (MacBeath et al., 2009) where learning has an incremental flow from student level to networks of collaborative practices. However, it is interesting to explore that the purpose behind creating the network is linked with image-building of the school and providing students with opportunities to prepare for workplace skills, admissions to good institutes after graduating from schools and career counselling. It highlights the importance of these skills as significant elements of learning with a socio-economic factor. Furthermore, the leadership engagement as lead learners is also not a routine feature in these schools. Resilience of leaders to change their approach of leadership and learning in school through learning new and improved ways is not well established in these schools.

In the public schools, "*deficient resources*" are considered the main constraint to inhibit learning for all in schools. However, all three headteachers appreciate government's initiatives in teacher training programmes in Punjab. However, it is obvious from the responses and evidence from public schools that the focus of learning in schools is mostly around examination related issues. Analysing it on Southworth's (2004) model of six levels of learning, it becomes evident that learning is at the first two levels mostly in these public

schools, where the activities and claims are all about students or teachers. It also indicates that students, as claimed by Watkins (2003), are “*passive learners*”. Moreover the resilience and reciprocity factor also remains deficient in the public sector. The concept of human agency is underdeveloped in these schools, although there is some evidence of collaboration and reflective practice in one of the public schools, and it emerges that the school has a culture that promotes learning for students to headteacher’s level. The sample of the study is purposive where all of the public schools were selected with similar resources and other infrastructure. The public school that seems to be at a higher level of learning indicates a culture of higher resilience and reflectiveness and headteacher’s role as a motivator.

### **7.3 Conceptualizing Leadership: From Single Position to Shared Skill**

Although there is extensive literature available about the paradigm shift in the concept of leadership from a single position and role to a skill in organizations, it emerges from the study that leadership in schools in Pakistan is still mostly seen as a position and power within that position. It is encouraging that the importance of teamwork, collaboration and trust among all stakeholders is also appreciated by the majority of the participants. The headteachers are usually busy in school administration though in some of the private schools they are busy in strategic leadership as well. It emerges from the study that headteachers are mostly at, what Bush (2008) describes as, “*managerial*” level and have a limited strategic role particularly in the public schools. The study resonates with Yukl’s (2006) claim that the concept of leadership is subjective to many other factors that have a direct impact on the way it is practiced. It is important to note that the way leadership is conceptualized and practiced by

the headteachers, is reflected through the opinion of other participants in an organization like school, which is considered highly permeable by Leithwood et al. (2006). Two headteachers in the private schools and one in the public sector, for example, have an understanding of the concept as a skill that flows across the organization. Similar thoughts emerge from the responses of teachers in those schools. The study indicates difference of understanding and practices in the public and private schools. In the private schools, the headteacher's role is more of a mentor and motivator; they are appreciated for being accessible, empathetic and supportive. In the public schools, leadership is bureaucratic and rigid as they have to ensure that the government policies are implemented completely; they are not usually involved in the policy making. This highlights that school leaders in the public schools have very limited authority and freedom. This may result in structured classroom and school practices and demotivation among all involved. The headteacher is held responsible for not being able to implement the policies and follow the curriculum. Contrary to this, the data from two of the private schools affirms the claim of many proponents of the concept of leadership as a shared skill (Starratt, 2004 and 2008; Fullan, 2006 ; MacBeath et al., 2009). It is clear from this study that headteachers in those organizations, although not at the top in the hierarchy, are indeed leaders. However, like others in the public schools and one of the private schools, they are also required to be managers. A different approach and more empowered and "free" headteacher could make these public schools in Pakistan closer to the concept of LfL.

All of them complain about the pressure of many administrative tasks that consume most part of the day and affect their contribution as an academic head of the school. The study

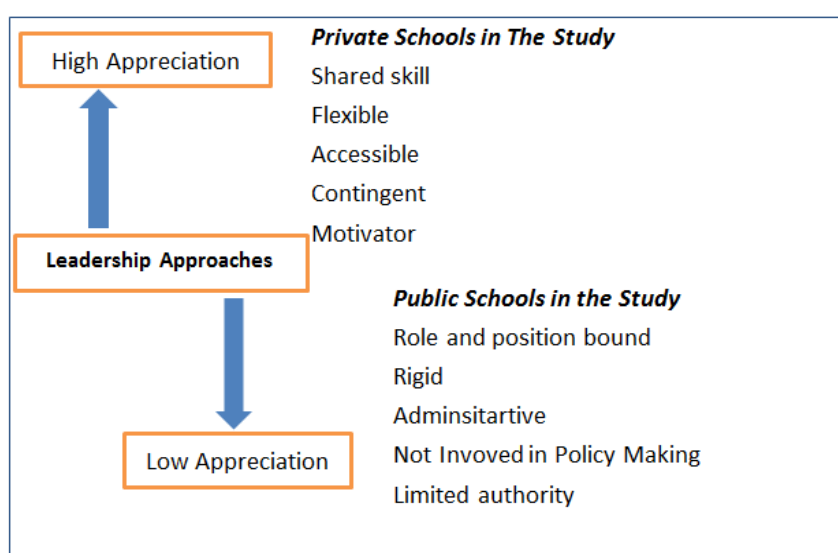


reconfirms the findings of Khan et al. (2009) in the schools of Punjab and adds that the similar apprehensions are shared by the headteachers of schools outside Punjab, from different parts of Pakistan. It also proves that the concept of leadership is somewhat blurred with the management as most of them consider that being good in administering a school is almost equal to being a good leader. The concept of leadership is closer to Hodgkinson's (1996) view that:

*"... leadership is identified with administration it can be understood as the effecting of policy, values and philosophy through collective action. It is the moving of men towards goals through organisation and it can be done well, badly, or indifferently".* (Cited in Gunter and Ribbins, 2002: p.362).

But this concept is to some extent different to the one propagated in the concept of LfL. The study highlights the difference in the leadership style as being bureaucratic in public schools and having a contingent approach in private schools that has an effect on power distances and/or quality of learning and capacity building strategies in these schools. The private schools have a more flexible approach to adapt their leadership style to be contingent upon varying situations. Importance is given to the stakeholders' opinion, and capacity and image building is considered important. This type of leadership is more aligned with the ideas of co-constructivism and shared leadership (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009; Rhodes et al., 2009; Gronn, 2010). As identified by Murphy et al. (2009) leadership is not the same in all schools and consequently the school performance is also diverse. The study identifies a clear

difference of approach and practice between the private and public schools. It confirms the findings of Khan et al. (2009) that the headteachers in public schools are still considered a non-academic person, bureaucratic in approach and busy in administrative tasks all of the time. The study highlights the power distance prevalent in the schools and reveals high dissatisfaction among teachers and students in the schools that results in demotivation and stress (Figure 29).



*Figure 29: Appreciation of leadership approaches in the Private and Public Schools of Pakistan*

Contrary to this, the schools that have a different approach and understanding about leadership demonstrate higher satisfaction and appreciation for leadership valued by all in the school. Leadership is conceptualized the way it is explained in the LfL but the way it is practiced is different. However, it is clearly indicated in the data that leadership as a widespread skill, as a motivator and entrepreneur, is more cherished than the typical concept of leadership as one position.

Learning is conceptualized as a process which develops and inculcates moral, social and cognitive skills among learners. However, it is noticeable that the socio-economic context of Pakistan highlights the importance of quantifiable aspects of the learning process. Examinations, workplace skills and career counselling are considered important by all the participants and the majority of them consider these aspects extremely important. Leadership is seen differently in private and public schools. The public schools conceptualize it as power that comes with certain positions and ranks, whereas in the private schools it is more like a shared skill. The staff and students appreciate and recognise leadership in accordance with the way it is practiced. The role of leader as a motivator and role model is important to bring any change and keep the team motivated. The schools are a learning place for all; staff, students and headteachers. However, the headteachers as learners is not a routine practice.

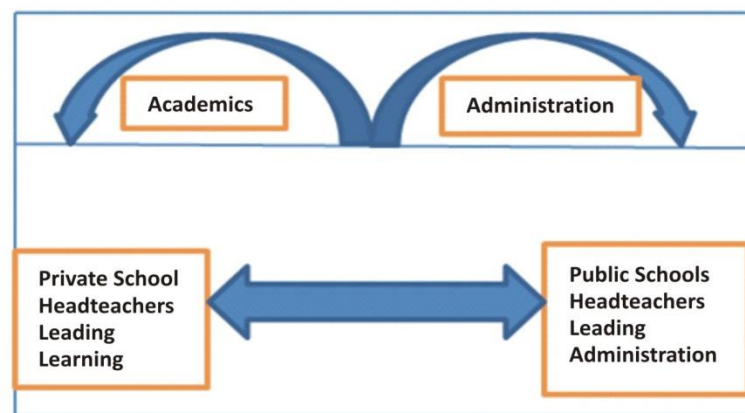
#### **7.4 Influence of Leadership on Learning Process**

Although the majority of the headteachers claim that they take a keen interest in the process of learning, the majority of the students' and parents' responses demonstrate strong disagreement with this claim. However, all of the participants agree that leadership has an effect on learning directly or indirectly. If a leader is actively involved in the learning process and motivates all in school, the quality of outcomes will be enhanced. The schools where leaders are not actively involved in academics have a low level of enthusiasm among teachers, and learning usually becomes a typical and boring activity. Thus the response of the participants confirms that leadership has an effect on the learning process, positive or negative:

*“It’s not tangible but you can feel it very easily ... it’s in every school, the moment you enter the school gate, a classroom or meet a student, you have a feel of it”.* (T 9 Public School 2).

This influence is the same as identified by Yukl (2006) and Leithwood et al. (2006) that leaders influence pupils’ learning almost as classroom experiences do. Leaders’ ability and perception about learning sets a culture of all learning activities and determines quality of outcomes. It is noticed that headteachers who have education-related professional experience or relevant degree prior to joining the current position have a different perception, and take active interest in the process of learning in their schools, whereas others who have different experience and qualifications consider schools as a corporate entity. The claims are justified mostly by the qualitative case study interviews and through triangulation of data in quantitative questionnaires and documentary analysis. Although the level of satisfaction among participants in terms of leaders’ direct interaction is highly variable within these two sources, the data strongly suggests that leadership influences learning activities in school. The diversity of responses and other evidence coincides with the work of Hallinger and Heck (1999) that leadership influence on learning outcomes may not be of high importance but it has strong influence on all activities in the school. The study highlights that the leader’s role as a mentor and coach to motivate and develop the staff and students is appreciated by all. School leaders are overburdened with administration but in the schools where the leadership role is given high priority as a leader for learning, a learning culture is prevalent. This kind of practice is more established in the majority of the private schools. Headteachers are the academic heads of school and they have staff for administrative matters.

The study indicates that leadership is highly contextual and is influenced by many factors in these schools. The interplay of learning and leadership in these schools is influenced by the leader's perception about leadership and learning. Leaders' resilience to bring a change in accordance with the needs and expectations of stakeholders is a key factor that can influence learning, satisfaction and motivation levels among all involved (Figure 30).



*Figure 30: Headteachers' Roles in Public and Private Schools of Pakistan*

This ability and role is emphasized by different studies (Leithwood et al., 2006; Busher, 2006; Fullan, 2006). It is obvious in this research that no specific one style of leadership is more effective than another, rather as Bush (2008) suggests, leaders should be able to adopt the style according to their context.

In the public schools, headteachers speak more about resources and funding to make learning conditions better in their schools. For them, their role as a resource manager and school administrator is the most important thing that can have an impact on learning activities in the school; as all learning activities need “*resources, let it be academic, curricular or extra-curricular activities*”. The other respondents also agree that the role of headteacher as school administrator is important but responses from them, particularly from parents and students indicate that headteachers’ role in terms of learning outcomes needs to be more involved and effective. They consider that the most important performance indicator is the examination results and although headteachers have a limited role there, they can ensure that “*learning is taking place in the school*”. Data indicates that students and their parents give good results high importance, but they expect that school should also offer them opportunities to learn other skills which they will need at the time of admissions to universities or which will make them successful professionals, for example teamwork, leadership, public speaking and problem solving as “*numbers alone will not be sufficient*”. A lot of emphasis on quantity and numbers in the schools could be a false impression about the quality of its work. This “competency trap” may be misleading (Cousins, 1996). Besides all the claims about the headteachers’ active involvement in the learning process, parents’ and students’ responses, particularly those from the three public schools, demonstrate strong dissatisfaction. This indicates more reflectiveness on the headteachers’ approach and leadership style in practice in these schools.

The private schools in the study also find most of their leadership and learning activities examination and career oriented. Contrary to public schools, the majority of the private school headteachers are academic leader in their schools and they have academic co-ordinators working under/with them to ensure and support learning in schools. However, the headteacher's role as lead learner and as a patron of professional development in schools is not evident. Nevertheless, these schools have many activities for students that make learning a rich and deep experience for them, enabling them to be ready for the workplace and real life challenges. The headteacher's interest and role to create these opportunities is appreciated by the staff, parents and students. Leadership in these schools enhances the effectiveness of all of these activities by strengthening the social capital in schools (MacBeath et al., 2009). Leaders' policies and practices to be accessible, open and democratic are appreciated in terms of improving learning activities through motivated teams in the school.

The study has limited evidence about the concept of shared leadership and responsibility being in practice, but strongly promulgates the importance of this concept to improve schools. It is considered by the majority of the participants that the fundamental characteristic of leadership is to empower team members and develop a shared understanding about the organizational vision and goals, but its implementation in daily practice is very limited. In line with Harris (2004a and b), the study recommends that distributed leadership is an important factor that may turn a school into a high-performance organization. Looking at the data, it is learnt that this way of working emerges from the first R (resilience) of Claxton's model (2002), where first of all the leader and then all involved should be ready and contingent along with 4 As as

mentioned in Figure 28 (p. 251). It strengthens with being resourceful (second R) for all involved where four As bring value to the entire process as being ability, authority aspiration and appreciation. The first A determines professional ability, the next A (authority) determines professional will, the third A (aspiration) determines and develops passion for learning and growth, and the last A (appreciation) facilitates the diversity of abilities, and ideas. These four As may result in social cohesion and trust as identified by Hopkins and Jackson (2003) in this process. It keeps people motivated and willing to work towards shared goals which they find personally compelling, exciting but reachable with enthusiasm, since this environment helps them make sense of their work and enables them to value their contribution towards the organizational growth within their work context. Teachers who are working in this environment feel that they have “*collective performance*” and the learning is a shared activity. They are working towards “*conceptual pluralism*” (Bolman and Deal, 1997), where school is working on a shared agenda and vision with shared responsibility.

The performance of these schools, as identified by Kohm and Nance (2009), becomes manifold and is generally successful and effective. Teachers are willing to improve their pedagogical practices with innovative ideas in the private schools; but as Mayrowetz (2008) state in their study, teachers’ willingness to share their ideas and rely on others for the same is very limited in the majority of the schools in the study. This highlights the trust deficiency among teachers and their peers, and among teachers and leaders. They express their concerns of being blamed and for wasting time and resources of school if things go wrong and nobody shares responsibility. Lack of trust and support can harm any initiative to share leadership,



responsibilities and innovation in schools, and teachers and the whole school procedures may revert to the typical and known methods of teaching, learning and leadership. The public school teachers though recognize the importance of this shared leadership but have very limited implementation in their schools. Limited resources, structured curriculum and examination pressure constrain any such move in their schools even if the leader is supportive. This study, thus, reconfirms the standing of Galton and MacBeath's (2008) work in the West and Javed (2004) in the UK and Pakistan, that curriculum design and structured and tightly controlled classroom and examination procedures are the main barriers for schools to move towards creativity and innovation. Students and teachers remain engaged in an activity that is all predesigned and has predefined goals. The sense of ownership, association and sharing does not flourish in these conditions and learning and the entire activity is just a "*recitation script*" (Tharp and Gallimore, 1988). Teachers criticise that examination results are over-emphasized and create a lot of pressure for students and teachers:

*"I think I have exam phobia ... actually many of my friends have that ... like students, teachers are also under a lot of pressure and demotivated because of examinations ... numbers are given a lot of importance". (T 19 Private School 1).*

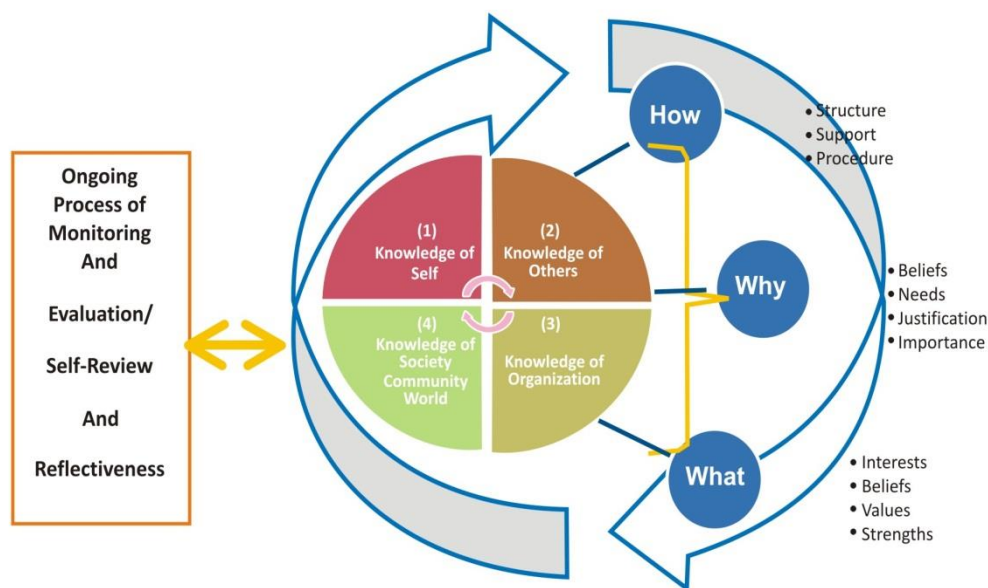
This type of pressure is considered anti-learning and can counter any move of capacity building in schools. However, parents' and particularly students' and those of two headteachers' responses bring a new insight to the study. The responses clearly agree with other data highlighting the importance of examination results, as found in the above mentioned studies as well, but these responses also highlight the specific socio-economic

context of Pakistan. The concept of effective learning is interpreted as a shared activity that broadens and ensures the future prospects for the learners. Good examination grades are considered inevitable to get admission to better institutes, but workplace and real life skills are considered equally important as well, to have better future prospects in the world of today with diminishing resources, increasing competition and particularly in a country like Pakistan with severe economic pressures. These responses call for reflectiveness of all school leaders, researchers and practitioners in Pakistan (Third R in Claxton's 2002 model) as an on-going practice at all other Rs within this model. Unless this important aspect is included and taken care of in the education system of Pakistan, any claim of social cohesion and shared vision may remain a fallacy.

Shared leadership is considered an important factor to improve learning outcomes, but in terms of shared responsibility and accountability, there is no specific structure and procedure in practice in private schools. Identification and selection of the right person, with suitable skills and talent for the right task is considered important by the headteachers. Sometimes "*delegation*", distribution of tasks and distributed leadership is considered the same. This difference is not well understood by the practitioners. Resourcefulness and resilience are important factors that must be considered to determine the scope and reciprocity of the concept of shared leadership in the schools in Pakistan.

In these three public schools, it is evident that government has a fixed line of communication and a vertical hierarchy. As compared to MacBeath et al.'s (2009) six dimensional accountability, the aspect of any stem of shared accountability is missing in the schools of Pakistan. Sharing responsibility within well-defined, communicated and agreed accountability procedures may enhance performance at all levels within an organization. This area needs a lot of scope for research and policy making in the schools of Pakistan. Although the accountability system is not well established in schools, in accordance with Elmore (2004), the study resonates that rewards and/or no rewards are considered signs of good performance or otherwise. Mostly, rewards are expected in the form of financial incentives. Absence of rewards may cause demotivation among teachers whereas finding resources for such rewards is a big challenge for headteachers. The type of accountability that is strongly prevalent in the schools both in public and private sectors is what Møller (2009) defines as “*managerial accountability*”. Practitioners are more concerned about the opinion of their line manager who is authorised to appraise their performance. Private schools also have a political accountability and are sensitive about their public image. Although schools are considered permeable and accountable organizations (Brundrett and Rhodes, 2010), no specific model of shared responsibility and accountability is in practice on a large scale or as routine in schools of Pakistan. For school administration, managerial accountability seems to be a suitable model for these schools, but for shared leadership and responsibility, creativity and innovation, an environment that gives freedom to all to experiment and share the lessons learnt in a collaborative and congenial environment, the accountability should be with a different approach. It should enable all involved to self-review the performance internally and to be able to respond and meet with the expectations and requirements of external policy makers

and governing bodies. For shared leadership and responsibility, the interflow of information and dialogue among all stakeholders (internal and external) is important, with a double loop learning process that is constantly reflective and steers the direction of school for further development and growth. This dialogue for learning and shared vision can also co-generate and sustain talent and leadership and a learning culture in the schools.



*Figure 31: Suggested Model for Learning Environment for Schools in Pakistan*

The data from the schools that are moving towards this shift in approach indicate certain strategies and levels to develop a learning environment and culture that has links with educational and human psychology and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1995). These schools provide

operational support through a structural connector (Walker and Leary, 2009). To support and develop a learning culture in schools, the first level is interlinked with the knowledge of self, moving towards others (2), organization (3) and finally to society/community/world (4) (Figure 31, p. 268). At each level, answers to three simple questions: what, why and how, are defined. These answers provide knowledge of belief, core values, strengths and talents at micro and macro level in a school, and establish cultural connectors with others in and out of school. Once this awareness is established through reflection and discussion, conceptual pluralism, common schema with knowledge of cultural and structural connectors can be established (Walker and Leary, 2009). However, leaders in the schools that have this type of working also appreciate and enable the team members to benefit from diversity of approach and opinions, and like to learn more as professional development may become a journey and not a credential. Leaders' role remains extremely important and s/he her/himself must also go through the entire process (Figures 31 and 33).

In line with the claims in the concept of LfL, the research confirms that school leadership has a direct or indirect effect on the quality of learning and teaching practices and overall school improvement. Therefore, the most important aspect of the role of a headteacher is his/her interaction as an academic head. Particularly the quality of teaching in schools can be under the strong control of headteachers. They can provide guidance support to teachers for understanding and implementing the curriculum. They observe teaching in their schools, evaluate teachers and make decisions about their timetables and classroom allocations. The role of headteachers is significantly important in the school academics and classroom

practices according to many teachers. The research indicates that the headteachers who have sound knowledge and understanding of learning as a process are respected by most of their staff. These headteachers consider them and their team responsible for learning outcomes in school. They try to enhance their teachers' capacity to meet the goal of high standard academics in school. As Elmore (2000: p.16) puts it:

*“The job of administrative leaders is primarily about enhancing the skills and knowledge of the people in the organization, creating a common culture of expectations around the use of those skills and knowledge, holding the various pieces of the organization together in a productive relationship with each other, and holding individuals accountable for their contributions to the collective results”.*

The way each school head performs these tasks inevitably varies but all of the headteachers are engaged in this activity. Contrary to all the claims about distributed leadership and being learning centred leaders in schools, the study suggests, in accordance with Leithwood and Jantzi (2005), that lacking proper time, commitment and strategies will demote any move to establish a learning centred approach in schools. For any such initiative, role of leadership as an academic head becomes of prime importance. The schools where leaders are willing and engaged in dialogue for learning make a difference.

The headteachers are considered academic heads in schools in Pakistan and it is expected that they have a direct focus on the process of learning. However, conditions in the public schools

are not much different to what was identified by Simkins et al. (1998). The headteachers are busy in administrative tasks for most of the day and as data indicates, the time spent in academic-related activities merely constitutes 15-20% of their time in schools. During this time the headteachers try to “*observe teachers as per requirements of the government school policy, check lesson plans and take school rounds*”. Their role does not provide any glimpse as a leader for learning that co-constructs new meaning of existing or new knowledge with other stakeholders. It is more at a managerial leadership level. As shared in the introductory part of the interview, most of them belong to the field of education but have no or limited training or relevant qualifications as headteacher. As argued by Leithwood et al. (2006), any behaviour and change, good or bad, has a ripple effect in schools. However, it is encouraging to note that all headteachers understand the importance of their role as academic leader in school, and consider reflection time an important activity to self-evaluate their personal and organizational performance, and plan accordingly. It looks important to reverse the first two levels of the cake model of LfL (Swaffield and MacBeath, 2009b) in Pakistan and make “*professional learning*” the first layer of the model, to provide a solid foundation and suitable skills and knowledge to the next layer or level, “*student learning*”. The headteacher’s occupancy in non-academic activities may have a bad effect on learning in schools of Pakistan (Khan et al., 2009). They recommend that the most important role of leadership in an organization like school needs to be directly linked with the core purpose of the organization, which is learning. Instead of being an administrative leader for most of their time, headteachers must perform as leaders for learning in schools in Pakistan. For being an effective leader for learning, they must be actively involved in the process of professional learning.

The data indicates that all headteachers claim to involve teachers, students and parents as stakeholders, and to create opportunities of learning for their staff whenever possible to improve academic conditions in schools. However, it is evident that the extent of these activities and the level is highly variable, and contextual to many other factors of extreme importance, including the headteacher's ability and resilience and the way s/he is defined by the policy makers to perform as academic head. This reconfirms Yukl's (2006) work regarding defining leadership and its scope. Their understanding of the extent of their role as academic head covers a range and level of activities from record keeping of high achievers to conducting workshops to improve classroom practices, from tickmarking the checklists during classroom observations to curriculum reviews through a process of inventing and reinventing. The level and mode of leadership is comparable to the skill types identified by Bush (2008). However, as argued by Simkins et al. (1998) and Khan et al. (2009), the low level of appreciation in the data for these headteachers, and the quality of teaching and learning in the schools where headteachers spent more time in non-academic activities creates a power distance between them and teachers, and indirectly discourages the passion of other stakeholders as well to improve academics in school. They have a tendency to give a "*know it all*" impression and have a managerial style in practice in these schools. This trend is noticeable in the majority of the participating schools of the public sector and in a few of the private sector.

Another important aspect that is considered pivotal and frequently appears in data is the importance of resources and funding in schools to improve academics:



*“Resources are important; many of our plans to bring improvement in classroom practices are not implemented as we have very limited resources.”* (Headteacher Private School 1).

The concern is more prominent in the public schools where the economic conditions of the students, their families and the funding available in schools, is very limited. In line with the findings of Riaz (2008) and Khan et al. (2009), it is felt that quality of academics is budget and resources bound and these two are mostly not available to them as per their needs. However, there is a slight difference in the findings as it is noticeable that all of these headteachers acknowledge that human resource is the best resource and if managed carefully, the schools can make a difference. However, finding time to keep their staff involved, committed and motivated with all the limited resources is a difficult task to achieve in the schools where headteachers are busy as administrative leaders most of the time.

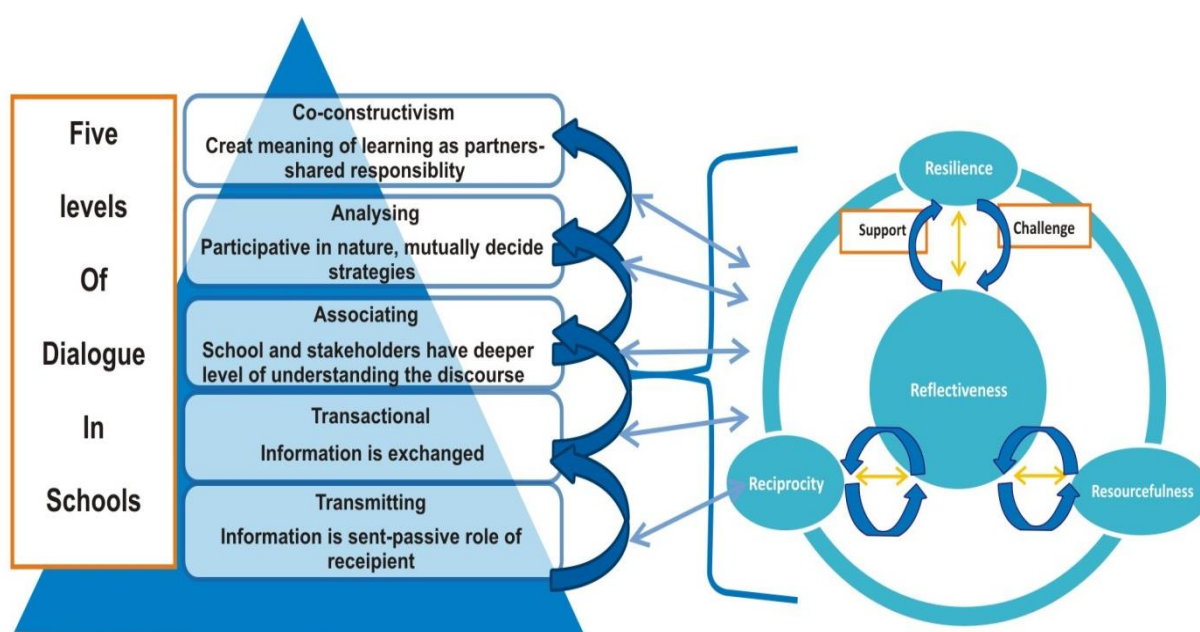
The research indicates that the role of headteachers influences learning practices directly or indirectly in the schools in Pakistan. There is a difference in practice in their role in public and private schools; in public schools they are mostly busy in administrative matters that results in a low satisfaction level of the staff and students. The specific socio-economic context of Pakistan highlights importance of the quantifiable aspects and related skills as important components of the learning process in the schools of Pakistan. These schools claim to have a shared leadership and responsibility in practice but mostly managerial accountability is a routine feature and there is no evidence available of any kind of structure or system of shared accountability. It is also noticeable that leader’s efficacy and resilience has an impact on

school and on teacher empowerment and performance. Their professional competence along with that of the teachers has a key role in terms of developing a culture of shared responsibility that promotes learning in schools. It looks important that the wedding cake model of LfL has a different structure in the schools in Pakistan and we have the layer of professional learning as the first step in the model.

#### **7.5 Different Levels of Dialogue for Learning among Different Stakeholders and its Impact on Learning Outcomes:**

Feedback and discussions among headteachers, teachers and students is considered an important aspect in schools of Pakistan. It reconfirms the importance of the third principle of the concept of LfL (MacBeath et al., 2009). However, the extent and scope of this dialogue is highly subjective. It is agreed that different human beings have different abilities and needs. It is important that the school is constantly involved in the process of discussion and dialogue to determine its teaching and learning direction with a “*conceptual pluralism*” (Bolman and Deal, 1997). Hence, it is agreed that schools can no longer work in isolation and any claim to construct knowledge only by a school may not be realistic and effective. Stakeholders’ opinion is considered important to recognize learning as a “*social activity*” (Bruner, 1986) that becomes more effective as different stakeholders construe its meaning together; a process that dwells on the co-constructivist approach of LfL. This approach inculcates a sense of belonging among all those involved in this process. However, the extent of this approach is highly variable and is dependent on many factors other than leaders’ willingness and ability to initiate this dialogue. The discussion and feedback is mostly about the syllabus examination

skills. To some extent, school environment and teaching practices are also discussed and feedback is taken. These practices are similar to the recommendations of Hopkins (2001) about collaborating on the content, process and social climate in the learning process to enhance its effectiveness. But the study highlights certain factors that influence the scope of this social activity in schools in Pakistan including resilience and resourcefulness of all involved in this social activity, socio-economic background of the families of students and gender.



*Figure 32: Suggested Model of Interconnected Process of Learning and Five Levels of Dialogue in Schools of Pakistan*

The extent and scope of this dialogue varies from simple level of exchange of information, that can be labelled as transmitting to the highest level, that can be labelled as co-constructivism where the learning process can become a shared responsibility that takes place

as a social activity through involvement of the social capital in and out of schools (Figures 30 and 31). The other three levels of this dialogue can be ‘associating’ (knowing and relating to the context) and ‘analysing’ (like zone of proximal difference - present condition to the desired). Every school in the study is involved in some kind of dialogue but the level is different. The level of dialogue can be enhanced by integrating the 4Rs model at each level in schools. The willingness, ability of parents and the family background are strong determinants of level and type of dialogue between them and schools in Pakistan. If the parents are educated and understand the importance of their role with the school they will contribute in such activities with clarity of perception and vision. Otherwise, most of them are only interested to know the exam results of their children. However, the schools where leadership is ready to take challenges, initiatives are taken in order to engage students, teachers and parents in different types of discussion to create awareness and improve learning. The four Rs model can be a useful strategy. Two schools in the study have a trend to invite speakers, send students on field trips and excursions to widen their horizons. These schools have a “*moral purpose*” (MacBeath et al., 2009) and try to improve social climate with effective process and improved content (Hopkins, 2001). However, it is evident in the study that this type of interactive dialogue is at a limited scale, and mostly school talks are about quantifiable tasks and objectives.

The classroom discourse in the schools is mostly interpreted as “*classroom talk, discussion and feedback between teachers and students*”. Alexander’s (2004) model of five levels of classroom talk is a good model to analyse the condition in schools of Pakistan in this regard.

Mostly the classroom talk in public schools is at rote and recitation level with limited instruction, where in private schools it goes to discussion level as well. In the first two levels, the classroom talk is teacher led and students are usually passive as listeners only. At the fourth level, students share their feedback and discuss with teachers on different issues with a focus on problem-solving skills. The dialogue level as illustrated in this model is a very rare happening in the private schools and no evidence is prevalent in the public sector.

Schools arrange discussion forums for parents on important academic related issues where *“important information is shared and advice is offered accordingly”*. Parent teacher meetings are also held regularly but the purpose is to share results and children’s performance with the parents. Guest speakers are also invited to give informative talks to students on important and relevant issues. Special workshops are arranged for examinations and career counselling. If analysed, parental involvement also seems to be passive in schools. The dissatisfaction about the engagement level of different stakeholders is reflected in the responses of students and parents, particularly in the public schools. Headteachers and teachers on the other hand consider that parents and students have unrealistic expectations from schools and are not ready to take any responsibility as stakeholders with school. The research identifies this communication gap between the parents and teachers, and highlights the need of advanced level of discussion leading to dialogue in schools.

All of them agree that students' feedback and involvement in the process of learning is very useful. Those who are engaged in this dialogue, claim to get many innovative ideas from students that make learning interesting and effective for them. This confirms Soo Hoo's (1993) findings in this part of the world as well, that students' feedback is very important as they have a first-hand knowledge and information about classroom practices in schools. "*Reflection time*" is considered important by the majority of teachers and headteachers. This reflection time will give teachers an opportunity to do self-evaluation of their practices and improve their strategies accordingly. MacBeath et al. (2009) also indicate the importance of this reflective practice and suggest that it should not be in isolation. If teachers and students are given a "*wait time*" to reflect on the learning practices, they will eventually get engaged in a dialogue for learning. However, in the schools in Pakistan, this reflection time should also be collective which might help in establishing shared vision and shared responsibility.

The study reveals a diversity of perceptions about parent involvement in schools in the responses of participants. These different perceptions highlight variance in power and responsibility sharing, diverse epistemologies, and some competing purposes. However, it is evident that it is generally accepted that mutually beneficial collaboration between parents and schools is essential to children's learning, personality development, and success in life. It is also agreed that any barriers in this regard need to be addressed to make these links effective.

In accordance with Epstein (1996) and Farooqi (2011), the study confirms that the parents' involvement is considered important in schools in Pakistan as well, but the level of the involvement is variable. Mostly, this interaction is at a basic level (Epstein, 1996), where schools are providing information to the parents mainly about examinations and syllabus related matters and their role is passive. However, in private schools, this correspondence is also about sharing of information on different activities that take place in schools, and sometimes parents are also involved in certain activities on a voluntary basis, for example to come for a guest lecture or to help organize a school play. Even within the basic level of parent-school interaction and involvement, these practices are very limited in schools. The parents' role is more of a "*reception model*" as explained by Coleman and Earley (2005) who explain it in terms of learning activities in schools. The teachers in this model are considered the "*gatekeepers*" of all learning activities and the students are dependent and passive. The model seems to be applicable to parents' involvement in schools of Pakistan.

*"... I agree that schools are number oriented, in terms of results, admissions, finance... but parents also have the same focus ... they are interested to know the marks, grades, fees or concession ... I feel under pressure because of their quantifiable expectations from school".*  
(Headteacher Private School 2).

This pressure of parents' expectations is a strong concern among school practitioners. They feel that if the school tries to introduce some activities where parents cannot see a direct link with the examination results, they pressurize to change these and criticise all such initiatives. Contrary to this, data clearly indicates that parents appreciate all initiatives which offer their

child a rich learning experience, a combination of skills which are examination related, moral and social, that they will need in the real world and particularly about the workplace and university admissions. However, it is evident that they give examination results and financial matters prime importance. This finding accords with Lightfoot (2004) who claims that low income or middle class parents are usually concerned about money matters in schools. However, there is parallel expectation among parents that school prepares their child for all the skills that s/he may need in real life. These findings highlight the importance of these skills as important components of the learning process in a low income country like Pakistan.

The research indicates parents' desires to become involved with the school where their child is studying but most of them, contrary to the claims of school management and leadership, seem to be unaware of school activities and initiatives to promote learning, but the majority of the students are aware of most of the related events and policies. It highlights that there is a communication gap between the schools and the parents. The dialogue between parents and school is mostly at the first level (Figure 32, p. 275). Thus, as suggested by Mitra (2006) school leaders should communicate with families and parents more frequently and explicitly. In the private schools, headteachers try to engage parents in different ways to work with schools as guest speakers and on different projects. Although this type of school-parent involvement was appreciated and recommended by Farooqi (2011) and Epstein and Sheldon (2006), it is underdeveloped in these schools. However, data strongly indicates that parents want and expect to become involved with schools. As Mitra's work (2006) suggests, schools should create opportunities of involvement for parents and make these known to them through



proper communication. In accordance with Connors and Epstein (1995), the research indicates that the majority of parents mention that there are no opportunities for them to be involved with schools. However, parents appreciate whenever schools try to communicate with them and keep them informed about the learning opportunities for their child. However, mostly headteachers and teachers feel that parents are not ready to become involved other than receiving their child's results. As questioned by Mitra (2006), although sharing information and reaching out to parents are large concerns among school practitioners, it is interesting to notice that parents and schools share similar goals and could form partnerships if the school leadership is accessible, ready and willing. However, it can be a big challenge for the leaders in schools to create this collaborative environment particularly when the context in every school is different. As suggested by Prew (2009), efforts of school leaders who take initiative to bring a cultural change and involve parents more actively are appreciated by parents and students.

The study indicates that the practitioners' opinion on the usefulness and importance of collaboration in the learning process in terms of many of the positive aspects, for example, a more distributive leadership structure, shared knowledge and improved learning, is consistent with most of the existing relevant research (Hargreaves and Fink, 2004). All of the schools are engaged in some type of collaboration. However, the extent and nature of this collaboration is highly contextual and is mostly about having links with the external examination boards. Type of collaboration to improve learning experiences and outcomes is more "*content*" based (Hopkins, 2001). Schools work with different ruling agencies and governing bodies about

syllabus, materials, examination patterns and policies. The other two levels and types, identified as “*process*” and “*social climate*” by Hopkins (2001) are at a very limited level. As the data from parents and students particularly from the public schools indicates, the learning process is mostly “*instructional*” (Watkins, 2003), where the main activity is teaching rather than learning. However, a few schools (mostly private sector), are engaged in a “*constructional and co-constructional*” process as well.

The schools that are involved in a constructional and co-constructional learning process have leaders who encourage collaborative activities and networking at all levels. The leadership vision and clarity of purpose behind collaboration and networking is an important factor in this regard. The leaders link it with the contextual circumstances.

*“For collaboration and networking to be effective many contextual factors, willingness and abilities of all involved and a shared purpose is crucial ... it is very important to determine why are we doing it?”* (Headteacher Private School 2).

The study highlights that collaboration and networking which is based on shared objectives and relationships with practical issues has long lasting effects. All such moves are appreciated by those involved in these schools, and teachers participate and volunteer for these activities with a high level of motivation. Contrary to this, the study also indicates a low level of commitment and motivation where teachers and other stakeholders cannot find any mutual interest. The claims to have a collaborative culture and networking become extremely limited.

Most of the teachers in the study take it as an additional burden and cannot link many of these with the learning objectives and “*examination skills that matter*”. It clearly indicates the need for professional development of teachers to be able to understand the social and moral aspect of the learning process besides having a focus on examination skills. Moreover, it seems integral that unless teachers and all others involved clearly understand the purpose and practical usefulness of collaboration and networking, they will remain reluctant or uninterested. The resilience factor, with four As (ability, authority, aspiration and appreciation), can be a good strategy to develop staff collaboration and networking culture in schools. A strong emphasis from the parents’ responses highlights that the networking should also be with market and industry to provide internships and placements for students to learn workplace skills and ethics. It is in accordance with Hopkins (2001) who highlights the importance of having a clear purpose and relationship with the practical issues behind any collaborative project or networking in schools; failing to do so means that networks often fall apart, as members start losing interest. The case schools in the sample which have a culture for collaboration and networking enjoy the different learning experience which “*is actual learning, much more than examinations and grades only*” (T 28 Private School 3).

The concerned participants from the school feel that their interpersonal skills, teamwork and leadership have improved because of working on joint projects inside and out of school. In the schools where teaching is more conventional, this type of learning activity is not common practice. However, these schools find that keeping students “*under control*” is a big challenge for them. It clearly indicates that teaching in schools is mostly focused on quantifiable aspects

where moral and social engagement is taken for granted, particularly in public schools in Pakistan. The interpretation of “*discipline and control*” is somewhat more about their authority and supremacy in class as a “*Master*”. They think that parents and students are not interested in these activities but examination related issues. Although parents and students give highest priority to examination related matters, the study reveals a high level of dissatisfaction among them for the deficiency or non-availability of any activities which could provide them opportunity to collaborate within or out of school for better learning outcomes. They criticize the teaching and learning practices as being controlled, boring, traditional and structured. It reconfirms Little’s work (1990) that networking and collaboration may demand a paradigm shift in teaching practices from being teacher-led to a participative approach, where different stakeholders work together and jointly interpret the meaning of learning. The teachers, who consider themselves as experts behind the closed door of the classroom, find it difficult to relinquish their control and authority to others in the process of collaboration and networking. Contrary to this, schools that have a culture of collaboration and networking, have a raised and advanced level of teacher empowerment and leadership. The findings of the study suggest in accordance with Hargreaves and Fink (2004) and Swaffield and Macbeath (2009a and b), that effective collaboration and networking gives teachers opportunities to play a more active role in the creation and sharing of professional knowledge with a co-constructional approach. It is also evident that students and their parents also appreciate and expect that schools must provide this type of learning environment.

Besides all benefits, the study highlights a number of issues and challenges that minimize the scope of networking and collaboration in these schools. It is evident that there is no proper policy and guidelines or support at government level or in the private schools. It is mostly dependent on leadership in the school. If the leader is appreciative of this type of working, school will be involved in some kind of collaboration and will have a “*learning centred*” approach (Hallinger and Heck, 1999; Rhodes et al., 2009). Many other factors like funding, trust and confidence, curriculum design and pressure of examinations constrain the scope of institutional collaborations and networking. Most of the time, collaboration is interpreted in terms of intra school projects and group work. It is considered a different teaching practice. Similar to Southworth (2004) and Rhodes et al. (2009), the study confirms that the leaders in the school of Pakistan who have an understanding and ability to create a shared vision expand learning from pupil level to organizational level, from micro to macro level where networks of shared practices and collaborated projects start developing. However, the level of this collaboration and networking is highly contextual. Many of the teachers and school heads talk about the examination system, standards and curriculum design being tightly structured in the public schools, and different curriculum designs in the private schools minimizing the scope of collaboration and networking in pure academics. However, collaboration and competition in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities is prevalent.

As claimed by MacBeath and Dempster (2009) for LfL in different other countries, it seems important for schools in Pakistan as well to have an inclusive curriculum with certain commonalities and shared responsibilities to promote learning through collaboration. For this

purpose, it is felt that policy should be formed or modified to give direction and guidelines to the practitioners. The difference between the public schools and private schools as highlighted by many participants is also indicative of the gap that is widening between these two sectors because of not having the same curriculum and quality of teachers besides other socio-economic issues. However, it is evident that parents and students have many commonalities in terms of expectations from schools to offer a learning experience to their children to inculcate problem solving and leadership skills among them besides preparing them for exams. It looks pivotal that government should frame guidelines and a policy about networking and collaboration in schools. The policy may include public and private partnerships in schools for all related matters

The research indicates that mostly it is agreed that the quality of teaching and learning practices can be enhanced through reflective practice and discussion. Most of the schools provide opportunities to the teachers for co-ordination which is more about term syllabus. They are supposed to reflect on their lessons and evaluate these at the end of every lesson plan. When a school has a culture where teachers are ready to share their practices among themselves and advise accordingly, it is likely that school will have improved teaching and learning. The study resonates with MacBeath et al. (2009) and establishes that the teachers who are reflective practitioners and critically review their interaction with students, study the misconceptions of children to improve their teaching capabilities, are constantly engaged in a process of knowledge and skill advancement through co-constructivism. They share a culture of collaboration and collegiality that is full of creativity. Although this type of practice is not a

common feature and is extremely rare in the public schools, the limited prevalence indicates a possible change in the trend and practices in schools where leaders can establish the knowledge of self and gradually develop a learning culture (Figure 29). They would have to move from an authoritative, managerial style to a more democratic and distributive style (Figure 29, p. 258 and Figure 30, p. 261).

Although the majority of the teachers are involved in some kind of collaboration and consider reflective practice an important aspect for improvement, the level and frequency of sharing the practices is variable. After a consideration of the context and other factors as mentioned by the participants, it is evident that the teachers' conceptualization and involvement is mostly about examination and syllabus related issues. Most of the co-ordination meetings, which are a regular feature in private schools, are based on syllabus coverage and contents. Schools which provide opportunities to teachers to be involved in a dialogue to improve learning have a different level of enthusiasm and commitment prevalent among all stakeholders. However, these schools are very few. Most of the schools that claim to be reflective practitioners to enhance the quality of learning remain examination and grades oriented. Examination results are considered performance indicators of schools and particularly of teachers. As Giles and Hargreaves (2006) say, these schools provide demonstrations of "*quick success*" which are actually "*competency traps*" (Cousins, 1996). Teachers' discussions mostly are about quantifiable tasks and results. The focus of practitioners on the qualitative aspect of education is a remote thought. It seems that schools mostly are inculcating examination skills among students, however, the trend is changing and a strong expectation from school is about moral,

social and professional skills, as evident from the data that comes from students and parents. The schools that are moving towards this change have a culture that nurtures learning. The environment is engaging and school leaders play an important role here. The study acknowledges the importance of trust among school members to enhance school effectiveness and learning at all levels. It has a direct impact on the quality of learning outcomes and collegial environment in schools. It is learnt that trust among teachers not only improves professional learning among teachers but also could improve students' learning (Hargreaves and Fink, 2006). The trust level about one's personal ability or about other colleagues, and the readiness to share that experience with others, reflects their assumption about their own and students' related skills and behaviours, including emotional, social and cognitive aspects of learning. The higher the trust level is, the higher the level of collegiality, sharing of practices and discussion among teachers is. Knowledge of self (Figure 29, p. 258) helps leaders and teachers to have resilience with four As (ability, authority, aspiration and appreciation (Figure 28, p. 251), and resourcefulness, and through constant reflectiveness, reciprocity is enhanced. Schools are social organizations and the social capital aspect of education is dependent upon the trust level in school. Teachers trust each other when there is a mutual and shared understanding about the obligations and expectations. Leadership plays an important role in building that trust and creating that environment where teachers are not reluctant to be vulnerable to colleagues; though limited, it is established that they interpret their colleagues' actions in terms of competence, reliability and openness. This collegial trust increases school capacity to work as a professional learning community (Hargreaves and Fink, 2006). Teachers in high trust schools willingly help and guide each other in school-based professional learning communities with reflexive dialogue, and they keep their classroom doors open to collaborate



and discuss with a focus on better learning for them and for their students. However, the schools that are deficient in trust are practitioners of traditional teaching practices which are mostly offering a rote or recitation learning experience to students. Teachers are not ready to let go their own “authority and competence” and doubt expertise, reliability and honesty of their colleagues. It is also noticeable that leadership is quite complacent with the existing practices and considers that “*we are doing a good job*”.

The study also highlights the importance of intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors in this regard. The role of leader seems to be of a motivator and facilitator here to establish this culture in school. Leaders’ role at all three levels of organizational culture, as described by Schein (2004), seems of extreme importance in this study as well. However, the majority of the data in the study identifies deficient dialogue at all levels in school, thus creating a communication gap and lack of motivation, trust and clarity among all involved. School leaders’ role is considered important by the teachers for facilitating them with basic opportunities, for example in the timetable giving them a “wait time” (Galton, 2007) to reflect on their practices or by motivating teachers to share best practices or challenging situations, or by offering certain incentives or simply talking to them. In the absence of support and opportunities, teachers become complacent or demotivated as they find it difficult and face many challenges to learn on their own and without shared vision about the importance of this reflective practice. In failing to find the level of satisfaction in the classroom and in the school, even the most dedicated teachers may begin to question their roles as professionals.

As the practice is very limited in the public schools, private schools also hesitate to share their practice with other schools as these are their competitors. A different level of trust deficiency is prevalent there. However, because of this competition, they foster a culture to analyse their classroom practices and some of them are ready to improve them with double loop thinking.

The study indicates that the dialogue for learning between different stakeholders in the schools is at different levels. The study identifies these levels from transmitting to co-constructivism where stakeholders are engaged in this dialogue. The level of this dialogue increases depending upon a high level of many other interlinked factors like leader's and staff's perceptions, ability and readiness, resourcefulness and reflectiveness and mutual trust. The study also identifies that parents' involvement is at a basic level in the majority of the schools and highlights a communication gap between the school and the parents. The majority of the parents show interest in being involved with school as a partner and expect that schools enable their children to have good results, but also real life skills that they will need eventually in their professional life. However, some of the schools involve them as active partners. Networking and collaboration is prevalent in different forms in all of these schools but the purpose is mostly examination oriented. However, there are many factors that constrain this kind of collaboration and dialogue for learning between different groups. There is no clear policy in any of these schools to inform the stakeholders about the procedure, and neither have they had any professional development linked with the concept to understand the potential benefits.

## **7.6 Student Voice as a Contributory Factor for Improving Learning and Teaching in Schools**

The study indicates that hearing, recognizing and valuing student voice and giving them leadership is an emerging trend in the schools of Pakistan, particularly in the private schools. Students' voice is interpreted and explained differently by the participants as including decision-making, valuing their opinion to their education, determining co/extra-curricular activities in schools. As per Hart's (1992) categorization of students' involvement, the study also indicates different levels of this involvement ranging from "*manipulation to tokenism*" in the participating schools. However, the study identifies a deficient system of recording students' voice in the majority of these schools.

The concept is understood more as student involvement, feedback and leadership. The public schools mostly interpret "*students' feedback*" in terms of any problem that students face in schools and particularly during lessons, or as a reaction and complaint from them. However, there is no proper structure available in the majority of the schools to record, receive and act upon the feedback for further improvement to facilitate learning. Most of the lessons, according to the majority of the teachers, are student centred whereas the majority of the students, particularly from public schools, find most of the classes "boring" and lecture based. The four Rs and four As (Figures 28 and 29) seem important in this regard. However, there is no structure to record feedback on a regular basis and to act upon it in a school-based inquiry and action research manner. As indicated in the data, the students feel frustrated about the classroom practices and eventually they go and give the 'feedback' as a 'complaint' to the

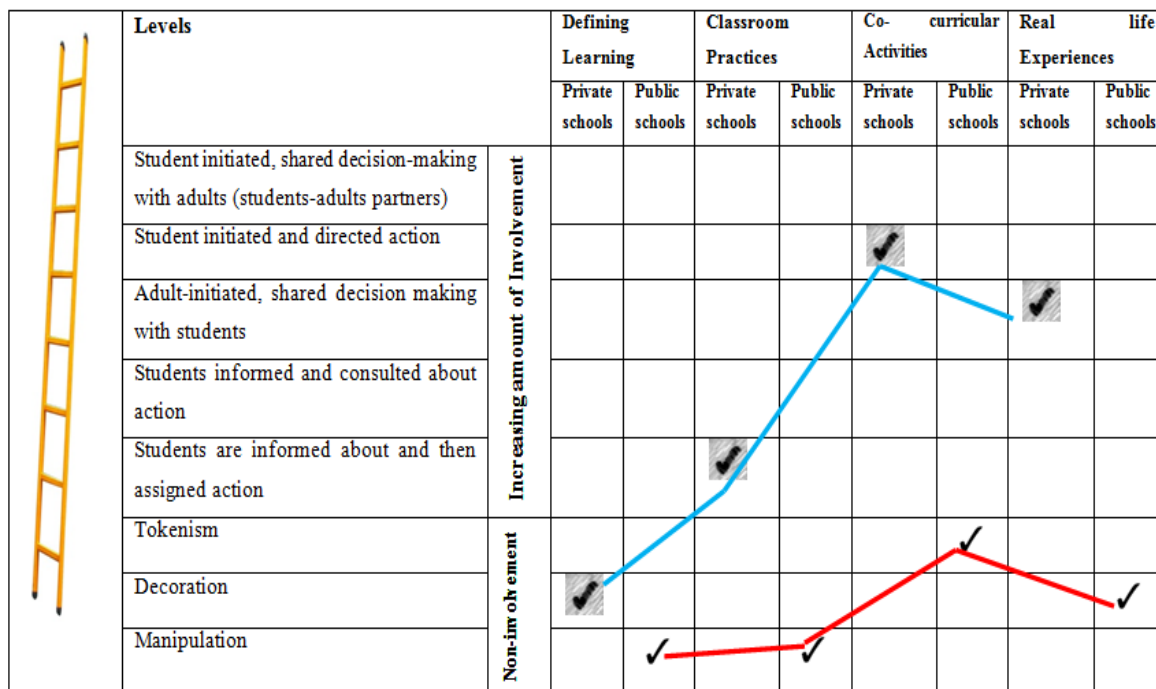
headteacher. These trends in these schools have created distrust among students and teachers, and among headteachers and students. For most of the time, the dialogue between students and school is at the transmitting and transactional level (Figure 32, p. 275). This results in low motivation and high level of frustration among students as expressed by the majority in the study. It is evident that as per Watkins (2003) learning is taught here, knowledge is transmitted from teachers mostly and the decision-making is quite bureaucratic and hierarchical in these schools.

Students' involvement in terms of taking an active part in school is more established in terms of extra-curricular activities. Headteachers and staff in public schools also complain about deficient resources and freedom to bring changes in schools as per students' expectations. Besides all of these odds, the study is indicative of slow change in the concept and attitude of practitioners towards this important aspect. All headteachers and teachers from the public as well as private schools understand and appreciate the importance of their roles to prepare the next generation of Pakistan in a highly competitive global society. Private schools are taking different initiatives to provide opportunities to the students to interact with other students and organizations, and value their opinions towards various related issues.

School council and societies play an important role in this regard. These societies arrange different functions and events in the schools where students participate accordingly. In some of the private schools the role is very active and students have a freedom to design, develop and arrange various kinds of activities and projects on an intra and interschool level and with

other organizations. The students in these schools volunteer for different community services and in other national causes, for example, a special relief and rehabilitation campaign for the flood victims in 2010 and 2011. These schools find that involving students both within the classroom and the wider school and community in a meaningful way, enables them to use their existing skills and attributes, develop new skills and be part of the decision-making. However, as Hart (1992) defines, although this involvement is mostly at a “*manipulation to assigned but informed*” level in these schools, few have gone to adult initiated/shared decisions with children. This is a new trend in the schools in Pakistan that has emerged within the last few years. These upper rungs on the ladder reflect a much more democratic, participatory approach where children and young people are sharing decisions with adults, and leading and initiating action. Although schools take the position similar to that which Hart explains at the upper end of the ladder, data indicates that most of them are in the non-participation part or a step higher, with a moderate level of student involvement in whole school or classroom improvement matters. The study indicates different levels of student involvement in different aspects of school as analysed against Hart’s model of student involvement.

The data also indicates the gap between the desired and current status of learning practices in schools in terms of students’ involvement and their leadership (Table 9, p. 294). The study highlights the headteacher’s role as an important factor to inculcate the supportive culture in this regard. Traditional structures and relationships have been in place in schools, particularly



Key: Public Schools: — Private Schools: —

Table 9: Students' Involvement and Leadership in Schools of Pakistan based on Hart's Ladder of Students' Involvement (1992)

in the public sector, for a very long time and for many practitioners, encouraging the student voice can be seen as eroding power and control and, in some ways, diminishing the role of the teacher. However, the study finds that believing that children and young people have a right to be heard and be respected as individuals; schools provide opportunities for them to contribute both in what and how they learn and in how they take leadership roles within the school and its wider community.

The steps taken by the schools are appreciated by the students and their parents. However, the study also highlights that schools have deficient opportunities and support for the “*average*” students who are usually “*taken for granted*”. Most of the students in the public sector feel that schools do not provide them opportunities to organize or participate in school improvement projects. However, slightly different from the findings of Rizvi (2008), the environment is becoming more participative and democratic in the private schools in Pakistan, as the data from the students of the private schools and documentary analysis present a higher level of involvement of students where their opinions matter and voice is heard. However, in accordance with the study, financial and other resources are considered important to incorporate the students’ suggestions. Many of the participants feel that limited time in an academic year where predetermined objectives and targets in terms of examination results and grades are considered performance indicators, available time and priority becomes a challenge for the teachers and headteachers to find time to hear students’ voice. However, the study provides evidence of good practices in terms of students’ leadership and students’ involvement from the schools that have a similar curriculum, resources and follow the same timeline. The leadership in these schools is the main source of inspiration to set the pace and vision to understand the changing role of students in today’s schools. Importance of dialogue, resilience and reflectiveness among teachers and headteachers seems important to incorporate a culture that promotes learning through students’ involvement and leadership.

The parents' awareness and involvement in the entire process seems deficient here, as the majority of them are not sure about all the opportunities that their children have in the school. They think that schools must try more to involve their children and provide opportunities to lead and learn real life skills. The study indicates that schools should try to develop better communication and involvement level with the parents about this aspect. The 'social capital' aspect of education cannot be achieved unless parents and families are equally involved and informed about different aspects of teaching and learning activities of their children in schools.

The study highlights the importance of students' role as stakeholders to improve classroom practices in accordance with many researchers who promulgate this concept. The schools in the study, where students are involved as partners in the process of learning, make it an interesting and meaningful activity for them. Flutter and Rudduck (2004) refer to learning as a social process and in accordance with Soo Hoo's study (1993), the research also provides evidence that students provide a rich source of data and variety of ideas to create learning a meaningful activity.

*"Time has changed, how can we design and give meaning to the process of classroom practices alone without considering the needs and requirements of the real 'consumers, the students' in it". (Headteacher Private School 3).*



Although a high majority of the participants agree, the real implementation of the concept is not a common feature in the schools particularly in the public schools. The main factor that resists this implementation is the teachers' reluctance to accept the changing role of students and the fear of being appraised based on students' feedback. The majority of these teachers are more concerned about the "*supremacy of their roles as teachers*". Moreover, teachers feel that they are already accountable for examination results, grades and other regular systems of appraisal and are under constant scrutiny. Therefore, most of them find it difficult and irrelevant to involve students as partners in the process of learning. This understanding among teachers, particularly in the public schools, indicates the need for a change in the mindset of teachers about this concept where if leadership is aware and resilient, can play an important role. It seems important here for these teachers and students to understand the true meanings and responsibilities of their role, as Fielding (2002) argues that the student voice "*movement*" may be a fad which could lead to unrealistic expectations on the part of everyone involved. He suggests that transformation requires "*a rupture of the ordinary*". He says that it requires a transformation of what it means to be a student; what it means to be a teacher.

The headteachers who have a clear understanding of this role identification and subsequent transformation can carefully bring this paradigm change. The study informs that the headteachers in the majority of the private schools appreciate students' involvement and are careful about the bias, validity and reliability factor of the data. They have a no blame culture in schools as compared to other schools in the study, where teachers' responses indicate anxiety and insecurity resulting from a low level of trust and respect prevalent in the school

culture. Making use of the enthusiasm catalysts (Figure 30), two of the school leaders in the study try to enhance a passion for learning at all levels in their schools. They enhance the ability, authority and aspiration among their teachers (Figure 28, p. 251) to use the data from students for a school-based research study to improve learning. They appreciate their teachers' resilience to improve their classroom practice through reflectiveness on students' feedback and involvement. The schools that consider learning a social activity (Bruner, 1986) provide learners opportunities to become partners in this process. Knowledge in this way is no more a recitation script and offers an interesting experience where students' cognitive, social, professional and examination skills develop mutually and teachers also improve their practices. The majority of the schools claim to have this practice but do not have any formal structure to involve students as partners in this process, and interpret the process as students' active participation in classes, being able to answer the questions asked and doing group work in the class. These schools look more keen on using it, and Ruddock and Fielding (2006) utter a cautious note for schools regarding "*hearing*" the student voice: they are concerned that there may be "*surface compliance*" where the focus will be on "*how to do it*" rather than a more reflective approach of "*why might we want to do it*". They want schools to take the time to create a whole-school culture in which the student voice has a rightful place:

*"However, in most schools it will take time and patient commitment to build open and dependable structures which will enable students and teachers, as partners, and without embarrassment, to talk about what gets in the way of progress in particular classes"* (Ruddock and Fielding, 2006: p.222)

Having ownership of their work enables students to build confidence, and provides them with opportunities to develop leadership skills. Students' suggestions as collected in this study reflect on the creativity, maturity and eagerness to learn among students. It seems to contradict teachers' and some of the headteachers' views that students cannot suggest and become partners at par in the learning process. The data also highlights a high ratio of dissatisfaction among students and their parents who feel demotivated as their voices are usually not heard in this regard. The students find classroom activities a boring and structured experience where a lot of information is transmitted to them and where most of them are sitting like "*tape recorders*".

The study presents students' involvement, leadership and feedback in schools as an emerging new concept in some of these schools in Pakistan, and explores some factors that minimize its scope here. These factors include some presumptions of the present and some fears about the future. School leaders usually are pressurized for the quantifiable targets, for example examination results, financial implications and number of admissions. Teachers also consider that the highest expectation is only about examination results. However, data clearly indicates that examination results are of prime importance but students want a learning experience that is engaging, challenging, and prepares them for real world skills. As the teachers and headteachers are very busy in all other related tasks, it results in a communication gap between students and teachers and headteachers. Besides all of these odds, the foremost important factor seems to be the knowledge and understanding of leaders and teachers of what

students' involvement as partners is all about. It seems important that professional learning takes place in the schools to make the concept clear and meaningful to them.

Although students' opinions are valued in the majority of the schools, the schools where students' voice is decoded more than a "*talk with students*", their role and involvement becomes manifold. Contrary to this, if the teachers and leaders understand students' voice in terms of complaints that students make, protests, unhappiness, unrealistic expectations from school or resistance against school policies, then students' voice becomes a threat and challenge for the teachers and leaders. They avoid hearing this voice. It is inferred that students' voice echoes in every school and if it is not heard now, the frustration level among students and parents increases. Teachers on the other hand also feel threatened which highlights the importance of a leader's role as a motivator to create trust and confidence among teachers. Teachers and leaders who can interpret it as a tool to improve their practices, and create a dialogue with a developmental and supportive perspective find it extremely useful. They understand "*learning*" as a combination of personal, social, practical, and examination skills (Hargreaves, 1995 and 1999). Contrary to this, many of the teachers and headteachers perceive learning in terms of examination results only. The study indicates that these teachers and leaders have little exposure and very limited opportunities of any professional development programmes that prepare them in this regard. The skill and capability of teachers and leaders has a ripple effect and students' perceptions about the importance and impact of their voice changes. Many of the school practitioners are apprehensive of the reliability factor of the students' voice when they speak for others. The

study resonates with the dictum of Alcoff (1991) in this regard. The relationship between the speakers and listeners is also important as structures and relations of power can change the meanings of students' voice.

*“Who is speaking to whom turns out to be as important for meaning and truth as what is said; in fact what is said turns out to change according to who is speaking and who is listening”* (Alcoff, 1991: p.12).

It is important to understand the core purpose of every school and link it with the knowledge of self, others, organization and society and try to understand the answers to the question of what, why and how.

*“What students say have different meaning to all of us and to what extent it is taken seriously is dependent on how it is interpreted, this interpretation can be different for different people and in different context”.* (Headteacher Private School 2).

It is learnt in the study that the school structures that are more hierarchical and bureaucratic in the positions, roles, procedures and policies, are not appreciated by the students (Figures 11 and 26). On the contrary, school leaders who have a shared leadership style have a different approach towards students' involvement as well. Hence the leader's role and perception, his/her personal efficacy and resilience towards the concept and then of all involved is

extremely important. They value and modify school practices accordingly. However, the schools that follow conventional practices consider it less important or impossible to change any of their procedures. In those schools, students have expressed their unhappiness and find classroom practices boring and obsolete. Despite students' desire and suggestions, these schools seldom create any opportunity for students to work as partners in the process of learning. This way of working makes these schools "*producer defined*" (Galton and MacBeath, 2008). The level of students' involvement in the process of developing a shared meaning of learning and classroom practices is at non-involvement level mostly in these schools (Tables 7 and 8).

In order to secure and strengthen effectiveness, education and learning experience should be contextualized with a consideration of what students say and feel about school. It is also inferred that no specific programme in these schools in Pakistan prepares or reinforces teachers' and leaders' ability to understand the importance and benefits of student involvement as partners. Similarly in most of the schools, there is no explicit policy or procedure to inform students about expectations for their involvement. Mostly, school councils and student voice activities are at a very limited scale although data from students indicate a reasonable level of understanding and various ideas from them about their involvement. However, students' involvement in co-curricular activities is at a higher level in these schools (Table 8, p. 210) but it remains very low in the pedagogical matters and the curriculum design. Pressure of examinations and timely completion of the syllabus makes learning a boring and structured activity in many of the schools for the majority of students. Students' voice is slightly

irrelevant in these schools as these have pre-determined teaching objectives and syllabus. As Coleman and Earley (2005) argue, the curriculum design and assessment criterion also seem to constrain the scope of students' involvement, particularly in the public schools in this study as well. In line with Nazir (2010), the study indicates that the classroom practices are mostly teacher led who are the "*gate keepers of knowledge*". The mind-set of school teachers and leaders is the biggest barrier to student voice. School leaders' deficient ability or willingness to bring a change in school culture to promote co-constructivism by involving students as partners makes the process complicated in schools.

Students' voice is mostly interpreted as students' involvement, leadership and feedback. The study highlights that there is no specific procedure and policy in the majority of the schools to determine the level of involvement and record the feedback for future improvement in classroom and school practices. Their involvement is present at different levels in determining the mutual meanings of learning, classroom practices, co-curricular activities and real life skills. Analysis of the extent of involvement in these areas indicates that mostly the practices are at non-involvement level in the public schools and highlights high dissatisfaction among students about the current learning activities in these schools. A communication gap between teachers, leaders and students and limited knowledge of the concept among teachers and leaders keep it under-developed in the majority of the schools, particularly in the public schools. However, data from private schools indicate an environment of high level trust, appreciation and involvement of students as partners in the process of learning. The study indicates that the concept is emerging as a new way of working for schools in Pakistan giving

them a customer oriented approach. However, it is shared that this paradigm shift requires a different mind-set and more support from all involved. Dialogue between all stakeholders, confidence, trust and respect are mandatory components for success in this regard.

## **7.7 Training and Professional Development**

The study indicates that the changes at the school level in terms of pedagogy, latest trends in education, competitiveness and like those affecting society as a whole, have made it important for the school leadership to have a focus on the professional autonomy and competence of teachers in recent years. The education system in Pakistan has been under a series of sweeping changes in the public as well as the private sector. These changes aim to improve the quality of classroom practices with a revised curriculum and better learning outcomes. This part of the study resonates with the fact that teacher training has been a somewhat ignored area in the past and teaching was approached from an abstract viewpoint, as if it involved “*transmission of facts and figures given in the prescribed books*” to students in a non-social context. The changing times highlight the importance of the role of schools and teachers to prepare citizens of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This change in the role demands a different set of skills among teachers who play a major role in society. The study indicates that various workplace pressures and external societal factors influence their role in schools that has direct impact on their students, and their classroom practices. The study infers that schools, where students and parents appreciate the work of teachers, have brought considerable change that challenges the status quo and provides opportunities of professional development to its staff.



It is inferred that teacher training is considered important in all schools (public and private). The government has taken many initiatives in recent years to provide teacher training through short courses and refresher programmes. Some of these initiatives also include pre-service teacher training opportunities in collaboration with different universities and foreign funding agencies. This training is completely sponsored. The schedule is made by the concerned government agencies and teachers normally come to know about their names being included or otherwise only a few days prior to commencement of the programme. In the private sector, schools have training programmes. The headteachers' training is a recent addition in the programmes. Training is given in different centres. Whether or not any need analysis is done prior to any training, most of the participants seem to be unaware. The training opportunities in the private schools are different in every school. One school has a regular training programme, which is need based and is career ladder oriented. It has a cascading model and the training programmes are being offered by its department for professional development in collaboration with a few universities abroad. The other schools also have training opportunities for staff but these are mostly short courses and need based workshops conducted by different private teacher training organizations.

Need based training programmes are appreciated at all levels. However, it is expressed repeatedly that most of the training programmes are not according to the needs and context of the school and audience. The importance of professional development is recognized by the majority of the participants as a necessary approach to improving learning quality in schools. However, as the school practitioners are required to attend different training, it is often the

case that they are not involved in planning and selecting these sessions, consequently, the professional development programmes are not closely tied to the classroom practice. Hence, the majority of the participants who have attended any training programmes find most of the contents not appropriate to their requirements, and result in low level of commitment and change in school or classroom practices. It is expected from schools to prepare citizens for the 21<sup>st</sup> century with all the desired skills, but the study embarks upon the need of training programmes to prepare the professional who can inculcate these skills among students. Many of the teachers find the content of training programmes “*boring, repetitive and highly theoretical*” and many of the headteachers also suggest that those who provide training must also re-evaluate their programmes on a regular basis to make them abreast with current needs.

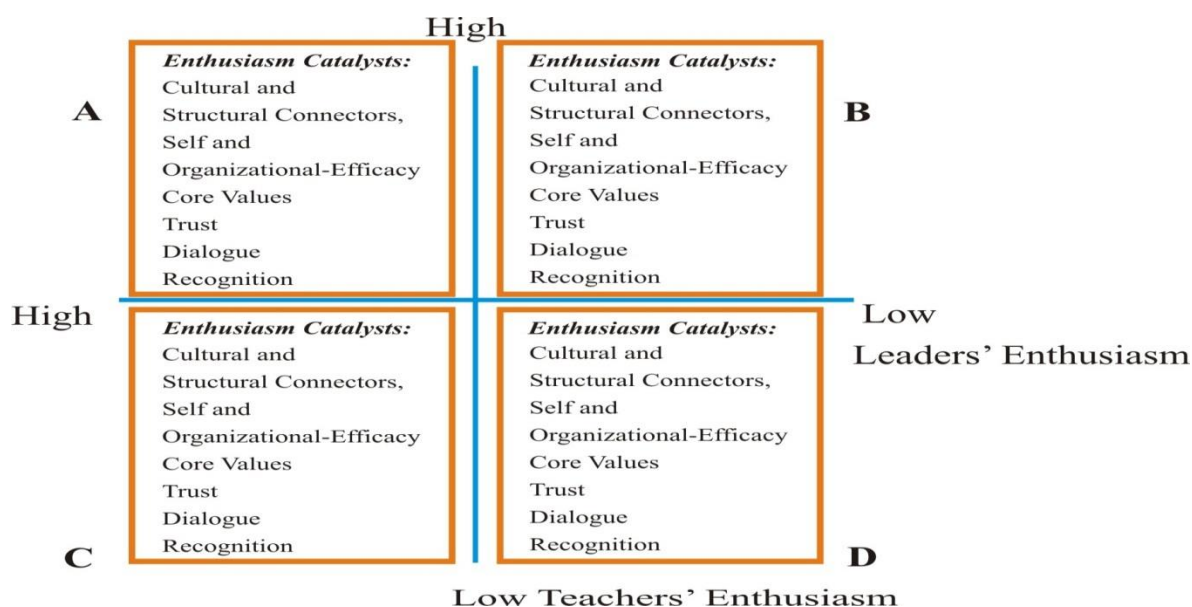
It is also inferred that training should be need-based and contextualized instead of standardized programmes. Although many of the participants from the private schools appreciated the usefulness of school-based training sessions, these were not frequently happening in schools. It is felt that standardized training programmes move too far in the direction of system-led training, and compromise on the importance of individual professional (employee or school) and career development. It is inferred that the majority of the teachers who enrol on any professional development programme do so with a main intention to have some kind of “*reward, promotion or increments*”. Headteachers find it difficult to “*come up to the expectations of staff in terms of rewards, financial gains and promotion ... as these are very limited*”. It highlights the importance of an effective vision about going on any professional development programmes where learning is a reward in itself. Evaluating the

success of any professional development programme in terms of monetary benefits that it brings at the end could keep the real scope of learning very limited. However, the institutes that have some kind of professional development based reward system have slightly less criticism and resistance from teachers. The study suggests that money and career growth (promotions) have an influence on teachers' motivation, and agrees with Odden and Kelley (2002) who argue that money is one of the many factors, among others, to keep teachers motivated to some extent and particularly in a low income country like Pakistan. The study suggests that money is one of the main factors for the majority of the school practitioners, particularly teachers, that keeps them motivated to go on professional development programmes in Pakistan. Hence, it is learnt that a training policy which involves a monetary/promotion component might attract many teachers and practitioners. A further benefit occurs as the socio-economic status of teachers rises. However, for this to be feasible, budgetary constraints are the biggest challenge as more revenue would be required for teacher salaries. Hence the schools that consider learning a reward in itself have a different culture that thrives on the passion and commitment of all stakeholders to learn from each other and are good reflective practitioners. The extent of money as an incentive will have its own limitations and would not result in a learning culture in schools.

The Headteachers' role is quite important as a motivator, mentor and role model for the staff. The schools where leaders consider their role as of being leader for learning in schools, set the culture right and teachers participate in the professional development programmes with a high level of motivation and enthusiasm. They influence and promote learning at micro (student)

level to macro (networking) level (Southworth 2004), where teachers' professional growth is given prime importance. Rhodes et al.'s (2009) illustration of headteachers' role to promote learning at all levels in schools seems to be an appropriate strategy in Pakistan. The absence of a leadership role in this regard or inconsistency in the policies also results in poor quality of teacher and school improvement initiatives (Borko and Bowers, 2010). However, this type of awareness and competence is not a common feature among headteachers. The study highlights the need of training opportunities for headteachers particularly in their roles as leaders for learning in schools. Furthering the findings of Raza (2009) that identified the "*set of essential skills*" that headteachers in Pakistan should have, the study highlights the need for a headteachers' development programme in government and private schools that should have a focus on the main role of a headteacher in school; that is to promote learning. At the moment, most of the training opportunities available to them are about administrative and managerial issues of school, very few programmes are about self-efficacy, organizational efficacy, building trust and confidence, effective and engaging dialogue, reflective practice and developing and leading a learning culture at all levels in schools. Teachers have many opportunities of professional development available but the way this training brings improvement in the classrooms depends a lot on the leadership besides other factors. Leaders have to be a constant source of motivation and inspiration and role model for teachers to keep going, however, many of their claims to bring improvement through newly learnt ideas fade away soon (Borko and Bowers, 2010). Based on the findings, the study indicates some factors labelled as enthusiasm catalysts (Figure 33), that are important to keep the motivation and enthusiasm high among leaders and staff. The leaders can identify the factor that is missing or

deficient and is causing demotivation and lack of enthusiasm among themselves or staff to keep the learning environment vibrant and effective.



*Figure 33: A Typology of Leadership Enthusiasm and its Impact on Teachers' Enthusiasm With or Without Elements of LfL in Schools of Pakistan*

Hence, it looks important that training is understood with an answer to 'what' and 'why' questions, and not as a programme that only brings credentials and money. The study indicates that schools where professional development is a routine practice with constant reflectiveness have a different learning culture for all; this has been appreciated by the majority of the participants from those schools. The schools where such reflectiveness and training is not a routine practice have low motivation and appreciation of learning by the participants. Therefore, it looks important that the wedding cake model of leadership for

learning has a different structure in Pakistan, with professional learning as the first layer and reflectiveness as a continuous feature.

Schools where reflective practice is a routine feature are constantly engaged in a highly contextual process of professional development. In accordance with MacBeath et al. (2009), the study indicates that such practitioners explore the effectiveness of their role through sharing, questioning and discussing their experiences with each other. The discussions and practices are not judgmental and evaluative; rather they focus on development and further improvement. High trust level among all involved is the strongest prerequisite for these activities in these schools. However, the study acknowledges the importance of the headteacher's role to nurture a culture that is full of respect and trust for each other. Schools that have a culture to be reflective practitioners continuously try to improve their existing professional practices. However, the study emphasizes that the effectiveness of this practice is dependent upon levels of trust among all practitioners involved in this activity. As explained by Smyth and Cherry (2005):

*“... a very high level of openness to the whole range of experience, feelings and thoughts of self and other; to be willing to explore whatever comes up; to lean into the experience together and to learn together” (p.274).*

This practice is not prevalent in most of the participating schools but the schools (Private Schools 2 and 3) where the practitioners have the culture consider this informal school-based

training as “*an ongoing and extremely effective way of professional development*”. Although the majority of the participants consider formal training important, they also mention the limitations of relying totally on the centralized and formal training programmes.

However, the combined and formal training is also appreciated as they provide an opportunity of “*intellectual exchange with the practitioners from different schools*”. The study highlights the need of a training and professional development structure that is a combination of formal and informal programmes, with a proper support and evaluation system which is not to establish quantifiable achievements, but has a focus on development and quality enhancement of learning in school. Headteachers’ role to create this environment in school and to provide opportunities to all involved is considered important by all as it requires a different leadership style, where a leader is ready to empower teachers, understand, plan and create a learning environment in school. As mentioned by many (for example: Heck et al., 1990; Southworth, 2002; Stein and Spillane, 2005), the dictum is reiterated in this study as well that to establish a culture of professional development and learning among staff in the school, a leader’s role and capacity is important.

The study identifies a communication gap between the parents and school in terms of sharing information or taking opinion of the parents about professional development initiatives and schedules at school. Most of them are not aware of any such activities taking place in or out of school where staff are engaged in professional development. It also raises a question as to

what extent the professional development in school is preparing the staff as per the skills that parents expect from them.

## **7.8 Summary of the Analysis**

The study identifies many commonalities between the practices in Pakistani secondary schools and those mentioned in the concept of LfL. There is no aspect that has been identified as not being relevant. However, different conceptualizations about leadership, learning and the way four Rs and four As are integrated, have an impact on the level of implementation and practice of the LfL in these private and public schools in Pakistan. It also highlights the inclusion of socio-economic skills related to the workplace that are considered an important part of education in Pakistan by the majority of students, parents and school leaders. To be able to make learning more meaningful, and secure success in the next phase of education after school, real life skills are considered important besides exam results. It is obvious that the role of leadership is a very important factor as mentor and motivator for capacity building in the school at all levels. It also indicates that the students' and parents' involvement is not a fully developed concept and more work is required. However, this involvement is dependent on a paradigm shift in the teaching and learning practices, and demands for a different leadership style that is more distributive and values opinion and contribution of all stakeholders.

The study indicates the importance of dialogue between different stakeholders with constant reflectiveness. To make this dialogue purposeful, knowledge of self, others and organization



with answers to ‘what’, ‘why’ and ‘how’ questions seems important. This knowledge enhances efficacy and gives direction for professional learning at all levels in schools. It is also important that schools have more rigorous and need based professional development at all levels for all of the staff in schools. Headteachers’ professional development programmes are extremely important to bring any kind of change and there are very few available to them. The important role and need of professional development suggests a slightly different model of LfL in the schools of Pakistan as being the first layer in the wedding cake model. Teachers expect monetary rewards at the end of these professional development programmes but also acknowledge the value of learning as itself a reward. However, this feeling is not strong enough to act as an intrinsic motivator for most of them. The study indicates a clear gap between the practices prevalent in private schools and public schools in Pakistan. Most of the headteachers in the public schools blame the strict policy and very limited resources and support from government as the biggest constraint for any change in schools, however, it is obvious that unless there is a change in the mindset of all involved, no resources can guarantee any change.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION**

### **8.1 Introduction**

This chapter translates the findings of the study into recommendations to further develop the theoretical understanding about leadership for learning for researchers and practitioners with reference to literature discussed in previous chapters. In this final chapter, the research questions set out in the first chapter will be examined in terms of the findings to draw conclusions followed by consideration of the contribution to knowledge and implications of research for future research and practice, before ending with a concluding summary.

The research explores the extent of influence of the LfL for improving learning in Pakistan based on the Carpe Vitam LfL Project that was carried out in eight countries, and that presented school specific, cross-international characteristics of the concept (MacBeath et al., 2009). The flexibility, as well as cross international characteristics, make it an attractive model for this part of the world as well, particularly when no work has been done in Pakistan or in South East Asia within the concept of LfL. Therefore, all the aspects explored in that study set baseline information which carries potential benefits for future researchers and practitioners in South East Asia and particularly in Pakistan. The five research questions asked are:

1. How is leadership and learning understood in the schools of Pakistan?
2. How do headteachers in schools in Pakistan perceive that they influence teaching and learning in their schools?
3. To what extent are headteachers, teachers, students and parents engaged in a dialogue for learning in their schools in Pakistan?
4. To what extent do teachers perceive themselves to be part of a learning community in their schools?
5. To what extent is student voice a contributory factor for improvement in teaching and learning in schools of Pakistan?

These questions provide the main structure in the following section; this approach ensures continuity and coherence with findings and analysis in the study.

## **8.2 How is leadership and learning understood in the schools of Pakistan?**

Despite the extensive literature available on the concept of leadership, its importance as a skill and the difference between administration, management and leadership, the study highlights that the concept is blurred in Pakistan in terms of practice, without much clarity about the difference and the effect of each of the components on the overall performance of the team involved. The concept of leadership is understood mostly as an individual role. Many researchers discuss how leadership is interpreted and linked with individuals in different organizations (Gronn, 2003; Muijs and Harris, 2003) but the study highlights that the concept

is interpreted in terms of individual positional power, particularly in the public schools in this sample. The leaders seem to be closer to what Bush (2008) describes as, “*managerial*” level. This positional power is more inclined mostly towards administrative matters within a school and is confined to assurance of policy implementation and compliance only that results in power distance. The concept is understood differently in the private schools as a shared skill where the headteacher’s role is considered important as being a motivator and role model for others. Figure 29 (p. 258) indicates that the leadership approaches that emerge from shared skills, motivation and flexibility as the underlying principles in the private schools are appreciated highly by the majority of the participants in these schools. The data from these private schools reconfirms the findings of many researchers about shared leadership as a skill and its effect on the motivation of the team (Starratt, 2004 and 2008; Fullan, 2006; MacBeath et al., 2009, Gronn; 2010). However, it is also evident that headteachers’ personal perception about their role is also very important towards leadership impact and capacity building.

The contexts in which schools operate in Pakistan have a strong impact on the way learning is conceptualized here. The examination results and real life skills are considered extremely important by a high majority of the parents and students as the main components of learning to ensure better future prospects for them. Therefore, schools that consider examination as well as social and workplace related skills important components of learning are highly valued. The majority of the teachers also feel that examination results are extremely important, however, they consider it as their performance indicator. Social, moral values and the involvement of all stakeholders at different levels in the process of learning are considered

important by all of the participants to make it relevant and effective according to the context in which the school is working. This concept highlights the importance of “*social capital*” as introduced by many theorists like Granovetter (1973), Coleman (1988) and Putnam (1999), and blends with the same theme in Swaffield and MacBeath’s (2009a) concept of LfL that highlights the importance of moral values and relationships among schools, families and community. However, the level of the involvement of these stakeholders is not consistent in these schools. Research indicates the way some of the private schools in the study are working where stakeholders’ resilience and resourcefulness is constantly improved through reflective practice. Their ability and authority is challenged to avoid complacency, and through appreciation their aspirations are kept high. This model might be explored for its implementation and effectiveness on a larger scale. Besides other factors, importance of dialogue among different stakeholders and at different levels is an important factor to influence and enhance this interaction in these schools. Leaders and teachers’ resilience and ability to initiate and enhance the level of dialogue is an important factor as well. The conceptualization of leadership and learning as a shared process with a focus on social, moral, workplace related and examination skills is more defined in the private schools in the study. However, within these private schools, one of the leaders who is a practitioner of positional power has a lower and structured level of learning in the school that is quite similar to two out of three of the public schools in the study. This factor highlights that the belief and value systems within every individual and particularly in the leader about his/her role, knowledge of self and knowledge of others, and ability to learn and influence others are extremely important.

### **8.3 How do headteachers in schools in Pakistan perceive that they influence teaching and learning in their schools?**

The diversity of responses and other evidence coincides with the work of Hallinger and Heck (1999) that leadership may not have a direct link with the learning outcomes but it has strong influence directly or indirectly on all activities related to learning in the school. The study highlights that the leader's role as a mentor and coach to motivate and develop the staff and students is appreciated by most of the participants. The majority of the schools' leaders are overburdened with administration but the schools where the focus on leading learning is prioritised as a shared responsibility, have a learning culture prevalent. However, the role of headteachers in the public schools is mostly about school administration (Figure 30, p. 261). There is a high level of dissatisfaction in the schools about headteachers' involvement in the learning process and about the quality of learning which highlights the importance of the leader's impact in this regard. The schools where headteachers have a high level of resilience, resourcefulness (conceptual, cultural and structural), and reciprocity through constant reflectiveness (Figures 28, p. 251 and Figure 31, p. 268), have a learning culture through conceptual pluralism and shared leadership. Teachers feel motivated and empowered in these schools. However, in the schools where headteachers are at managerial level and busy in administration mostly, their level of involvement in the process of learning is criticized by the majority of the participants in the study from these schools, that results in a low level of ownership and association among staff, and sharing does not flourish in these conditions. Learning and the entire activity is just a "*recitation script*" (Tharp and Gallimore, 1988) in these schools. Figure 29, p. 258 indicates that these leaders have very little appreciation from the participants in their schools and have an impact on teachers' enthusiasm to work (Figure

33, p. 309). The study indicates that the majority of the headteachers want to lead learning in their schools by actively participating in the process, however, they feel that expectations and demands about administrative matters in the schools make it very difficult for them to be involved actively in the process of learning.

The study indicates that shared leadership, networking and collaboration also require shared responsibility and accountability. At the moment, there is no evidence of any shared accountability model in practice in these schools. The majority of the private schools only talk about their market, public image and reputation. In terms of collaborated projects, fear of loss and being held responsible keeps any such initiatives at a very basic level. In public schools, headteachers are held responsible for implementation of policies. So they consider it more important to keep all practices according to the predefined rules and structure. However, this way of working leads to an “*anti-learning*” environment in schools and compromises on social capital and conceptual pluralism, creativity and shared leadership factors in these schools (Illich, 1971; Gardner, 1993; LeDoux 1996). However, the study highlights that schools where leaders take an active role in learning, have a learning culture that tries to find answers to ‘what’, ‘why’ and ‘how’ questions in regards to all of the activities that take place in their schools. Based on the findings of the study, a model to establish learning culture in schools is being proposed (Figure 31, p. 268) that could be of potential interest to researchers and practitioners. The effectiveness of the model can be determined after implementing it in a large scale study.

#### **8.4 To what extent are headteachers, teachers, students and parents engaged in a dialogue for learning in their schools in Pakistan?**

The involvement of headteachers, parents, teachers and students in a dialogue for learning is present in all schools but the level and purpose is different. The purpose of dialogue is mostly about examination results and syllabus between students and teachers. The type of dialogue is more at a rote and recitation level where students are passive in their role (Alexander, 2004). Feedback given to students is also mostly about examination related matters. The interaction between headteachers and other stakeholders is mostly about policy matters where the role of others is quite passive as usually the policies are predefined and headteachers simply announce them for implementation. Dialogue with parents is very limited. The majority of the parents' responses indicate that they are not aware of most of the activities that take place in schools. They also complain that headteachers and teachers have no time and importance to their opinions. The majority of them express their willingness to get involved with school in different activities. However, headteachers' and teachers' responses indicate that the majority of the parents come with expectations that are beyond their control and are unrealistic particularly in terms of their child's results and fees. It is also shared in two of the private schools that parents from the elite class have other priorities and they rarely attend any meetings in schools. The study identifies five levels of dialogue among these stakeholders in these schools (Figure 32, p. 275) from the basic level (Transmitting) to the highest level of co-constructivism. It is evident that the importance of a higher level of dialogue in these schools in the study is not completely understood and not implemented. This area requires extensive research to inform practitioners, and for theorizing the concept further. The learning process that enhances social, moral and professional skills among learners is not crafted in isolation



and within the four walls of the classroom only. The involvement of different stakeholders through an active and higher level of dialogue is important.

All participating schools in the study are involved in some kind of networking and collaboration. However, the extent and purpose of this dialogue is different across schools. In the public schools the dialogue and collaboration is mostly content based (Hopkins, 2001) where the schools work with different examination agencies to improve their knowledge about examination related policies and rules. Schools work with different ruling agencies and governing bodies about the syllabus, materials, examination patterns and policies.

However, the study also indicates that the practitioners' opinions on the usefulness and importance of collaboration in the learning process in terms of many of the positive aspects, for example, a more distributive leadership structure, shared knowledge and improved learning, is consistent with most of the existing relevant research (Hargreaves and Fink, 2004). Private schools have collaboration with different organizations and other schools to enhance teamwork, social and moral skills, and professional attributes. However, the concept of teachers, their ability to appreciate diversity and to manage students' behaviour during the collaborated projects, highlights the need to improve their professional skills in this regard. The study also identifies the need of a policy in these schools to determine the scope and procedure for developing collaboration and networking with a higher level of dialogue, shared purpose and responsibility. Dialogue among different stakeholders can enhance learning

outcomes in these schools but the concept is at a basic level and needs resilience, resourcefulness and reciprocity through reflectiveness in this regard.

#### **8.5 To what extent do teachers perceive themselves to be part of a learning community in their schools?**

The concept of a learning community is appreciated by the majority of the participants but it is not fully developed in these schools. Teachers share their practices with each other with a reflective approach only if there is a high level of trust, confidence and mutual respect among different stakeholders in these schools. Although they also complain about the time and curriculum design constraints to bring in any changes and to be involved in the process of review and development, it is evident from the schools where the environment is full of respect and support, that they find ways for these activities. All of these schools provide time for co-ordination meetings in the academic calendar but the activity level varies from finalizing the syllabus division per term to lesson planning with new pedagogical procedures. The concept of lesson evaluation is present in the majority of these schools but it is mostly about fulfilling the requirement on the lesson plan form by writing a satisfactory report about the lesson. Teachers complain about not having any reflection time for this self-review or to do it with students and other peers, but they understand the importance of critical review of their practices similar to what MacBeath et al. (2009) discuss in their work. However, the majority of the teachers particularly from public schools consider examination results as an indicator of their performance. The study indicates complacency among these teachers about their achievements based on examination results. However, it is resonant in the study that

learning is not only about having good grades in examinations. This kind of complacency could be, as Giles and Hargreaves (2006) say, demonstrations of “*quick success*” which are actually “*competency traps*” (Cousins, 1996) and eventually result in higher levels of dissatisfaction among students and parents.

The study indicates that there is a difference in the perceptions and practices of teachers in terms of being reflective practitioners and critical friends in some of these schools where leaders have been actively involved in the process as mentors and motivators. The majority of the teachers are reluctant to let go their own “*authority and competence*” and doubt the expertise, reliability and honesty of their colleagues. They have the impression that they know their job well and they are “*teachers*”. They have a rigid and managerial, authoritative style which is quite similar to the headteachers’ style in those schools.

The importance of professional development is recognized by the majority of headteachers and teachers, however, the study indicates that there is strong need of customized professional development programmes other than standardized programmes for teachers and headteachers in these schools. Moreover, these schools have no proper procedure of doing needs analysis for the customized trainings. Headteachers are the main source to send options for these training programmes so their competence and involvement in the process of learning, and their own vision about their schools and ability in talent management and development of the staff in their schools is extremely important. The study indicates that the majority of the headteachers, particularly in the public schools, are working as administrative heads mostly

(Figure 30, p. 261) and this results in power distance, low level of dialogue for learning and low appreciation from staff and parents in these schools (Figure 29, p. 258). The need to have a dialogue for learning within an environment of trust and confidence is evident in the study but the ability to initiate and enhance the level of this activity is not fully developed among headteachers and teachers. Headteachers have a direct impact on the school environment, level of trust and teacher empowerment. Their abilities and professional development in terms of self-efficacy, knowledge about others' efficacy, organizational and the outside world is extremely important to create a learning culture for enhancing the level of dialogue in the schools (Figures 28, p. 251 and Figure 32, p. 275). The study also highlights the importance of rewards associated with professional development programmes in these schools in Pakistan, where teachers are among low paid professionals and face economic pressures. However, evaluating the usefulness of professional development only in terms of financial gains or credentials, as indicated by some of the participants, might be anti-learning besides being difficult to find sufficient financial resources for all trainees as the main reward. In line with Bush (2008), the study also highlights that headteachers' ability and perceptions about learning for all in schools enhance teachers' ability to develop schools as a learning community. Headteacher's personal efficacy and ability has an effect on others, and organizational efficacy and ability (Figures 28, p. 251 and Figure 29, p. 258). Most of the teachers have a degree at postgraduate level in these schools relevant to the subject they are teaching, however, the majority of them share that they have not received training to enhance their skills in the pedagogical process and human psychology as a teacher and headteacher. Therefore, it looks very important that schools have a proper professional development programme to enhance efficacy at the macro and micro level. The LfL model that seems to be

more useful may have professional learning as the starting point in the LfL concept for the context in Pakistan.

#### **8.6 To what extent is student voice a contributory factor for improvement in teaching and learning in schools of Pakistan?**

The study indicates that hearing students' voice for improving learning as important stakeholders is not a fully developed but an emerging concept in these schools. The findings identify different levels of this involvement and indicate a gap between the practices prevalent in the private schools and those in the public schools of Pakistan. The private schools have a more democratic and shared leadership approach where students' opinion matters and their level of engagement is at a higher rank if analysed on Hart's ladder of students' involvement. However, the majority of these public school students have a passive role in schools contrary to the claims of their headteachers' about having a student-centred approach in schools. In line with Watkins (2003), mostly learning is taught here and the decision-making is quite bureaucratic and hierarchical in these schools. The predefined objectives, structured curriculum design and the pressure of examinations make these schools producer-centred (Galton and MacBeath, 2008). The study also identifies a communication gap between the teachers, headteachers, parents and students. Teachers have the feeling that the majority of the students and their parents' highest expectation is only about examination results from schools, but the data from students clearly indicates that they expect a learning experience that is closer to what the concept of LfL explains (MacBeath et al., 2009). Contrary to their expectations, schools offer a structured and tightly controlled learning experience to the students that adds

to their frustration and their voice turns into a complaint. This creates an environment of distrust among students, teachers and headteachers. Contrary to these public schools, the private schools have a different level and type of student involvement that seems to be at a higher rung on Hart's ladder of students' involvement that may have an impact on the level of co-constructivism and effectiveness of learning as a social, moral and cognitive process. The basic difference between these schools seems to emerge from the ability and perception of the headteachers in these schools.

	Public Schools					Private Schools				
	<i>HT</i>	<i>Teachers</i>	<i>Students</i>	<i>Parents</i>	<i>DA</i>	<i>HT</i>	<i>Teachers</i>	<i>Students</i>	<i>Parents</i>	<i>DA</i>
<b>Leadership</b>	Positional	Positional	shared	Should be	Positional	shared	Positional, shared	Should be	Should be	Positional, shared
<b>Learning</b>	based	Exam based	work place	Exam, social, work place	Exam Based	social	Exam based and social	Exam, social, work place	Exam, social, work place	
<b>Headteachers' perception about their influence on learning in their schools</b>	Admin Focussed	Admin Focussed	Admin Focussed	Admin Focussed	Not Available	Admin, Academic	Admin, academic	Admin, academic	Admin, academic	Admin, academic

Transactional, associating	Collaboration
transactional	Structured/ collaboration
associating	collaboration
associating	Self-review,
Associating, analysing	Collaboration, reflection
Transmitting	Structured and exam based
Transmitting	Structured
Transmitting	Structured, conventional
Transmitting/ transactional	Examination related
Transactional	Examination related
<b>Headteachers', teachers', students' and parents' involvement in a dialogue for learning in their schools</b>	<b>Teachers' perception about themselves to be part of a learning community in their schools</b>

Student voice as a contributory factor for improving learning and teaching in these schools of Pakistan	Decorative	Decorative	Manipulation	Manipulation	Decorative	Students directed	Staff initiated, shared decisions with students	Staff initiated, shared decisions with students	Assigned but informed	All three levels
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*Table 10: Summary of the Findings of Study from the Six Public and Private Schools in Pakistan*

The headteachers who have a more democratic and shared leadership style seem to influence the entire culture within their organizations. Table 10 (p. 329) gives a comparison of practices in the public and private schools within the study in terms of the findings in the study. It is evident in the study that leadership's ability and accessibility has an affect on the trust, confidence and motivation of staff and students (Figure 29, p. 258 and Figure 33, p.309) that moulds the learning environment in the school accordingly (Figure 31, p. 268). The findings from the last research question allow tentative conclusions to be drawn that strongly highlight the need of professional learning at all levels in these schools, but most importantly at leadership level that brings a change in the mindset of all involved towards learning as a social activity where the opinions, skills and abilities of all matter.



## **8.7 Reflecting on the Study**

The qualitative small scale multi-level embedded case study design has been useful to explore the concept of LfL in the six schools in Pakistan as it has also been considered useful by many other researchers in the area of leadership, learning and school improvement (Yin, 1993; Bassey, 1999; Pring, 2000). While interviewing headteachers and teachers and during the transcription process of the interviews I had opportunity to remain engaged in constant reflection on what was said and shared by different participants. The data collected from parents through questionnaires, as decided after the pilot study, proved to be very important as it highlighted the need for dialogue and to fill the communication gap between parents and the schools. It was decided, as mentioned in the fifth chapter, that children would not be interviewed, however, recognizing the importance of students' voice and involvement in the concept of LfL, as it emerged from the literature, I decided to use questionnaires to collect data from them, as Dahlberg et al. (2007) suggest that students are important stakeholders. Their input proved to be very helpful to understand the meaning of learning in these schools and what these students expected from schools. The documentary analysis gave another insight into school life as it provided an additional glimpse of these schools for a period of almost two years. With all of these methods together, I was able to collect data that was both rich and vibrant. While collating the data collected through multiple sources and with a focus on triangulation, I was continuously involved in constant comparison and gathered a deeper understanding to inform my research questions.

Although the questionnaires provided an opportunity to include a reasonably large number of parents' and students' voices in the study, for any future research, interviewing parents and students might offer an opportunity to explore their idea of effective learning in further depth. Through open-ended questions in interviews, their responses might give further useful recommendations for the practitioners about the prospects of their involvement in different projects in schools, which might then be useful to prepare policy and strategy accordingly. However, the present study, being the first one about LfL prospects in schools in Pakistan, would enable practitioners, policy makers and researchers to have an analysis of the current practices and the possible benefits that the proposed model of LfL with centrality of dialogue in schools in Pakistan may offer in future. Therefore, for any further study in the related field, it might be useful to interview some policy makers as part of the study to include their vision and voice to proceed further in this regard. However, the interviews of the headteachers covered that part as being representatives of the policy makers in their schools. Moreover, I used a multilevel embedded case study approach where I used different sources of information to collect data with a mixed method approach. This strategy also brought in triangulation in my research design, and the data presented a fuller picture as Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) describe, of the prevalent conditions in the schools of Pakistan in terms of the concept of LfL as it was collected from five different sources being headteachers, teachers, parents, students and documentary analysis in every case.

The data collected through interviews presented a "*thick description*" (Cohen et al., 2007: p.254) of the entire phenomenon of learning and leadership in school adopting a humanistic

knowledge approach as mentioned by Gunter and Ribbins (2002). By taking a qualitative dominant mixed method approach (Johnson et al., 2007) to analyse data, I have been able to analyse data with a fitness for purpose approach (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2003). This approach enhanced design triangulation in my study and gave me an opportunity to analyse data with explanatory design where I collected the qualitative data followed by some quantitative data from questionnaires to refine the findings (Creswell 1998; Fraenkel and Wallen, 2003; Morrison, 2007), and to analyse the similarities and differences within practices and claims. Moreover, I could also understand to a greater extent the theory of practice and in particular the work of MacBeath et al. (2009) has influenced the conduct of my research. Also, combined with MacBeath et al. (2009), Claxton (2002), Southworth (2004), and Rhodes et al. (2009) and my research findings, I have developed a model of LfL for the schools in Pakistan (Figure 32, p. 275) that could be explored and tested in future studies in this regard.

## **8.8 Contribution to Knowledge**

One of the purposes of humanistic research is to “*contribute to enabling and improving*” (Gunter and Ribbins, 2002: p.378). This small scale case study enables practitioners to reflect on their practices in terms of learning and leadership activities in schools. This focused reflectiveness may also contribute to further development of the concept with the changing needs and trends in education, as the essence of any case study within a humanistic knowledge domain is in its contextual evolution that emerges from on-going reflectiveness. Practitioners and leaders may reflect and explore their own notions of LfL in the light of the findings of this study. The study has identified a collective vision of LfL. This is the first study of its type in

South Eastern Asia as no similar research has been conducted under the overarching concept of LfL in the entire region and particularly in Pakistan. Hence the findings contribute to the existing knowledge on the subject in this area and would be of use to all those interested in knowing the international perspectives of the concept.

The study not only identifies the similarities with the LfL model of the Carpe Vitam Project (MacBeath et al., 2009) but has also highlighted some contextual factors as important contributors in this process in Pakistan. The importance of socio-economic and professional skills as one of the main components to make learning effective is evident in the study. The study highlights the direct and indirect impact of leadership on the environment for learning in these schools and emphasizes active dialogue for learning among all stakeholders. The study also identifies five levels of this dialogue (Figure 32, p. 275) in schools that would be of interest and help researchers, practitioners and leaders to reflect on the current level of this dialogue in their organization and determine how to move towards the next level.

The importance of students' voice and involvement is evident in many studies. However, how the level of this involvement is linked and influenced by the leadership approach prevalent in the organization is an important finding of the study. The current level of this involvement in the public and private schools may have an impact on the future policy and practices in the schools. Combined with Claxton's work (2002) and the findings of the study, the four Rs model is modified (Figure 28, p. 151) for these schools and suggests that challenging ability and authority within an environment that is reflective and supports high aspirations through

appreciation, resilience, resourcefulness and reciprocity is enhanced. This model has set some direction for further exploring its scope in terms of levels of dialogue for learning in schools. Resonating with the work of Bandura (1989), the study also highlights the importance of knowledge of self, others, the organization and the world outside the school to enhance efficacy, effectiveness and competence at micro and macro levels in schools. Combined with the six levels of learning (Southworth, 2004) and the leaders' approach to improve learning at different levels in school (Rhodes et al., 2009), and based on the findings in the study, the research presents a LfL with centrality of dialogue model (Figures 31, p. 268 and Figure 34, p. 335) for Pakistan and for all other regions where learning is interpreted in the similar or different context that might be tested and explored with further research in future. This model is in cyclic form and highlights the importance of learning as an interlinked and on-going activity that begins at individual level but is connected and has an influence to all other levels. Leaders who learn with this approach can establish a learning culture in their schools (Figures 29, p. 258 and Figure 33, p. 309) by enhancing the enthusiasm and trust among themselves and staff (Figure 33, p. 309). The study continuously highlights the dearth of academic research available in Pakistan or in South East Asia on the concept of LfL. This research has developed the existing knowledge in terms of theorizing from empirical work (Gunter and Ribbins, 2002). Data collected from six schools provides a thick and rich description of the on-going practices, and has informed that academic role and involvement with a shared leadership approach is appreciated highly (Figure 29, p. 258). The schools where leaders have a shared leadership approach have an environment that has a higher level of dialogue and learning environment. As emphasized by other researchers (Gunter and Ribbins, 2002) I have already presented some of my work from this research in two international conferences

(Javed, 2010 and 2012) and intend to communicate the findings of this research further to other researchers, policy makers and practitioners through publishing in journals and presenting papers in conferences.

## 8.9 Recommendations for Practitioners and Scope for Future Research

The research contributes to the existing knowledge by theorizing and introducing different models about LfL in Pakistan. Analysing the concept of LfL (MacBeath et al., 2009) for its usefulness in Pakistan to bring improvement in learning in schools, the study indicates many similarities and identifies some additions based on the socio-economic context of Pakistan. A model of LfL showing the centrality of dialogue for learning in Pakistan is being proposed (Figure 34).



Figure 34: Suggested LfL Model for Schools in Pakistan showing the

### *Centrality of Dialogue for Learning*

Based on data in the study about LfL in schools of Pakistan and information gained from reviewing previous research, the model informs on how LfL may improve learning in schools of Pakistan where a dialogue for learning is the central part of the entire process. The model combines the work of Claxton (2002), Southworth (2004), MacBeath et al. (2009) and Rhodes et al. (2009), and adds the importance of supporting and challenging the four As (ability, authority, aspiration and appreciation) from individual level to a level of networks outside the schools, and from students to leadership level through ongoing reflectiveness in the schools in Pakistan within the entire process of LfL. Schools in the study that have an environment to develop and nurture knowledge at different levels ranging from self efficacy to universal efficacy, are the ones that are constantly engaged in the dialogue for learning with a focus on providing support and challenging the status quo. Four As in the model supplement the four Rs in Claxton's work (2002) for LfL in these schools in Pakistan with a centrality of dialogue for learning with ongoing reflection.

The LfL model with centrality of a dialogue for learning with four As for schools in Pakistan (Figure 34, p. 335), suggests that learning at all levels in schools (from student to leadership, and from classroom to outside world) is a combination of skills about self, others, the organization and the world outside the school and about their beliefs, values and interests that has a direct impact on efficacy; therefore it has implications for policy makers, practitioners and researchers. Besides many other factors, the entire learning process is interlinked with socio-economic factors prevalent in and out of schools. Therefore, schools should constantly

be engaged in the process of dialogue with all the stakeholders, in and out of school, that enhances efficacy and competence at all levels. Reflectiveness and high level dialogue for learning with a focus on three basic questions, ‘what’, ‘why’ and ‘how’, can transform the process of learning to become more experiential, needs-based and an effective activity as compared to what many students in the study complain of as being a “*repetitive*” and “*boring*” practice that is mostly about scoring high grades in the exams following rote learning and recitation script in classes. Through this ongoing dialogue and reflectiveness, self-review and shared responsibility can also be developed in the learning culture where trust and mutual respect is the core value from student to leadership level.

Indeed the model (Figure 34, p. 335) is not presented as a panacea for every kind of improvement in the schools of Pakistan, however, it is intended that it will be useful for leaders and researchers in Pakistan and elsewhere with a similar context for development of a more experiential and effective alternative to the structured and recitation script level of learning in schools. Hence, it may inform practitioners and researchers to improve confidence, efficacy and competence through effective learning at individual and ultimately institutional and cross institutional level.

The following recommendations for further research add to the findings of the study:

1. This study explored the theoretical paradigm that was developed in the Western context and also utilised survey instruments that are developed in the Western context



mostly. It is suggested to explore, identify and develop theories which are more contextualized and relevant through more in-depth, large scale exploratory modes of enquiry where findings of the current study offer the opportunity for the first time to assess the applicability and usefulness of the concept of leadership for learning in an Asian country. More specifically, further research from South Eastern countries for example, India and Bangladesh, can bring depth and clarity to the extent this concept may bring improvement in learning.

2. The data was collected with a mixed method embedded case study from six schools located in three different cities that maximises social, cultural and geographical diversity in the findings. The selected method ensures interpretation of knowledge as experienced by the participants and is highly contextualized (Bassey, 1999). However, to maximise the transferability of the results to a wider population outside these three cities, a large scale, comprehensive study would be useful to establish the scope of findings within Pakistan that has different culture in every province, that might be studied as a variable to bring change in the manner leadership is conceptualized.
3. The study might also provide opportunities to compare and contrast the findings among and between both the public and private schools and inform future researchers to investigate further accordingly.
4. The study identifies 4As within leadership behaviours with a focus on their impact of staff motivation in schools and how they are interlinked with 4Rs (Claxton, 2002) which were introduced to improve the process of learning. Further research can analyse the scope of these 4As with an action research approach to establish the extent

these are important within the concept of leadership for learning within diverse locations through a large scale inquiry.

5. The study highlights importance of dialogue among different stakeholders to improve learning within LfL. It identifies different levels of dialogue in the participating schools of Pakistan and suggests a model to enhance the level of dialogue for learning (Figures 32, p. 275 and Figure 34, p. 335); this model could be explored further to assess the effectiveness with an action research approach with a focus on 4As as contributory factors to invigorate this dialogue for learning in schools. It could be analysed as to which of the 4As is more important among leaders to improve performance of staff.
6. The study highlights the importance of students' involvement and leadership and its impact on schools as an emerging trend in Pakistan. It identifies different levels of student involvement and provides guidelines to school based inquiries on how to ensure student empowerment through a higher level of engagement as stakeholder (Table 9, p. 294).
7. As this research identifies differences between public and private schools which are not always a result of resources and structural connectors, it might be useful to explore to what extent leadership is the main factor to bring improvement in the public schools and to what extent public-private partnership is possible with a focus on 4As as important attributes within leaders to improve learning in public schools.

The following recommendations for the policy makers and practitioners may develop organizational working further:

1. The study highlights the need of professional learning at all levels in schools and sets some guidelines for the researchers, practitioners and policy makers on how to establish a learning culture in schools (Figure 28, p. 151). It is suggested to establish units/departments of professional development within schools to identify and support professional development needs of staff.
2. The study highlights the difference between the roles of headteachers in public and private schools from being more of an administrator and management focused to that of being accessible and academic focused and its impact on school environment, appreciation from staff and students respectively (Figure 29, p. 258 and Table 10, p. 329). It may be useful to redefine and develop the headteacher's role as a leader for learning in public schools in Pakistan.
3. A proper structure and strategy of rewards, recognition and professional development-linked promotion system may be introduced in public as well as private schools to identify, develop and sustain good professionals in schools who can be leaders for learning.
4. Practitioners may also find it important to develop a proper system of recording students' voice and can use it as important data for school-based inquiry and self-review to improve learning in schools.

5. The study indicates a communication gap between parents and schools. Practitioners may enhance the level of this dialogue by making use of the model identified in the study (Figures 18, p. 203, Figure 22, p.220 and Figure 24, p.226). A proper policy indicating the purpose and level of parental involvement in schools as stakeholders to improve learning needs to be developed in schools followed by proper training and support to inform all concerned about their and parents' roles, rationale of engagement, its level and options.
6. A proper policy about networking and collaboration on an interschool/organizational level may be needed in public as well as private schools to avoid ambiguity about roles, procedures and extent among practitioners who expect support and guidance in this regard.
7. The study highlights the expectations of students and their parents from schools to enable students to learn not only examination skills but also those of real life, professional and workplace related skills as well. It is recommended to develop and approve a policy and procedure manual of partnership between government and non-government organizations to develop and promote students' placement and internship programmes as part of the learning process in schools.

## **8.10 Summary**

The chapter revisits the research questions set in the beginning of the project, research methodology and methods for the project, and highlights the conclusions drawn out of the study. The research explores the usefulness of the concept of LfL in schools in Pakistan. It is

clear from the literature sources, the stakeholders' responses and documentary analysis that the LfL can be a useful concept to improve schools in Pakistan. However, despite the positive affirmations regarding the concept of LfL, it is evident from the findings that it needs further development and research in Pakistan as some areas are at a very basic level, for example, students' involvement as stakeholders in schools to improve learning. The process of learning is conceptualized slightly differently by the teachers and headteachers who give highest importance to examination results in these schools whereas students and their parents expect to have a learning experience that develops social and workplace related skills as well. This process is influenced by the headteachers' involvement as academic leader in school. However, the practice in public schools is quite different here as headteachers are mostly busy in administration and leadership is practiced as positional power. The study highlights the influence of leadership at all levels and aspects of these schools. The study asserts the need for professional learning about knowledge of self, others, organization and the world outside to enhance efficacy and effectiveness with on-going reflectiveness and dialogue among all stakeholders to define what learning is, why that is important and how that is to be achieved.



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## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Permission letter requesting access in order to conduct the research**

.....

.....

**Dear Sir/Madam**

This letter is to seek permission to access your school to participate in a research project that I am undertaking as part of my PhD through the University of Birmingham, UK. My supervisor is Dr. Christopher Rhodes. I am exploring the concept of leadership for learning in schools of Pakistan.

Enclosed please find brief details of my background and research interests. I started my career as a school teacher in 1994 and am currently working as head of department in a University.

Data will be collected through interviews of headteachers and teachers, questionnaires from students and parents and documentary analysis (detailed schedules and procedures are enclosed for your reference). Confidentiality and privacy of all of the participants will be observed throughout the project.

I would be more than happy to talk to you or any of your staff about this project in more detail and I can be contacted on the details below at any time.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Uzma Javed

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **Interview information sheet**

#### **‘LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING: A CASE STUDY IN SIX PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS OF PAKISTAN’**

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed as part of my research.

The aim of the interview is to analyse to what extent leadership for learning can be influential for school improvement in Pakistan. Your contribution will be anonymous as it is similarities, themes and differences which shall be reported on in the thesis.

The interview will last approximately one hour and will generally consist of open-ended questions around the following themes:

- Your overall view of how headteachers in schools in Pakistan perceive that they influence teaching and learning in their schools.
- Your understanding on how headteachers, teachers, students and parents are engaged in a dialogue for learning in their schools in Pakistan.
- Teachers’ perceptions about their role as part of a learning community in their schools.

- Student voice as a contributory factor for improvement in teaching and learning in schools of Pakistan.
- Your recommendations to further improve the schools in Pakistan.

Thank you.

Uzma Javed



## **APPENDIX 3**

### **Schedule of guide questions used in the interviews**

1. Define leadership in school.
2. Do school leaders in Pakistan have a clear understanding of what constitutes learning in schools?
3. Outline what you see as your key responsibilities and which of your responsibilities takes more of your time in school?
4. How would you define learning at school? And what do you consider are some achievements of your school within the last two years?
5. How do head teachers' actions demonstrate a commitment to better teaching and learning in schools?
6. How are decisions taken in your school about any teaching and learning matters?
7. What do staff and students perceive as their role in leading learning?
8. What is parental contribution to improve teaching and learning in school?
9. Do teachers involve parents as stakeholders with them to improve learning?
10. Are teachers encouraged to network with practitioners in other schools, organization and community?
11. Describe what you see as the key responsibilities of teachers in your school.

12. To what extent is student voice heard and given importance in school matters?
13. To what extent the concept of student leadership is prevalent in school? And do you think your school prepares them for real world challenges, how?
14. How do you motivate your staff and students to establish a collaborative learning environment in school?
15. What are the challenges which you face while trying to promote a culture for learning in school?

## **APPENDIX 4**

### **Pilot study**

The pilot study that has informed the research questions took place in two secondary school settings in Lahore. One school was public and the other was private. Public school (referred hereon as School A) was affiliated with the Lahore Board of Intermediate and Secondary School and had matric system, which is the local education system of secondary school examination in Pakistan. The private school (School B) was affiliated with Lahore Board as well as the Cambridge International Examination and was offering matric as well as GCE 'O' Level curriculum. Both the schools had around 500 students (520 students in School A and 505 in School B). The basic infrastructure was quite similar as both the schools were equipped with science labs, playgrounds, computer labs, proper classrooms and school buildings. Both of these schools had a Headteacher as their focal leader and one senior master (deputy headteacher). There were 25 teachers in School B and 20 in School A. The schools were single sexed and located in the developed area of Lahore. During the pilot study, headteachers and two teachers from both of these schools were interviewed. The school development plan for the years 2008 and 2009 and school logbooks for 2009 and 2010 were analysed.

Semi-structured interviews took place using the ethical codes outlined in the chapter entitled 'Research Design and Methodology'. The comments from respondents were subsequently recorded and then transcribed in order to facilitate accurate analysis of the emergent themes

from the comments made which then in turn informed the future study. Keeping the design triangulation in view within this small scale pilot study, documentary analysis proved to be a useful tool. It was conducted after the interviews. The frequency of events and existing situation was interpreted in terms of the scale given in the Research Methodology chapter. The same percentage was used to make analysis in the documentary evidence.

From the responses given about roles and responsibilities of teachers and leaders, distribution of works, and the decision-making process, it became evident that a general consensus exists among all the participants that the leaders should involve staff in the decision-making process. However, there is a difference of opinion between teachers' and headteachers' responses when it comes to implementation and routine practice. Headteachers say that this is a routine practice and teachers say that it is rarely done. Headteachers define leadership more as a role not as a capacity whereas teachers expect a leader to be a mentor who works to maximise the institutional capacity through teamwork and creating opportunities. Documentary analysis exhibits that School B has a professional development strategy in their school development plan whereas the school logbook does not provide evidence of any professional development practices in the respective year. Analysis of student leadership made it evident that the answers related mainly to decisions from leaders or teachers and showed a lack of depth of understanding about the concept. School Councils were present in the schools but their role was mostly around doing small administrative tasks. They were not involved in the decision-making in School A. However, little evidence was found in School B of their participative role. Parents' role was considered important. It was felt that students who have educated and concerned parents perform well in schools. However, students' performance and learning is

linked with their results mostly. Both the schools claim to have a collaborative learning culture but very little evidence was found in the documentary analysis. Teachers' responses show that leadership is mostly busy in administrative tasks and does not have any direct interaction with the students in classes. Leaders' responses support this information but say that they interact with students and keep themselves updated about classroom practices in the light of students' perspectives whenever possible. However, no specific format of these informal meetings or interaction was evident in the school development plan or logbook. However, it was considered important by all to consider students' opinions and needs to enhance learning outcomes. The concept of learning was defined mostly in terms of students' performance in exams. The performance of school is considered commendable which has good results in the subjects leading to good prospective in future. School A participants consider that students and their parents are only interested in studying the few subjects which lead to professional education and highly paid jobs. They feel that project work is considered wastage of time and money and other resources. However, teachers and headteacher feel that the market is an important factor that determines the direction of students' future education. However, the headteacher of School B told that the strategy of community involvement, project work and creating internship opportunities for students in different industries and markets enhances learning outcomes. Documentary analysis also supported this information as a common practice in the senior school. School A participants also agree that there should be a well-defined policy where community, market and parents should all be actively involved in the process of learning at schools. Schools should promote a culture of learning that prepares students for real life challenges. The pilot study highlighted the importance of parents and a market representative as significant stakeholders with schools in a country like Pakistan that

faces extreme economic constraints. It is considered important to include parents and market representatives also as part of the main study.

## **APPENDIX 5**

### **Participant information sheet**

#### **Participating Schools:**

Public Secondary Schools = 3

Private Secondary Schools = 3

Total = 6

#### **Interview:**

Headteachers  $1 * 6 = 6$

Teachers  $5 * 6 = 30$

#### **Questionnaire:**

Students  $60 * 6 = 360$

Parents  $60 * 6 = 360$

## **APPENDIX 6**

### **Questionnaire information sheet**

#### **‘LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING: A CASE STUDY IN SIX PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS OF PAKISTAN’**

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my research.

The aim of the questionnaire is to analyse to what extent leadership for learning can be influential for school improvement in Pakistan. Your contribution will be anonymous as it is similarities, themes and differences which shall be reported on in the thesis.

The questionnaire has mostly structured questions and only two open-ended questions around the following themes:

- Your overall view of how headteachers in schools in Pakistan perceive that they influence teaching and learning in their schools.
- Your understanding on how headteachers, teachers, students and parents are engaged in a dialogue for learning in their schools in Pakistan.
- Teachers’ perceptions about their role as part of a learning community in their schools.



- Student voice as a contributory factor for improvement in teaching and learning in schools of Pakistan.
- Your recommendations to further improve the schools in Pakistan.

Thank you.

Uzma Javed

## **APPENDIX 7**

### **Research interview consent form**

#### **‘LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING: A CASE STUDY IN SIX PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS OF PAKISTAN’**

Interviewer: **Uzma Javed**

Interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of interview: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Purpose of interview**

This interview is part of my research for the award of PhD at the University of Birmingham, United Kingdom.

#### **Confidentiality**

Research ethics will be observed at all times in the analysis and use to which the data may be put. The data from the interview will only be available to my supervisor for the PhD programme at the University of Birmingham and, possibly for my thesis. Excerpts from the

interview may be included as part of the final thesis, but your name will be excluded, and any identifying characteristics will be removed. The interview may also be used as part of written papers or books, but without your name and excluding any identifying characteristics, and subject to research ethics.

### **The Right to Withdraw**

You have the right to withdraw from participating in the research anytime before the agreed interview date or one month after your interview. You must inform the researcher personally, should you want to withdraw.

### **Acknowledgement**

Please sign this form to show that we have agreed to its content.

Signed (Interviewer): \_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX 8**

### **Research questionnaire form**

#### **‘LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING: A CASE STUDY IN SIX PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS OF PAKISTAN’**

##### **Purpose of questionnaire**

This questionnaire is part of my research for the award of PhD at the University of Birmingham, United Kingdom. I am exploring the concept of leadership for learning in your school. Your participation in my project would make this study more meaningful. Kindly fill in the questionnaire and return it to the School Administration.

##### **Confidentiality**

Research ethics will be observed at all times in the analysis and use to which the data may be put. The data from the questionnaire will only be available to my supervisor for the PhD programme at the University of Birmingham and, possibly for my thesis. Data will be included as part of the final thesis, but your name will be excluded, and any identifying characteristics will be removed. The data may also be used as part of written papers or books,

but without your name and excluding any identifying characteristics, and subject to research ethics.

### **The Right to Withdraw**

You have the right to withdraw from participating in the research anytime within one month after you return the questionnaire. You must inform the researcher personally, should you want to withdraw.

### **Acknowledgement**

Please sign this form to show that we have agreed to its content.

Signed (Researcher): \_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX 9**

### **Questionnaire for parents**

#### **‘LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING: A CASE STUDY IN SIX PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS OF PAKISTAN’**

The responses provided will not be attributed to any individual without first obtaining the permission of the respondent. The completed questionnaire will be held securely and used only for research purposes. Strict confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

#### **Section 1: Respondent’s details**

Please tick or circle the answer you wish to give, or add numbers or texts as appropriate.

1. Gender

1. Male

2. Female

2. Age: \_\_\_\_\_ years

3. Class in which your child studies: \_\_\_\_\_
4. In which year did your child join this school: \_\_\_\_\_
5. What do you do? Father \_\_\_\_\_  
Mother \_\_\_\_\_

## Section 2: Leadership for learning

This part of the questionnaire investigates how well you think your opinion is valued in school for improving learning. Based on your perceptions as students, please confirm your agreement, disagreement or otherwise by selecting one of the following options with a tick mark (✓) against each statement.

1. Strong disagreement (SDA)
2. Disagreement (DA)
3. Neutral (N)
4. Agreement (A)
5. Strong Agreement (SA)

No.	How is leadership and learning understood in Pakistan?	Scale				
A1.	My biggest expectation from this school is that it enables my child to have high grades in exams	SDA	DA	N	A	SA
A2.	I consider it very important to discuss my child's progress with teachers on meeting days					
A3.	Headteacher likes to know what parents think of the quality of learning offered in this school					
A4.	I consider it very important that school activities are designed in a way that students influence people inside and out of school					
How do headteachers perceive that they influence learning in their schools?						
B1.	I think headteacher's role is the most factor in schools to determine the quality of teaching and learning					
B2.	The headteacher has a clear vision and understanding of how to create a learning environment for students in this school					
B3.	Teachers' different teaching activities make learning interesting for my child					
B4.	In this school, staff and students try out new					



	things, without any fear of being blamed for failure					
To what extent are headteachers, teachers, students and parents engaged in a dialogue for learning in their schools in Pakistan						
C1.	We discuss about learning and leadership skills among students with headteacher and teachers in formal or informal meetings					
C3.	Parents are encouraged to get involved in different activities and projects					
C3.	Visitors from different universities and from other fields at the school exchange useful information with students					
C4.	I find this school often working with other schools and different organizations on different projects that help improving learning, leadership skills and teamwork among students and staff					
How do teachers perceive themselves to be part of a learning community in their schools?						
D1.	Most of the teachers often work in teams on different collaborated projects in this school					
D2.	Mostly teachers in this school are very competent and committed to promote					

	learning among students through probing questions in classrooms					
D3.	Many teachers with students often work on collaborated projects with other schools					
D4.	School calendar has allocated days of professional development for teachers in this school					
To what extent is the student voice a contributory factor for improving learning and teaching in schools of Pakistan?						
E1.	My child has the opportunities to help shape the ways the school works					
E2.	Students' opinion plays an important role in order to help improve teaching and learning in school					
E3.	Students are encouraged to learn by working with different teams of different organizations					
E4.	I as parent appreciate the way school promotes learning for all of the students					

### **Section 3: Recommendations for further improving learning in this school**

- 1. How can parents play a more active role for improving teaching and learning in schools in Pakistan?**


- 2. How can expertise of staff, students and parents be drawn upon further as a useful resource for school improvement?**


**3. What do you like the most within the context of leadership and learning practices in this school?**

<hr/>

Thank you for participating in this study. Your input is highly appreciated.

## **APPENDIX 10**

### **Questionnaire for students**

#### **‘Analysis of the influence of leadership for learning on school improvement in Pakistan’.**

The responses provided will not be attributed to any individual without first obtaining the permission of the respondent. The completed questionnaire will be held securely and used only for research purposes. Strict confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

#### **Section 1: Respondent’s details**

Please tick or circle the answer you wish to give, or add numbers or texts as appropriate.

- |    |   |    |        |
|----|---|----|--------|
| 1. | Gender  | 1. | Male   |
|    |   | 2. | Female |
| 2. | Age: _____ years                              |    |        |
| 3. | Class in which you study: _____               |    |        |
| 4. | In which year did you join this school: _____ |    |        |

5. What do your parents do? Father \_\_\_\_\_
- Mother \_\_\_\_\_

## **Section 2: Leadership for Learning**

This part of the questionnaire investigates how well you think your opinion is valued in school for improving learning. Based on your perceptions as students, please confirm your agreement, disagreement or otherwise by selecting one of the following options with a tick mark (✓) against each statement.

- 6. Strong disagreement (SDA)
- 7. Disagreement (DA)
- 8. Neutral (N)
- 9. Agreement (A)
- 10. Strong Agreement (SA)

No.	How is leadership and learning understood in Pakistan?	Scale				
A1.	My biggest expectation from this school is that it enables me to have high grades in exams	SDA	DA	N	A	SA
A2.	My teachers consider it important to discuss my progress with my parents on meeting days					
A3.	Headteacher likes to know what my parents think about the teaching and learning that takes place in school					
A4.	My understanding of citizenship has become clear as my school gives me the opportunity to influence people inside and out of school					
	How do headteachers perceive that they influence learning in their schools?					
B1.	I think headteacher's role is the most important factor in schools to determine the quality of teaching and learning					
B2.	The headteacher has a clear understanding of how to create and organize different activities for students to promote learning in this school					
B3.	Teachers' use different teaching methods					

	that make learning interesting for us					
B4.	In this school, students and staff try out new things, without any fear of being blamed for failure					
To what extent are headteachers, teachers, students and parents engaged in a dialogue for learning in their schools in Pakistan						
C1.	Teachers, headteachers, students and parents often discuss among themselves things which can improve learning in school in formal or informal meetings					
C2.	Parents are encouraged to get involved in different activities and projects					
C3.	Visitors from different universities and from other fields at the school exchange useful information with students					
C4.	My school often works with other schools and different organizations on different projects that help improving learning, leadership skills and teamwork among students and teachers					
How do teachers perceive themselves to be part of a learning community in their schools?						
D1.	Most of the teachers often work with other					



	teachers on different collaborated projects in this school					
D2.	Mostly teachers in this school are very competent and committed to promote learning among students through probing questions in classrooms					
D3.	Many teachers with students often work on collaborated projects with other schools					
D4.	My school calendar has teacher training days every year					
To what extent is the student voice contributory factor for improving learning and teaching in schools of Pakistan?						
E1.	I have the opportunities to help shape the ways the school works					
E2.	Students' opinion plays an important role in order to help improve teaching and learning in school					
E3.	Students are encouraged to learn by working with different teams of different organizations					
E4.	I am proud to be a student of this school					

### **Section 3: Recommendations for further improving learning in your school**

- 1. How can students be encouraged more to play an active part in improving teaching and learning in your school?**


- 2. How can expertise of staff, students and parents be drawn upon further as a useful resource for school improvement?**


- 3. What do you like the most within the context of leadership and learning practices in this school?**


Thank you for participating in this study. Your input is highly appreciated.

## **APPENDIX 11**

### **Sample interview script**

#### **Headteacher of a private school**

**UJ:**

Could you please start by telling who you are, what do you do, your education and for how long you are in the current position?

**HT:**

I am .....

**UJ:**

All sounds very good and interesting. Would you please share with me how do you perceive and define leadership in schools in Pakistan?

**HT:**

Leadership is all about having a vision, passion and commitment to bring improvement. It varies from person to person, depending upon his ability, willingness to share authority, readiness to empower others. The concept of leadership is changing; it is more about having a collegial relationship based on trust and respect for each other with a shared belief that we can

make a difference. Umm...within the scenario of schools in Pakistan, leadership is not always empowered and free to bring the change as per their vision ... but I think it is more or less the same everywhere ... still leadership can make a difference and is very important.

**UJ:**

OK, what do you think are the key responsibilities of leadership in schools?

**HT:**

Very important indeed ... and can make a difference ... creating an environment in school that is full of support for each other to learn more from each other ... not only for exams but for real life ... providing resources whatever possible, creating opportunities ... having a good name in the market.

**UJ:**

Do headteachers in schools of Pakistan have a clear understanding of what constitutes learning in schools?

**HT:**

To some extent, yes, because we are a small section and we really don't have time ... mostly we are busy in paper work and other administrative matters. I think the most division we have is two English teachers; one for the 'O' Level and one for the American High. So each teacher takes on the responsibility themselves. But to what extent we are really knowledgeable ... I am not sure ... but umm ... can one headteacher be really master of all subjects? I don't think

so ... I think ... by knowing their subject, they have an outstanding pedagogy of knowledge and that transfers to the students and then the students are confident about knowing what they are talking about, their ability to individualize the students when somebody has a problem with understanding, they can then focus on that. The attention to overall education that they exhibit to the students, gives them confidence of accepting what their teachers are telling them. This makes teachers leaders of their subjects.

**UJ:**

Outline what you see as your key responsibilities and which of your responsibilities takes more of your time in school?

**HT:**

Well, as the head of the school, I do have a vital role in terms of everything is concerned but as hierarchal as ... is, it's also fairly horizontal in terms of shared responsibility. So I think it's a good mixture of both, me setting the right team and putting them on board not only as my subordinates but also as my colleagues. So that particular culture pays up in the long run rather than me just being a strict boss, by getting angry every time they do something wrong, that doesn't work ... but I must admit that administrative tasks, attending meetings, paper work, financial issues and many non-academic activities consume a major part of my day in school ... may be two thirds of every day.

**UJ:**

How would you define learning at school? And what do you consider are some achievements of your school within the last two years?

**HT:**

Learning is no more about numbers and grades only. It is a mix of many things. Now schools that emphasize the development of the student personality and educate him to be responsible citizen and at the same time, meet with the ever increasing pressure from the parents and students about not only having high grades in the examination but also to prepare them for their future endeavours really make a difference in society ... most importantly if teachers are motivated they make a difference ... learning gets enhanced and effective ... teachers' motivation and excitement in their subject is transferred to the students, verbally, through their actions, through their work and then the students are cognitively learning by their actions that education is important to them. The classroom in a whole is a unified learning, so they're learning through their actions, through the verbal, through the interaction. I think it's the whole unit, i.e. if you are just taking the verbal part, you are still learning, but it's just the whole realm of what's going on. In the last two years many of our students got A\* and distinctions in 'O' Levels. They have done really well in sports and debates as well.

**UJ:**

How do headteachers' actions demonstrate a commitment to better teaching and learning in schools?

**HT:**

It is about their own initiative that I appreciate which tells me that there is some kind of professional development and improvement taking place. I make sure that they get the right type of help and support that maximizes their professional development and growth. It gives them a feeling of empowerment and leadership. I arrange special trainings which are need-based and customized. I give them freedom to try new ideas to improve pedagogy and learning.

**UJ:**

How are decisions taken in your school about any teaching and learning matters?

**HT:**

As far as up here, it's a collaborative effort. It's the Co-ordinator, myself and the Teachers together making the decisions for the classrooms and what's best for the students. I can't make one decision and expect it to work for everybody. Likewise the Teachers can't make a decision and make it work for everybody. However, she probably has more say because she knows the students better than I do or the Co-ordinator. So we discuss issues and then come up with a decision.

**UJ:**

What do staff and students perceive as their role in leading learning?



**HT:**

Traditionally, here, it's the teachers teach and the students learn. That's the extent of it here mostly... but we always give importance to what students feel and what they want to have in schools.

**UJ:**

What is parental contribution to improve teaching and learning in school?

**HT:**

I have not seen a lot of that here this year. Mostly parents are concerned when things are questionable or when they don't understand a letter or a grade. As far as parents being involved in that, this doesn't happen much here. I think they rely on the students because it's High School and they rely on them to take up all of that. They figure that if they're in school all day, they must be learning.

**UJ:**

Do teachers involve parents as stakeholders with them to improve learning?

**HT:**

I don't think so. I think most of these students would rather their parents not know what's going on. Life is just easier that way (laughs). But teachers do keep parents in the loop. They do, actually most of the teachers over here get in contact with the parents through sms, email

or sometimes they call them and set a meeting with the parents if they are concerned about the students like why his graph is falling down, so both the parties get involved more often.

**UJ:**

Are teachers encouraged to network with practitioners in other schools, organization and community?

**HT:**

Yes, I would say so. This is the situation where web-based teaching comes into place. There's no local intranet or local network or message board where they can collaborate with each other. There's a lot of resources online where teachers can share their ideas, where they can share their lesson plans with each other, so I do encourage that kind of exposure and that kind of involvement ultimately leads to their professional development. But I think leader's role is really important here to encourage and nurture the environment in this regard.

**UJ:**

Describe what do you see as the key responsibilities of teachers in your school?

**HT:**

I would say it is all about preparing our next generation, enabling them to pass every exam in life ... but honestly and unfortunately most of the time they come from busy in preparing them for examination results and grades. Parents expect good grades as the most important outcome from schools.

**UJ:**

To what extent is student voice heard and given importance in school matters?

**HT:**

At this level, at 'O' and 'A' Levels we don't have them fill out survey forms for teachers but informally they do impact. The school management does encourage the students to keep us updated about the teachers' progress, I myself have discussions with primarily 'A' Level students, about what they think about the faculty, and how they view their classes and what problems they are facing in their individual classes, so student voice is important, but if we hear too many complaints coming about a teacher, those matters are looked into seriously, and that is definitely a two way process. The children in Pakistan are very intelligent. They are very high in learning power. And now, even when the rote system is declining, they still have better memories. And they can do a lot better; if only they stop their carelessness ... then they are geniuses. If you look at the other countries, Canada, or US, or UK ... even in universities abroad, these children, Asians, are on the top and achieve Roll of Honors. There are so many examples. While living in Pakistan, the same triangles come in action. If teachers and parents put in effort, these children can go a long way. But teachers are sometimes overburdened and ... umm ... teachers are also human beings - they are also wrong at many occasions. But on many occasions, they feel that by virtue of being teachers they cannot be wrong, and will not admit their mistake, even when the child is right. Sometimes children are right and we should not discourage them from speaking out. We should hear them, and reason with them logically, and satisfy them. And if they are right, then we should not be hesitant about admitting our

wrong. In Pakistan now, our emerging school systems have teachers who listen to children, but mostly the typical attitude of the teachers is to not listen.

**UJ:**

To what extent is the concept of student leadership prevalent in school? And do you think your school prepares them for real world challenges, how?

**HT:**

Well, in some cases we have our 'A' Level students acting as TA's (teacher assistants) and helping them in their spare time. We don't have that much of TA-ship in 'A' Levels because like I said the visiting faculty tends to come and deliver a lecture and leave, but from senior teachers' point of view, it's important. Depends on teacher to teacher, but myself as a teacher, I would encourage the students to be active participants in such stuff and I encourage their feedback. Sometimes, it is helpful to get insight on teachers who tend to hide their shortcomings, because obviously they are not professionals in the field and they feel that their reputation may be undermined. Students volunteer but there are more opportunities in public speaking activities and other co-curricular activities. In the name of the school, the students contribute a lot.

**UJ:**

How do you motivate your staff and students to establish a collaborative learning environment in school?

**HT:**

Well, I think, letting people internalize that vision and let it not be a lying placard on the school walls or the classroom walls. At the time of hiring, at the school events and other activities, people are not to be taken on task. Team building activities are vital. I think any faculty member can be the stakeholder in this dialogue, as far as the “key”, obviously the higher administration has the key role to play, the vice principal, the co-ordinators and senior teachers are the key stakeholders and these are the people who take your vision forward ... Yes, I think, if you get untrained teachers in the school and unprofessionalism is there, those people can ruin the school ethos, the vision and the mission, but those people get noticed very easily, and if counselling doesn’t work, then they more often than not find themselves leaving the schools.

**UJ:**

Are there any challenges that you come across while trying to establish an environment where all stakeholders are at par to improve teaching and learning in schools?

**HT:**

Oh, yes! There’s always resistance. Change is pretty well accepted here unless it doesn’t make sense. And justifying that change has to be done in a way that can be accepted and then the transition is smooth. That’s about it. The challenges are there, where we consider the ‘uniformity’ among the key stakeholders. The teachers who are less serious and unprofessional, getting them to be motivated in viewing the student’s progress in terms of a

liability, which is a challenge we face. Creating a culture of accountability is a huge challenge, because I cannot have eyes and ears around the campus at any given time, so I rely on various modes of feedback which come to me, and in terms of politics of how teachers view their superiors, controlling that kind of political issues, senior vs. junior teachers, female vs. male teachers, fulltime vs. part time teachers, neutralizing those kind of politics is one of the biggest challenges we face in this job.

**END OF INTERVIEW**