



Rethinking Instructional Leadership in Pakistan’s Elite Schools: A Call for Indigenous Leadership Models

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ABSTRACT

This opinion paper makes a case for the need to develop indigenous instructional leadership models through Pakistani elite schools that challenge the use of Western leadership models. This reveals some significant cultural misalignments between the imported leadership models and the local educational scenario, needing leadership techniques rooted in Pakistani norms and high academic standards. This paper presents the fundamental building blocks of indigenous models of leadership that are culturally, organisationally, and contextually relevant to Pakistan. We discuss an implementation framework that guides awareness of obstacles and stakeholder roles and underscores the importance of systematic evaluation mechanisms. The study proposes recommendations with respect to policymaking, research initiatives and capacity-building programmes that will facilitate effective transformation. The paper argues that indigenous leadership models could contribute to educational effectiveness by bringing academic excellence and cultural authenticity to educational leadership and potentially influencing educational leadership practices outside elite schools to the advantage of Pakistan’s educational system.



Introduction

Elite schools in Pakistan’s instructional leadership is entangled between imported Western modes of instructional leadership and local educational needs. With superior infrastructure, higher academic standards, and more financial resources than their counterparts in developing countries historically, education institutions have embraced leadership approaches developed in Western

educational contexts (Rauf, Muhammad, & Yousaf, 2024). While such models have enhanced academic excellence in their respective fields, they fail to account for the unique milieu of Pakistani culture and social and educational environment (Rauf, Muhammad, & Siddique, 2024)

Pakistan's elite schools are a special part of schooling, catering to the urban upper-middle and affluent strata. These institutions influence the education conversation in our country. Their practices, therefore, are of the utmost importance to Pakistan's educational advancement because of the influential nature of their leadership instruction models (Haidar, 2019).

However, the propensity to use the Western leadership framework is problematic mainly because it challenges its viability and worth in the Pakistani context. These imported theoretical models are very sophisticated in their theoretical underpinnings. Still, they, unfortunately, tend to neglect localized cultural complexity, religious values, and social expectations (Akanji et al., 2020). This is most evident in teacher-administrative relationships, as well as parent and community involvement, which are significantly upended by local cultural norms and social structures.

This paper argues that there is an urgent call for developing and implementing indigenous instructional leadership models compatible with Pakistan's educational context and strict in maintaining high standards of academic excellence. Such models would include local wisdom, cultural values, and social practices while relating to principles of global education leadership (Lahmar, 2020). In this paper, we do not seek to reject international best practices but to foster culturally responsive leadership approaches that speak to Pakistan's educational stakeholders.

The scope of this analysis encompasses several key dimensions: An examination of current leadership practices in Pakistani elite schools, with an identification of their limitations, together with the cultural and contextual factors necessitating the indigenous form of models and the framework elements of culturally appropriate leadership forms. Through this paper, the authors aim to contribute to a discursive process of educational leadership in non-western contexts and offer practical insights for school leaders, policymakers and educational researchers in Pakistan.

Since Pakistan has, in recent years, started asking questions about its identity, quality, and relevance in an increasingly globalized world, this analysis deserves to be selective since we are in a critical era considering the current state of Pakistan's education sector. Developing leadership models for indigenous leadership in Pakistan's elite schools is not an activity pursued for academic purposes alone but is essential to education leadership in those schools in ways that are culturally resonant.

Current Landscape of Instructional Leadership in Pakistani Elite Schools

The current practices of Pakistani elite school instructional leadership are primarily oriented towards Western educational models (mostly British and American) and hold school administration practice as an Achilles heel. Imported approaches, however, have become deeply embedded in school operations and have greatly impacted leadership style, the decision-making process, and the organizational culture. The prevailing leadership approaches centre on data-based determinations, standardized assessment systems and corporate-like management structures.

Structurally, these models are Western-specific and can be almost entirely explained through hierarchical systems in which principals become executors, often almost exclusively, because their front-and-centre focus is on measuring outcomes and administrative efficiency (Masood et al., 2024; Nawab & Quraishi, 2024). Typically, such approaches entail strategic planning cycles, formal teacher evaluation systems, or standardized professional development programmes (Abid & Munir, 2024; Akram et al., 2024; Begum et al., 2025). Moreover, elite schools have likewise embraced corporate management techniques, focusing on performance indicators and quality

assurance systems and constantly searching for international standards to compare, benchmark, and compete (Shahid, 2023).

Current practice, however, pays little heed to implementation in the wider sense. In curriculum leadership, the demand is usually drawn from international examination boards; Cambridge and International Baccalaureate programmes, among others, are very popular. Teacher development focuses on formal certification, international training programmes, and professional development frameworks that follow the standard. The student assessment systems are largely Western in character, including continuous assessment, standardized testing, and portfolio-based evaluation. Formal and structured parent engagement and outreach models are shared among schools within Western education institutions and often spread the adoption of such models into school–community relations.

These existing approaches have achieved notable achievements. The models have been implemented by elite schools that have consistently produced top academic results, attracted global recognition, and ensured that students gain admittance to high-end universities worldwide. The systematic approach to school management has led to efficient operations, standardized quality measures, and a clear accountability structure.

However, many limitations and challenges to the current implementation remain. Western-centric leadership models often generate cultural fit alternations between school leadership and local key stakeholders. However, the Pakistani tradition of relationship building, collective thinking, and religious concerns often contradict the Western model's more individualistic and secular ways. Furthermore, these imported systems sometimes fail to tackle the problems facing local educational issues, such as bilingual programmes, cultural preservation, and the community's expectations towards moral education (Kaur & Mohammad, 2020).

However, though corporate management is efficient, it sometimes creates tension in the educational background. Teachers note evidence of reduced autonomy in classroom practises and state that they see themselves as not involved in decision-making processes. Parent engagement can too quickly become formulaic and cause the loss of authentic family involvement in Pakistani society.

Most importantly, current leadership practice does not utilize indigenous knowledge systems and local educational wisdom (Hammad et al., 2024; Iqbal et al., 2024; Mansoor et al., 2024). Lessons learned from international best practices are necessary, but they come at the expense of neglecting culturally responsive leadership approaches that could enhance educational effectiveness in the Pakistani context.

This analysis of elite school operations indicates several culturally disconnected but efficient leadership models (Rauf et al., 2021). These approaches have some advantages, but some limitations suggest the need for a more equitable, culturally responsive leadership structure that better serves the Pakistani educational context.

The Case for Indigenous Leadership Models

Due to culturally disparate disconnects and the context in which it operates, an indigenous leadership model for Pakistan's elite schools is a compelling need. When imported leadership models are implemented, there are significant tensions in school communities, significantly where local cultural values and education expectations vary from Western norms. The cultural disconnect can be seen in school leadership's different operational and relational aspects.

This disconnect mainly presides over school culture through institutional relationships and decision-making processes. Collective decision-making and hierarchical respect systems that are

far removed from the more individualistic approaches of Western models are norms embedded in conventional Pakistani social structures, a deviation critical to our personal and professional experience. For example, teachers and school leadership may draw heavily on the concept of 'baithak' (communal consultation) but then fail to include community elders in educational decisions, thus creating a conflict between this more informal, ad hoc approach and the more formal, kinds of structures that inform Western school leadership.

Several unique contextual factors require locally rooted leadership solutions (Abdollahi & Karimi, 2013; Ciotti et al., 2018; Nguyễn et al., 2018). The decisive role of extended family networks in making educational decisions is a key characteristic of socio-cultural considerations but is notably absent from Western education models. Pakistani parents and family members, including extended family members, expect a significantly more significant role in school operations than is commonly supported by Western leadership frameworks. Pakistani education is a function of religious and moral values, and Islamic ethical principles should guide educational objectives and leadership practice, which are often absent in secular Western models.

Another important area is language and communication patterns, which are intrinsically complex and require an indigenous solution. Pakistan's elite schools operate in multilingual environments that are divided in nature and on which English, Urdu, and regional languages redound. As pinged by Malik and Ahmed (2024), how do you lean into instructional leadership at the same time as positioning yourself in a game of linguistic Jenga, balancing between academic integrity and your own cultural authenticity? However, the standard Western models for leadership dynamics seldom narrate this kind of story.

Developing locally developed leadership approaches has enough benefits. Improved cultural relevance would enable school leaders to more closely align education with what the community expects and values. Studies of schools using local leadership practices found improvements in stakeholder satisfaction and better community engagement (Leechman et al., 2019). Leadership that portrays local cultural norms and values creates more stakeholders' buy-in and more sustainable education initiatives.

Additionally, leadership models that successfully bridge global educational standards and the local cultural context produce better educational outcomes. Schools that have successfully integrated indigenous leadership practice within the international academic standards have outperformed those adhering strictly to the usual and common models of the West. (da Silva et al., 2024; Khalifa et al., 2019).

However, the integration of indigenous leadership models is addressing a 'culture sustainability gap' within Pakistani education, namely, that gap which involves the desire to keep and promote indigenous cultural values alongside the ambition of achieving educational excellence. This balance is especially critical in the case of the schools which preserve this balance and are treated as education role models for other schools in the country.

On this basis, the case for indigenous leadership models is founded on practical and theoretical foundations. Thus, these models will be able to provide culturally appropriate, more effective and sustainable educational leadership practices that can also support the idiosyncrasies of elite Pakistani schools without compromising the promise of better academic results. This is not an academic exercise of creating models like this but is actually a growth of Pakistani leaders with regard to education.

Core Elements of Indigenous Leadership Models

Local contexts need to be preserved to ensure educational excellence and shape indigenous

leadership attributes to develop indigenous leadership models for leadership in Pakistani elite schools. They need insight that focuses on cultural, organizational, and pedagogical issues. These core elements need to be managed carefully, deliberately providing a serious framework for fulfilling local demand in education and aligning with globally established standards.

Cultural Foundations

Key elements of the cultural foundations of indigenous leadership models must be incorporated. Second, the ideals of Islamic ethics play a prominent role in shaping the approaches to leadership. Concepts such as ‘adl’ (justice), ‘shura’ (consultation), and ‘Amanah’ (trustworthiness) form the basis for ethical leadership in an educational context (Kriger & Seng, 2005). This aligns with local expectations and universal values practical for educational leadership.

Another crucial foundation of South Asian culture is South Asian leadership traditions. Although the concept of ‘guru shishya parampara’ (mentor-mentor relationship) is subcontinental, it offers useful points about modern instructional leadership. Traditional knowledge transmission and leadership development methods could be extended to contemporary educational settings. Similarly, leadership frameworks must include respect for izzat (an honour), collective decision-making, and understanding harmony in the community (Rafiki, 2020).

Organizational Components

The indigenous leadership model’s organizational structure is attentive to local dynamics. However, it preserves institutional efficiency. Traditional concepts of ‘jirga’ (council) and ‘mashwara’ (consultation) should be adapted for formal school governance and should be included within collaborative decision-making structures of formal school governance. Those schools that adopt these traditional decision-making processes achieve better stakeholder engagement and more effective policy implementation (Hadijah, 2024).

Pakistani society is strongly familial and social, so it is important that community engagement mechanisms encapsulate these pillars. In a “concentric circles” model of community engagement, school leadership purposefully organizes various stakeholder groups in the decision-making processes, starting with immediate family and moving on to a broader community network.

A teacher empowerment approach should balance hierarchical respect towards tradition (the teacher is, after all, the authority, the one who has grown to old age, etc.) and professional autonomy, especially in classrooms. Indigenous leadership models with a successful traditional leadership model involve an ordered mentorship system and professional development with cultural sensitivity.

Pedagogical Elements

Instructional leaders need to incorporate local knowledge systems into their frameworks. This includes the recognition and use of indigenous teaching methods, cultural knowledge, and local wisdom. (Brauckmann et al., 2023). Effective instructional leadership in Pakistan must fill the gap between global educational standards and local knowledge systems.

Specific leadership approaches are necessary for bilingual instruction, as recognition of Pakistan’s linguistic landscape is remarkably complex. We must use leadership models to deal with the challenges of teaching instruction in multiple languages while maintaining academic rigor. The leadership frameworks specifically emphasizing linguistic complexity are needed to implement bilingual programmes effectively.

Cultural competency in pedagogical leadership encourages the growth of ‘cultural pedagogical intelligence’, or the capacity to lead teaching and learning that is culturally responsive and internationally educationally appropriate.

Assessment and Evaluation

In developing indigenous leadership models, evaluation systems must be shaped based on holistic measures of student development that are consistent with local values while being universally based (Brauckmann et al., 2023). In the traditional cultural contexts of Pakistani, individual achievement is not often given a high value, but collective progress with moral development and academic success.

Evaluation based on cultural competency and academic achievement - should be incorporated into culturally appropriate performance metrics. This, however, ensures that leadership effectiveness is comparable to both local expectations and global standards.

Formal evaluation processes need to be supplemented by the development of community-based accountability systems. These systems should professionally reflect local ideas of responsibility and success (Samuels, 2018). Many effective accountability systems in Pakistani schools frequently use formal evaluation measures and community-based feedback mechanisms.

These core elements constitute a foundation from which indigenous leadership models that are culturally authentic and educationally sound can be constructed. The catch is that all these elements need to be applied in ways that do not compromise the high academic standards of elite schools in a culturally authentic way, specifically in Pakistan. The correct application of theoretical foundations and practical applications is of the utmost importance in producing successful leadership models that work for both local and global educational purposes.

Implementation Framework

For indigenous leadership models to be successfully implemented in Pakistani elite schools, a carefully structured approach is needed. This approach must acknowledge not only the complexity of change but also the need for sustainable transformation. The framework must address the prerequisites for that framework, its phased implementation approach, and the existence of necessary support systems.

Prerequisites for Change

A fundamental and necessary mindset shift among key stakeholders is required before Indigenous leadership models are implemented. School leaders should first acknowledge the constraints of current Western-centric models and celebrate the applicability of indigenous ones (Santamaría & Santamaría, 2013). Such a cognitive transformation requires cultural leadership consciousness, that is, recognizing that local cultural contexts can foster educational excellence, not only hinder it.

These are comprehensive orientation and training programmes for stakeholder preparation. New leadership models require at least 6–12 months of well-thought-out preparatory work with administrators, teachers, and community leaders. Resistance potential must be considered while building understanding and support for indigenous approaches, and this preparation must be done.

Resource allocation is another key prerequisite. Schools need to invest heavily in three main areas: professional development training, community engagement, and documentation systems. These investments solidify institutional commitment while providing the required impetus for implementation.

There is a need for cultural audit. Initial assessment and planning should involve addressing the cardinal sin of cultural auditing of existing leadership practices, assessing stakeholder needs, comparing current and desired leadership models, and developing school-specific implementation plans.

Pilot programmes are vital testing grounds for new approaches to leadership. A starting point of indigenous leadership models in specific departments or areas of the school once they are ready for broad implementation. A process such as this allows the practice experience to adjust and iterate in a low-institutional friction environment.

Support Systems

Robust support systems are required for effective implementation. Indigenous leadership principles need to be built into redesigning professional development programmes. According to Khan (2023), the significance of developing what he calls cultural leadership competency through structured training programmes that blend theoretical knowledge with practical application.

Implementations must be tracked, so a tracking research and documentation system is created. Systematic documentation is very important in capturing best practices and finding solutions to challenging problems. Elite schools implementing indigenous models should establish 'cultural leadership networks'. These networks provide a platform for sharing experiences, support for collaborative problem-solving, continuous improvement resources and professional support systems.

In addition, the implementation framework needs to accommodate the characteristics of elite schools. Such institutions frequently find themselves under the extraordinary pressures of university admissions about international recognition. The implementation process must be academic excellence, but it must introduce indigenous leadership. There is a balance required to keep high academic standards and authentically integrate local cultural elements.

Indeed, for indigenous leadership models to have a chance, they need to be sustained and have systematic efforts. This helps to structure the challenges and possibilities as to how the leadership practices in Pakistani elite schools can be transitioned. However, with careful attention to prerequisites, a phased implementation of reforms, and support systems for the students and schools, the effective transition to new, more culturally appropriate and educationally effective leadership models can be accomplished.

Potential Challenges and Mitigation Strategies

Indigenous leadership models must be implemented at Pakistani elite schools, and some key challenges to implementing them must be carefully considered as there must be the need to develop strategic measures to surmount these challenges. For effective change in leadership practices in retaining educational excellence, it is necessary to understand and handle these challenges.

Most probably, the biggest resistance to change emerges at various levels of institutions. Indigenous leadership models, as suggested, are likely to be cumbersome at best since school administrators are often concerned about the loss of such institutions' global competitiveness or international accreditation status in undertaking such steps. The stakeholders see this more in elite schools, where placements in international universities are one yardstick to success. Since such resistance exists, it is crucial to have a clear means to illustrate that indigenous leadership models can support international standards as opposed to challenging them.

Teacher resistance, then, is usually found on the basis of professional autonomy and concerns about evaluation systems. This makes teachers in elite schools concerned that indigenous leadership processes theoretically might have subjective evaluation criteria or violate the professional standards they gained from Western programmes to acquire their techniques. In order for this resistance to be countered, professional culture bridging is necessary to show how indigenous leadership ways can enhance change, not impede it within professional practice.

Usually, resistance by parents arises concerning whether children will be harmed educationally and would resist university admissions. Of course, indigenous leadership models could be perceived by elite school parents who have deeply invested in their children's education to be potentially risky detours from tried-and-true Western ways. Reservations to engage in this type of programme can be mitigated through parent engagement programmes that show the benefits of culturally responsive leadership.

The other problem is the constraints of resources. There are financial costs associated with professional development, community engagement systems and documentation systems when implementing new leadership models. The identification and development of 'new' leaders, who will help in bridging the old with the new in education, have a particular need in schools. Implementing time requirements is also often involved in already busy school schedules. It will require a model that combines implementation activities with the existing programmes in schools so as to reduce additional resources.

Nevertheless, ensuring the quality of service is very important in the education of elite schools. We need to maintain international standards but not at the expense of the indigenous leadership modes. Three critical areas require attention: metrics of academic excellence, leadership effectiveness, and stakeholders' satisfaction. Schools will have to develop "dual-lens evaluation systems" that evaluate international standards as well as cultural responsiveness.

Another challenge is to ensure consistency in implementation across different departments and grade levels. Implementation is only successful with thorough documentation of processes and continuous monitoring of implementation fidelity. However, balance is required in this consistency to adapt to departmental-specific needs.

New evaluation frameworks are needed to measure the effectiveness of indigenous leadership models. Metrics of academic outcomes typically are considered in traditional ways, where only these outcomes and their achievements are the focus. Ahmad (2023) argues that a substantial evaluation system should encompass quantitative and qualitative success criteria.

Because of their complexity, systematic mitigation strategies are required. However, schools must match mitigation specifically for each potential challenge. Such an approach enables institutions to stay grounded in the practicalities of implementation, navigating new obstacles as they arise without trying too hard to predict the future.

These challenges are structurally complex and interconnected and thus require the mitigation of holistic approaches that simultaneously address multiple issues whilst focusing on the centrepiece of the intervention — the creation of effective, culturally responsive leadership models. These obstacles must be reconciled to actualize indigenous leadership styles and ensure their permanence within the parameters of accepting schools of elite status.

The Role of Different Stakeholders

A great challenge is to introduce indigenous leadership models in elite schools in Pakistan, but this should be thought out, and strategies should be implemented to mitigate it. To move forward,

one needs to know the challenges and be part of the process to become part of the solution through the evolution of leadership practices and excellence in education.

With regard to this, institutional inertia at multiple levels is the most impeding factor. Pushback from the administrative side includes the fear of being a second-rate school with a sound system. School administrators who do not acknowledge such models fear that their school will forfeit its international accreditation status or its competitive edge in the global market. This is of particular concern in elite schools where international university placements are the single success metric. The making of frameworks that aid in perpetuating the indigenous leadership models rather than a threat to international standards.

In most cases, teacher concerns about professional autonomy, as well as already existing evaluation systems, are most commonly responsible for this resistance. Indigenous leadership models make elite school teachers afraid that there will be subjective evaluation criteria or procedures that undermine the principles taught in Western programmes of professional training. This resistance must be addressed, ‘professional culture bridging’, by demonstrating how indigenous leadership approaches can enable rather than constrain professional practice.

Indigenous leadership models in Pakistani elite schools can be successful only with the active participation and scheduled joint effort of multiple stakeholders, each with distinct yet related functions in the transformation process. Understanding and defining these roles is crucial for successful implementation and sustainable change.

Initiating and leading the transformation process rests firmly with school leadership. Their role encompasses three critical dimensions: change management, resource allocation and vision setting (Shaikh et al., 2023). For vision setting, school leaders must articulate a strong, determined vision that combines traditional educational values with modern excellence standards. This process is directed at the emergence of what perhaps can be called the ‘cultural excellence framework’, which shows how Indigenous leadership improves educational quality rather than the opposite.

School leadership’s change management role must be accompanied by sensitivity to institutional dynamics and stakeholder concerns. Institutional leaders need to manoeuvre through much of what is a cultural transformation while ensuring that academic and operational effectiveness continues to prosper. Managing resistance, answering concerns, and maintaining institutional momentum through the change process are all involved (Khan et al., 2020).

School leaders have ongoing resource allocation responsibilities, including strategic decisions about where to invest in new leadership approaches. They must fund costs to provide professional development, establish time for community engagement, and build needed support systems. Similarly, school leaders must ensure that resources are allocated according to institutional priorities but will support indigenous leadership models.

Indigenous leadership models are key to teachers’ implementation and benefit. Their role encompasses three main areas: pedagogical innovation, curriculum adaptation, and cultural integration. Teachers’ curriculum adaptation must integrate local knowledge and indigenous perspectives into their teaching with academic rigour. It needs to be as much about content as about delivery methods.

Teachers’ roles as pedagogical innovators mean adapting teaching methods from traditional to modern education practices. This consists of trying different pedagogical methods, recording effective practices, and advising colleagues. These teachers must also work to include cultural elements in their teaching practises not to diminish educational effectiveness but to boost it.

Parents and community members are essential stakeholders in the implementation process. Their roles include providing support and help, cultural resources, and suggestions about implementation efforts. The active engagement dimension entails supporting and participating in school activities and decision-making in areas where cultural values and educational practices meet (Leithwood, 2021).

However, sharing cultural resources with parents and community members enriches the implementation process with authentic, pragmatic views. Sharing traditional knowledge, cultural practises, and community wisdom can include how knowledge can inform the leadership approach. Parent community members, or wherever they may be community members, are involved with deciding what schools can provide to the community in terms of feedback provision.

Stakeholder engagement is very effective if information is conveyed and coordinated effectively to everybody. For schools to be successful, structured approaches to stakeholder engagement must recognize and respect the roles of different groups with a focus on educational excellence. Regular communication channels, feedback mechanisms and opportunities for collaborative decision-making are all part of this.

Implementing these indigenous leadership models of success requires all the stakeholders to know and fulfil their roles collaboratively by working towards common goals. This collaborative approach allows implementation efforts to reflect educational excellence, cultural authenticity, and all stakeholders' needs.

These stakeholder roles are dynamic roles that need to be reviewed and adjusted quite often as implementation gets underway. In schools, the role definition should be flexible, and the responsibility and expectations should be noted. In order to maintain institutional stability throughout the entire transformation period, there has to be balance in the current situation.

The other big challenge is resource constraints. Costs for reading, professional development, community engagement, and systems of documentation need to be made up on the financial side of implementing new leadership models. In more specific terms, the demand for human resources is very high since the schools must identify and devise means for the development of leaders who will bridge the new and the old leadership paradigms. The implementation often requires time, preventing it from fitting within the already busy school schedule. Existing school programme activities must be combined with implementation functions in resource optimization to minimize additional resource demands.

In the domain of elite schools, specific attention is required on the quality assurance aspect. This, however, should be done but with caution regarding the balance that must exist between the maintenance of international standards and indigenous leadership models. Special attention needs to be paid to three of the critical areas: leadership effectiveness measure, academic excellence metric, and stakeholder satisfaction indicator. Schools require the development of 'dual-lens systems' of evaluation based on ascertaining international standards and cultural responsiveness.

New evaluation frameworks of the effectiveness of indigenous leadership models are required. Just because a culturally responsive leader is using culturally responsive strategies does not mean that they are going to succeed on traditional measures of academic outcomes. The development of broad evaluation systems encompassing both quantitative and qualitative indicators of success.

To develop successful, culturally responsive leadership models, interrelated complexity and multiple challenges must be dealt with concurrently and holistically. Implementation efforts aimed at achieving these challenges have often been successful in determining the overall effectiveness of

implementation efforts and ensuring the long-term sustainability of indigenous leadership approaches within school contexts.

Success Indicators and Evaluation Mechanisms

This study needs a systematic evaluation mechanism that could be used to assess the short-, medium-- and long-term impacts of the implementation of these indigenous leadership models on the schools in which they are implemented and, by extension, on the students within those schools. Such evaluation systems involve the blending of local cultural values and international educational standards with quantitative metrics and qualitative assessments.

Short-term focus concerns indicators that relate to implementation milestones in the short run and early evaluation of results. Stakeholder engagement levels provide early key feedback regarding the acceptance of the new leadership and the effectiveness of the leadership. These can include a parent-school interaction, attendance in a feedback session, and decisions made by people at the influencing level. Milestones for early implementation are benchmark metrics used to measure progress against planned goals, such as completion of training programmes, establishment of new organizational structures and cultural integration initiatives.

Provides good implementation feedback and identifies needs for modification early on. That includes seeking structured feedback from administrators, teachers, parents, and students at every level regarding their experience with new leadership approaches. Then, as the process unfolds, these early indicators help school leaders to see and address obstacles to successful implementation while moving ahead in the change process. These include academic performance tracking, measuring levels of student engagement, and assessing teacher effectiveness in using new leadership strategies. Thirdly, the satisfaction levels of a community are able to provide valuable feedback to the leadership practises concerning the expectations and values on which they are founded. Cultural integration metrics may also look at the extent to which schools have adapted local values and practises into educational excellence. Such measures may involve evaluations of how decision-making processes, communication patterns, and leadership practices differ from the benchmark of cultural responsiveness.

Metrics of education excellence must demonstrate that models of indigenous leadership enhance rather than degrade academic excellence. They include tracking traditional academic metrics, but they also include a wider metric of educational success that includes cultural values and community expectations. The challenge is to create what you might call 'culturally relevant success metrics' that indicate both cultural integration and academic success.

How well schools defend and disseminate local social values in the pursuit of educational excellence is also judged by cultural preservation metrics. They may encompass metrics such as integration of cultural practices into quotidian school functioning, cultural value preservation in contemporary schooling contexts, or complex approaches to culturally aware leadership practice.

When we want to measure the effectiveness of that implementation, success indicators and evaluation mechanisms must go hand in hand so as to obtain a comprehensive estimate of how effective that implementation has been. This lies in, during the system design for evaluation, the rigid adherence to both quantitative and qualitative criteria as a way to measure and quantify the full extension of indigenous leadership models' impact within the school, both in the operational and the resultant sense.

Assessment frameworks undergo periodic reviews and adaptations to ensure that they remain relevant and effective. However, schools require flexibility in how they assess and consistency in what gets measured. This balance enables evaluation systems like this to be generative in the

service of ongoing enhancement of the core practice of leadership, coupled with a strong sensitivity to cultural relevance and educational quality.

These evaluation systems need to be devised and implemented for them to succeed in transforming the leadership practises in Pakistani elite schools.

Recommendations and Way Forward

The transformative role of leadership in the instructional domain of elite schools in Pakistan is the dire need of the hour and will require coordinated policy directions and system-level research interventions along with targeted approaches in system capacity building. These recommendations are intended to provide support for the establishment of a sustainable model of indigenous leadership without sacrificing educational excellence.

These policy recommendations tackle several institutional levels. Such policies of school leadership should focus on creating frameworks that seek to embed cultural values in leadership practices alongside the development of academic standards. It implies giving rules to be followed while making decisions and managing stakeholders and performance evaluated, to a certain extent, through the national culture tempered by international education objectives.

Such policies should include modifying criteria for granting accreditation by including the integration of culture-sensitive leadership attributes and setting objectives in the measurement of academic achievement alongside objectives in cultural integration.

Policy changes should also anticipate the development of professional standards that are in line with local cultural contexts and meet international educational needs.

The provision of an enabling policy environment for indigenous leadership development must be facilitated by government authorities. This includes promoting new styles of leadership in elite schools by determining where they are in the world, providing the membership with funds for research and development, and enabling coordination between educational facilities that utilize practices of indigenous leadership design.

Systematic documentation and analysis of indigenous leadership practice must be at the core of the research agenda for indigenous leadership. Such support comes through studying how existing successful Pakistani school practises influence educational outcomes, the impact of cultural integration on educational outcomes, and building theoretical frameworks that embrace indigenous leadership in educational development. Instead of researching failure points in delivering excellence, we need to learn more about how cultural values support rather than hinder educational excellence.

There is a need to assess the immediate and long-term impacts of indigenous leadership models. Such evaluation should include academic outcomes, stakeholder satisfaction, and cultural preservation. It should also research how different school contexts affect the implementation and effectiveness of indigenous leadership approaches. Ongoing research will be needed to develop and refine the model. This included studying how indigenous leadership models evolve, successful adaptation strategies, and procedures for implementing this model in various school contexts.

Building leadership capabilities that can bridge cultural understanding with training excellence requires a focus on capacity building. School leaders must be ready to respond to the indigenous leadership models and, at the same time, high academic standards. A combination of theoretical understanding and practical implementation skills should be used in these programmes.

Teacher training initiatives will need to support the implementation of indigenous leadership approaches. This includes enhancing teachers' cultural competency by developing their capability

of integrating local values in teaching practises and increasing teachers' capacity for committing to a culturally responsive leadership system (Oloo & Kiramba, 2022).

Effective stakeholder participation requires formal community engagement protocols. These include well-ordered protocols for community engagement, communication strategies reflecting local social norms, and a framework to promote collective decision-making.

Conclusion

One of the fundamental challenges of contemporary education in Pakistani elite schools has been transforming instructional leadership. This paper calls for indigenous leadership models that embrace local cultural values while also achieving educational excellence.

We argue that the distinct context of Pakistani education is rarely taken into consideration in existing Western-oriented leadership models that generate academic success. Central to the argument for indigenous leadership models is the requirement to disrupt current systems and for indigenous and non-indigenous leaders to offer culturally responsive and quality learning through the creation of inclusive educational environments. The process of implementing indigenous leadership models must, therefore, consider multiple factors: Organizational structures, cultural foundations, stakeholder engagement, and evaluation systems. Clear target setting, systematic planning, a thorough understanding of stakeholder engagement, and an effective evaluation system help turn the implementation ambition into reality.

Indigenous education models can generate learning environments closer to local educational needs and aid students in meeting the requirements for global practice. Generally, these models lie in between schools that are academically strong and culturally authentic and schools that are excellent and preserve the culture of certain people.

This is a journey, not a destination, as we work toward indigenous models of leadership. It is vital for schools to keep iterating and adjusting and improvements from lessons learnt in response to changing educational needs. How this happens will depend on the sustained commitment of all those involved and on systematic efforts to explore and implement pragmatic leadership approaches.

The indigenous leadership is restoring transformative potential to become Pakistan at the national level of an extensive education system. These models illustrate that cultural values can assist, not impede, the attainment of educational excellence and provide a framework for more productive and culturally responsive educational leadership practices nationwide.

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