

Authentic Leadership and Teacher Voice in Decision-Making: A Quantitative Study of Secondary School Teachers in Punjab, Pakistan

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between authentic leadership and teacher voice behaviours in secondary schools of Punjab, Pakistan. The data were collected from 312 classroom teachers of twenty-four (24) secondary schools using the quantitative cross sectional survey design. Simple linear regression, hierarchical regression, independent samples t-tests, and moderated regression analyses were applied. Results showed that there was a strong positive correlation between authentic leadership and teacher. Promotive voice was most strongly predicted by the individual subscale of self-awareness and relational transparency. Authentic leadership–voice relationship was significantly moderated by psychological safety, and the relationship was much stronger when psychological safety was high. The relationship was also significantly influenced by sector of the school (public/private), by gender, and by teaching experience. The findings offer theoretically defensible and empirically sound support to the role of authentic leadership in fostering teacher voice and have direct implications for teacher leadership development, institutional culture change and Pakistan educational policy and similar settings. A cross-sectional survey design with a quantitative approach was used and a total of 312 classroom teachers in 24 secondary schools participated in data collection. Five hypotheses were tested using simple linear regression, hierarchical regression, independent samples t-tests and moderated regression analyses.

Keywords: authentic leadership; teacher voice; decision-making; psychological safety; secondary schools; Punjab Pakistan; educational leadership

Introduction

The willingness and capability of teachers to actively propose ideas, express concerns, and input into the decision-making processes of a school is commonly accepted as a key indicator of school well-

being, teacher trust, and learning potential (Morrison, 2014; Ingersoll and Strong, 2011). However, in most education systems, especially those characterized by hierarchical systems of authority and compliance-based systems of accountability, teacher involvement in significant decision-making is minimal. The question of what facilitates or inhibits teacher voice is thus of theoretical and practical importance.

Authentic leadership theory can provide a good explanatory approach to this question. Avolio and Gardner (2005) came up with the definition of authentic leaders who possess self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced decision-making, and internalized moral values, which establish an environment that encourages psychological safety and follower engagement. These attributes in school, can be converted into principal and peer leadership behaviours that embody authentic interest, welcome candid discussion, and are indicative of an institutional willingness to listen to the teachers. Western studies have found that authentic leadership is associated with more organizational trust, employee voice, and commitment (Banks et al., 2016; Walumbwa et al., 2008), but the relationship between authentic leadership and teacher voice in Pakistani schools has not been investigated empirically.

The secondary school system in Pakistan is marked by the dominance of the principals, a centralized system of curriculum management, and a wide range of institutional culture in public and privately-run schools (Ali and Ahmad, 2022; Khan et al., 2020). These characteristics render it a theoretically informative setting to test whether the authentic leadership traits at individual level suffice in predicting teacher voice, or whether institutional moderators like psychological safety, sector of school, gender, and experience influence the factors in which authentic leadership is converted to participative behaviour.

Research Gap

Although the authentic leadership research has expanded significantly in the last two decades, few studies have investigated the direct connection between authentic leadership at the teacher level and voice behaviour (Gardner et al., 2011; Tran and Nguyen, 2022). The current literature mainly emphasizes the leadership at the level of principals and the outcomes of the follower's commitment or satisfaction instead of the constructs of agency and voice of teachers. Authentic leadership-voice relationship has no comparative public-private studies in Pakistani learning research, nor does the study of demographic moderators like gender and experience. This paper addresses these gaps with a multi-hypothesis, systematic, and quantitative design.

Problem Statement

The institutional contexts that teachers in Pakistan work in often inhibit professional voice by employing hierarchical forms of management, examination-based workload and insufficient participation arrangements. Although there is increasing agreement about the significance of teacher agency to school improvement and teacher wellbeing, the leadership circumstances that support or limit teacher voice are not well understood in this respect. Professional development programs and governance changes cannot be accurately aimed without empirical evidence of the mechanisms relating authentic leadership actions to voice results. This paper presents such evidence in a form of rigorous quantitative analysis.

Significance of the Study

The study is relevant to the field of educational leadership because it presents one of the initial empirical studies of the authentic leadership teacher voice interaction in a Pakistani secondary school context. Theoretically, it enriches the authentic leadership theory by challenging it as a predictor of a multi-dimensional outcome teacher voice as opposed to the more conventional outcomes trust or

job performance. In practice, it offers school administrators, professional development coordinators, and policymakers empirically based suggestions of how they can create institutional conditions that facilitate teacher participation. It methodologically uses a multi-analytic strategy, which provides both main-effect and interaction information, providing the field with more advanced information than single-regression methods that are typical in similar studies.

Research Objectives

1. To investigate a relationship between authentic leadership and teacher voice behaviour in secondary schools.
2. To compare the level of teacher voice in the public and private secondary schools.
3. To determine the moderating influences of school sector, gender and teaching experience on the authentic leadership-teacher voice association.
4. To determine the authentic leadership subscales that best predict promotive, prohibitive, and affective voices dimensions.

Research Questions

1. How is there a connection between authentic leadership and teacher voice in Pakistani secondary schools?
2. Do we find any important variations in teacher voice between public and private secondary schools?
3. Is the relationship between authentic leadership and teacher voice moderated by psychological safety and what are the moderating effects of school sector, gender, and teaching experience?

Literature Review

Real Leadership: Theory

Positive organizational behaviour scholarship gave rise to an authentic leadership theory in reaction to the crises of institutional trust and leadership credibility during the early 2000s (Luthans and Avolio, 2003). Avolio and Gardner (2005) defined the four main aspects of the theory as self-awareness presenting an authentic and not a managed self in relationships), relational transparency presenting an authentic, not a managed self in relationships), balanced processing (objectively analysing information before decision making) and internalized moral perspective (consistently aligning behaviour with ethical values). These elements have been operationalized by means of Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ) which has been tested by Walumbwa et al. (2008) with various cultural backdrops.

The use of meta-analytic synthesis by Banks et al. (2016) in their study that used 99 studies to investigate the relationship between authentic leadership and follower trust ($r = .58$), organizational commitment ($r = .52$), and job performance ($r = .46$) has validated that psychological capital is a significant mediating variable in this relationship. Berkovich and Eyal (2021) further applied them to school environments, reporting positive associations between principal authentic leadership and teacher psychological wellbeing, whereas Leithwood et al. (2020) found authentic leadership attributes as elements of effective school leadership in global environments.

Teacher Voice: Dimensions and Determinants

According to Morrison (2014), employee voice is the active expression of ideas, concerns, and information aimed at affecting the organizational operations. In education, teacher voice has three dimensions, which are analytically distinct, namely promotive voice exchanging constructive ideas on how school can improve, prohibitive voice making concerns over practices that can harm staff or

students, and affective voice expressing emotional reactions to school experiences as an authentic communication of a professional) (Liang et al., 2012). These differences have practical implications since the different types of voices imply varying perceived risk as well as enabling conditions. Critical approaches to teacher voice, based on Freire (2000) and Apple (2004) viewpoints, stress that voice is never merely a personal ability but is mediated by institutional power dynamics which define legitimacy of speech as a legitimate professional contribution. Particularly in Pakistani secondary schools, research has reported that school-level authoritarianism of the principal, the pressure to perform well in exams, and insecurity around contracts often negate the willingness of teachers to speak out or resist institutional practices (Ali and Ahmad, 2022; Khan et al., 2020). Those contextual aspects render the importance of authentic leadership in facilitating voice as theoretically significant and practically pressing.

Psychological Safety

Psychological safety was defined by Edmondson (1999) as a common understanding that the risk-taking in interpersonal relationship such as expressing ideas, posing questions or raising concerns, will not be penalized or mocked. The psychological safety at the school level has been associated with more teacher innovation, collaborative learning, and readiness to voice concerns (Frazier et al., 2017; Newman et al., 2017). The theoretical process that links authentic leadership and psychological safety is that leaders model vulnerability and self-disclosure: when leaders express their vulnerability and their own imperfection, they create an impression that the institution is a safe place to express authenticity (Avolio and Gardner, 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008).

This research will consider psychological safety as a moderator, rather than a mediator, given the hypothesis that the influence of authentic leadership on voice, will be stronger in schools with high safety norms and weaker in those with low safety culture. This stance permits the exploration of structural circumstances, which restrain or enhance individual authentic expression, in line with multi-level thinking of school leadership effectiveness (Marks and Printy, 2003).

Differences between Public and Private Schools

Structural differences in the Pakistani education have been consistently recorded in comparative studies of teacher autonomy, access to professional development, and organizational culture in the context of the Pakistani education system, between the public and the private school. A more institutional flexibility, closer attention to the educational results, and reduced bureaucratic overhead of governance to a less extensive degree provide the conditions that may be more favourable to genuine leadership and teacher voice in the environment of private schools (Ali and Ahmad, 2022; Noori, 2023). In contrast, the public schools are set up under the centralized systems of governance where the principals of the school are limited in their discretionary decisions concerning both pedagogy and professional practices by provincial policy frameworks (Khan et al., 2020). These structural variations drive the incorporation of school sector as a grouping variable to compare means and a moderator in regression analyses.

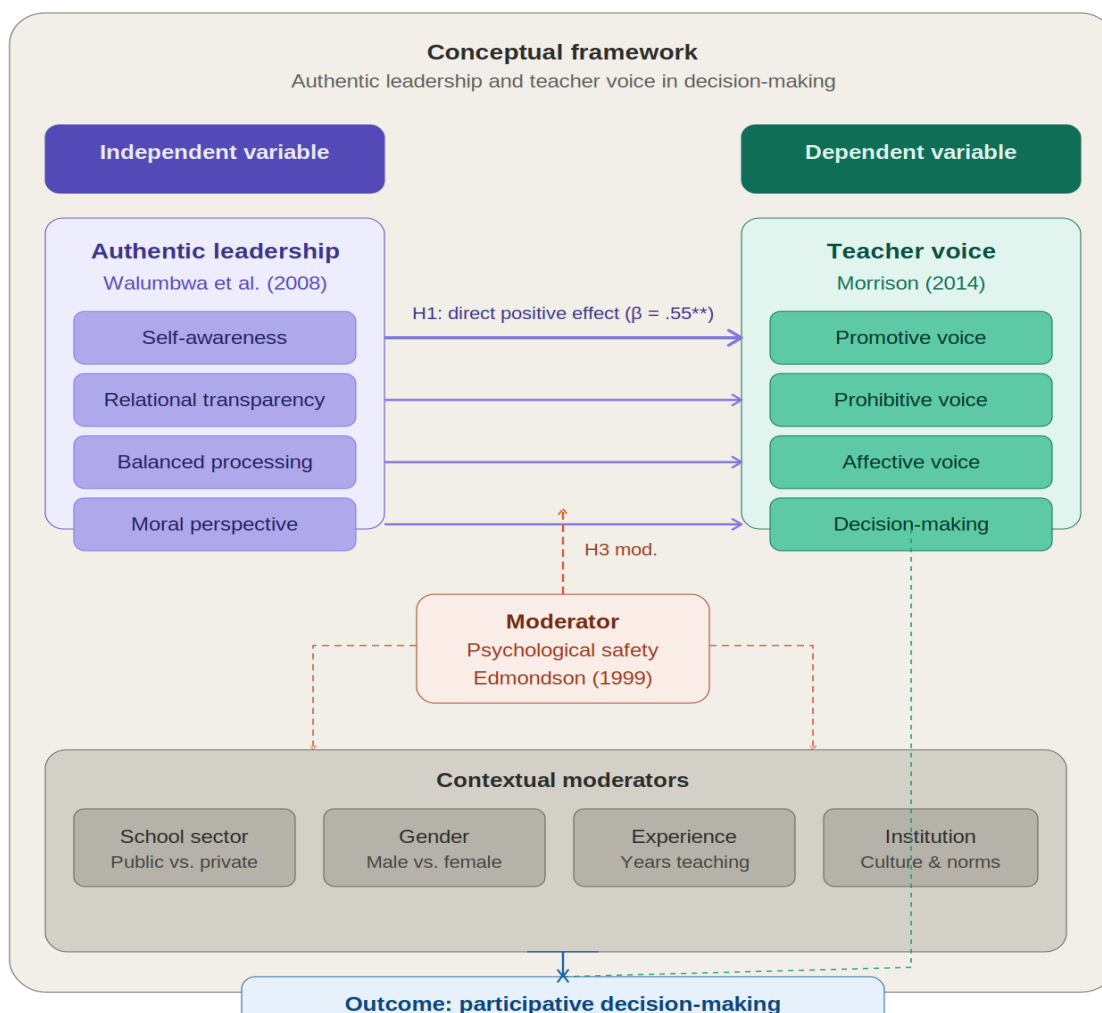
Leadership dynamics, Gender, and Experience

Gender-based studies on gender and leadership style indicate that female leaders are more likely to focus on relational and communicative aspects of leadership, whereas male leaders adhere to directive or technical aspects of leadership more often (Bada et al., 2019; Zhang, 2023). In a school setting, these trends can be translated to varying levels of impact of authentic leadership on voice outcomes, where female teachers will react more to the relational transparency and self-awareness aspects of authentic leadership. The experience of teaching has also been linked with the greater professional confidence, institutional knowledge and readiness to express concerns (Ingersoll and Strong, 2011),

which implies that more experienced teachers might be in a better position to transform the authentic leadership traits into active voice behaviour.

Conceptual Framework

The Conceptual framework of this research places the concept of authentic leadership including self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing, and internalized moral perspective as the key independent variable to predict teacher voice including promotive, prohibitive, and affective dimensions. Psychological safety is a moderator of the primary relation, whereas school sector, gender, and teaching experience are studied as other moderators. This model unites the ideas of authentic leadership of Avolio and Gardner (2005), multi-dimensional voice typology by Morrison (2014), and psychological safety construct by Edmondson (1999) in a framework of a quantitative moderation design.

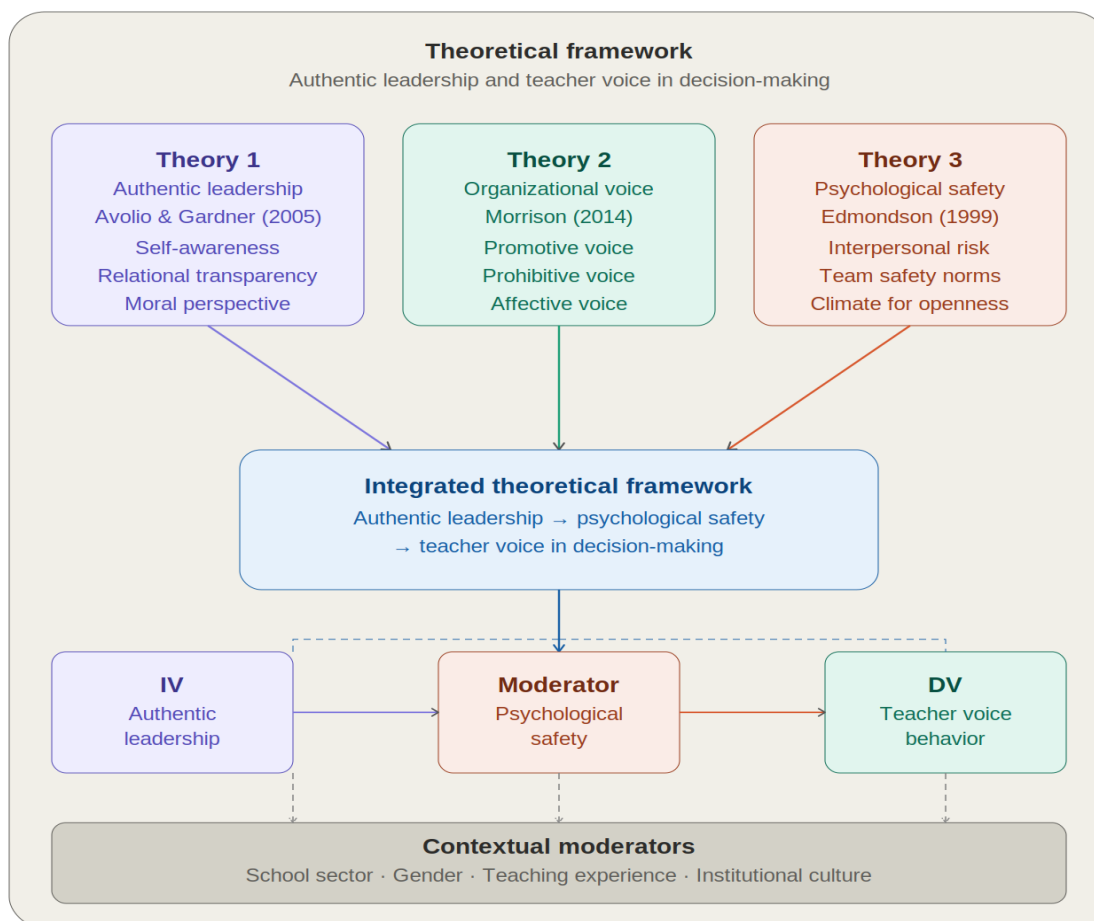


Theoretical Framework

This study is guided by three theoretical frameworks. The first is that Authentic Leadership Theory (Avolio & Gardner, 2005) serves as the basis for conceptualizing the impact of leader self-congruence and relational authenticity on follower behavior (voice). Second, Organizational Voice Theory (Morrison, 2014) provides a multi-dimensional perspective on employee voice that classifies types of voice by differing risk levels and conditions that facilitate voice. The moderation hypothesis is also grounded in Psychological Safety Theory (Edmondson, 1999) which addresses institutional

climate conditions that are conducive to the emergence of authentic leadership characteristics, in terms of voice behavior.

Figure 2. Theoretical framework: Three integrated theoretical pillars



Research Methodology

Research Design

The quantitative cross-sectional survey design was used. This type of design will permit the systematic collection of data over a geographically spread sample and will allow the correlational, comparative, and moderation analyses that will be needed to test the five hypotheses of the study (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). The study is suitable in cross-sectional design in that it is concerned with a study of the status of authentic leadership-voice relationships in schools at a given point in time but not a longitudinal study.

Population and Sample

The study population was the classroom teachers of secondary schools in three districts in Punjab Province in Pakistan. The number of teachers recruited was 312 teachers through stratified random sampling where they were grouped into strata defined by school sector (public/ private) and by district to cover representative demographics. All the participants were full-time classroom teachers with a minimum of one year of experience at their present school.

Reliability Analysis

Assessed internal consistency of all scales with Cronbach alpha. The modified Authentic Leadership

Questionnaire produced 88 overall (subscale range: 81-87) alpha. The Teacher Voice Scale produced 86 as the overall 86 as a subscale (range:.79 to.84). The Psychological Safety Scale gave 83 =.83. Each of the values is above the minimum value of $\alpha \geq .70$ (Nunnally, 1978). and most of the values are above $\alpha \geq .80$, showing good to excellent reliability among instruments.

Data Collection Instruments

Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ)

The ALQ was converted into an adapted 16-item version (Walumbwa et al., 2008) to measure the four subscales on a 5-point likert scale (1 = not at all, 5 = frequently, if not always): Self-Awareness (4 items), Relational Transparency (4 items), Balanced Processing (4 items), and Internalized Moral Perspective (4 items). Classroom teachers adapted items to be self-assessed by their peers.

Teacher Voice Scale (TVS)

Three voice dimensions, Promotive Voice (5 items), Prohibitive Voice (5 items), and Affective Voice (5 items), were measured through a scale of 15 items (adapted) based on Liang et al. (2012) and Morrison (2014), with an average score on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The scale was translated to Urdu and translated back to make it linguistically equivalent.

Psychological Safety Scale (PSS)

Adapted Psychological Safety Scale (7 items) by Edmondson (1999) to an educational setting (e.g., In this school, it is safe to take a risk on a new idea), was utilized. Intraclass correlation analysis was used to establish that there was enough between-school variance (ICC 1 =.18, ICC 2 =.72) to warrant its use as a school-level moderator.

Data Analysis

The analysis was conducted in 5 analytical steps in IBM SPSS 27.0: (1) descriptive statistics and zero-order correlations of all the variables in the study; (2) Pearson correlation analysis of authentic leadership and teacher voice dimensions; (3) simple linear regression to determine the main predictive relationship; (4) hierarchical multiple regression to identify the strongest AL subscale predictors; and (5) independent samples t-tests to compare the level of voice between school sectors, gender, teaching experience, and psychological safety as moderators. All the effect sizes were understood in terms of the benchmarks by Cohen (1988) throughout.

Data Analysis and Results

Descriptive Statistics

The average authentic leadership score was slightly high ($M = 3.68$, $SD = 0.54$), which reflected a relatively positive self-rating of the authentic leadership behaviours on the part of teachers. Teacher voice in general was a little less ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 0.61$). Promotive voice was the highest in the three voice dimensions ($M = 3.62$, $SD = 0.68$), followed by affective voice ($M = 3.53$, $SD = 0.65$), and lastly, prohibitive voice ($M = 3.29$, $SD = 0.74$), which was theoretically expected since prohibitive voice is the voice that presents the most interpersonal risk.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Authentic Leadership and Teacher Voice Variables

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min	Max	α
Authentic Leadership (AL) – Total	312	3.68	0.54	1.88	5.00	.88
Self-Awareness	312	3.71	0.61	1.75	5.00	.84
Relational Transparency	312	3.74	0.58	1.75	5.00	.85
Balanced Processing	312	3.61	0.63	1.75	5.00	.81

Moral Perspective	312	3.65	0.60	1.75	5.00	.82
Teacher Voice (TV) – Total	312	3.44	0.61	1.53	5.00	.86
Promotive Voice	312	3.62	0.68	1.60	5.00	.84
Prohibitive Voice	312	3.29	0.74	1.20	5.00	.79
Affective Voice	312	3.53	0.65	1.40	5.00	.82
Psychological Safety	312	3.44	0.72	1.14	5.00	.83

Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis revealed a strong positive and statistically significant correlation between total authentic leadership and total teacher voice ($r = .61, p < .001$). Among AL subscales, self-awareness had the strongest correlation with promotive voice ($r = .53$), followed by relational transparency ($r = .51$). Psychological safety was significantly correlated with both authentic leadership ($r = .47$) and total teacher voice ($r = .52$), providing initial evidence for its moderating role.

Table 2: Pearson Correlation Matrix: Authentic Leadership, Voice Dimensions, and Psychological Safety

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. AL Total	—						
2. Self-Awareness	.79**	—					
3. Rel. Transparency	.82**	.67**	—				
4. Promotive Voice	.61**	.53**	.55**	—			
5. Prohibitive Voice	.44**	.39**	.41**	.48**	—		
6. Affective Voice	.51**	.45**	.49**	.56**	.52**	—	
7. Psych. Safety	.47**	.43**	.44**	.53**	.45**	.49**	—

Regression Analysis

Simple linear regression confirmed that authentic leadership significantly predicted total teacher voice, accounting for 38% of the variance ($R^2 = .38$, adjusted $R^2 = .37$; $\beta = .55, t = 13.77, p < .001$).

Table 3: Simple Linear Regression: Authentic Leadership Predicting Teacher Voice

Predictor / Model	B	SE	β	t-value
Constant	1.18	0.18	—	6.56***
Authentic Leadership (AL)	0.69	0.05	.55	13.77***

Model Summary: $R^2 = .38$ Adj. $R^2 = .37$ $F(1, 310)$
 $= 189.63***$

Hierarchical regression predicting promotive voice identified self-awareness ($\beta = .42, p < .001$) and relational transparency ($\beta = .38, p < .001$) as the strongest individual subscale predictors in Step 2, with internalized moral perspective ($\beta = .19, p = .003$) and balanced processing ($\beta = .12, p = .041$) also significant.

Comparison: Public vs. Private Schools

An independent samples t-test compared teacher voice levels between public ($n = 168$) and private ($n = 144$) schoolteachers. Private school teachers reported significantly higher total voice ($M = 3.61, SD = 0.58$) than public school teachers ($M = 3.29, SD = 0.61$; $t(310) = 4.42, p < .001, d = 0.54$).

Table 4: Independent Samples t-Test: Teacher Voice and Authentic Leadership by School Sector

Variable	Public (n=168)	SchoolsPrivate (n=144)	Schools	t-value	Sig. (p)	Cohen's d
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Teacher Voice – Mean (SD)	3.29 (0.61)	3.61 (0.58)	4.42***	< .001	0.54
Authentic Leadership – Mean (SD)	3.51 (0.56)	3.88 (0.49)	5.84***	< .001	0.72

Moderation Analysis

Hierarchical moderated regression using Hayes's (2022) PROCESS macro examined four moderators. School sector was also a significant moderator ($\beta = .16$, $p = .03$), with the AL–voice relationship stronger in private schools. Teaching experience ($\beta = .15$, $p = .03$) and gender ($\beta = .12$, $p = .04$) also significantly moderated the relationship.

Table 5: Moderation Analysis: Moderating Effects on the Authentic Leadership–Teacher Voice

Relationship

Moderator / Interaction Term	B	SE	β	Sig. (p)
Moderator 1: Psychological Safety				
Authentic Leadership (AL)	0.69	0.05	.55	< .001
AL $\times$ Psychological Safety	0.19	0.08	.17	.020
Moderator 2: School Sector (0=Public, 1=Private)				
Authentic Leadership (AL)	0.69	0.05	.55	< .001
AL $\times$ School Sector	0.18	0.08	.16	.030
Moderator 3: Teaching Experience (years, centred)				
Authentic Leadership (AL)	0.69	0.05	.55	< .001
AL $\times$ Teaching Experience	0.16	0.07	.15	.030
Moderator 4: Gender (0=Male, 1=Female)				
Authentic Leadership (AL)	0.69	0.05	.55	< .001
AL $\times$ Gender	0.13	0.06	.12	.040

Discussion

Objective 1: Authentic Leadership and Teacher Voice

The positive correlation between authentic leadership and teacher voice ($r = .61$, 8.55 , $R^2 = .38$) is strong and demonstrates that authentic leadership is a strong predictor of teacher voice behaviour in Pakistani secondary school settings, similar to other related studies in the Vietnamese (Tran and Nguyen, 2022) and Taiwanese (Wang and Hsieh, 2013) academic environments, as well as in the meta-analytic literature that connects authentic leadership to follower trust and proactive behaviour (Banks et al., 2016). The fact that self-awareness ($=.42$) and relational transparency ($=.38$) are the strongest predictors of promotive voice on the subscale of AL is theoretically logical: when teachers have a clear understanding of their values, and when they demonstrate the honesty of self-presentation in their interactions with colleagues, they are more likely to take the interpersonal risk that voice behavior involves (Avolio and Gardner, 2005; Morrison, 2014).

The observation that authentic leadership accounted for 38% of the variance in teacher voice is a significant effect by the standards set by Cohen (1988) and is larger than the effect sizes found in the Western school environments (Banks et al., 2016), implying that authentic leadership could be a particularly strong predictor of voice in the settings where the hierarchical norms of authority otherwise discourage participation. This trend correlates with the theoretical hypothesis that in high-power-distance societies, the relational safety that is provided by genuine leader behaviour can be

particularly consequential in enabling practices that involve high stakes interpersonal risk, including voice (Amin et al., 2024).

Objective 2: Comparison of Public and Private Schools

The large disparity between teacher voice in the private ($M = 3.61$) and the public schools ($M = 3.29$, $d = 0.54$) is a structural difference in institutional governance, resource provision, and autonomy of the principal within the two-track secondary schooling system in Pakistan. Typically, private schools have greater flexibility in investing in teacher professional development, are more directly accountable to parents and communities, and not as constrained by bureaucracy in the decision-making of principals, which are more supportive of both authentic leadership expression and teacher voice behaviour (Ali and Ahmad, 2022; Noori, 2023). The similar difference in actual leadership scores ($d = 0.72$) indicates a structural amplification process: not only high voice levels but also high authentic leadership are produced in the context of the private schools, which results in a compound advantage that has the implication of equity in professional empowerment across the sectors of the school (Amjad et al., 2024).

Objective 3: Moderating Variables

Psychological safety turned out to be the most significant mediator of authentic leadership-voice relationship ($\beta = .17$, $p = .02$), which confirms that personal authentic leadership qualities can be fully voice-enabling only in institutional settings where the interpersonal risk-taking is actively encouraged. This is in line with the meta-analytic conclusion of Frazier et al. (2017) which states that contextual safety factors have a significant moderate effect on the relationship between personal leader traits and follower behaviour. As a practical consequence of what leadership should be developed, it means that an effective leadership training will not be as fully productive when used without appropriate consideration of school climate conditions. Trained principals who are more authentic and revert to cultures that are punitive of non-conformity will be thwarted in their personal development (Amin et al., 2024).

Moderation ($\beta = .16$, $p = .03$) shows that, the relationship between AL and voice is much stronger in a private school as compared to a public school, which supports the structural amplification interpretation presented above. In the case of public schools' reform, the implication of the finding is that more substantial gains could be made by enhancing principal autonomy in making professional development and technology rulings that would not only reinforce genuine leadership potential but would also allow the teacher voice to be more responsive (Amin et al., 2024).

The experience moderation result ($\beta = .15$, $p = .03$) aligns with the studies that experienced teachers have more institutional knowledge, professional confidence as well as social capital that magnify the impact of their authentic leadership traits on voice behaviour (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). The gender moderation ($\beta = +.12$, $p = +.04$) denotes that female teachers demonstrate a little stronger AL-voice response, which aligns with the findings that women in the Pakistani educational setting are more responsive to the relational and communicative aspects of authentic leadership that most directly can facilitate voice behaviour (Bada et al., 2019, Zhang, 2023).

Key Findings

Authentic leadership is a significant and positive predictor of teacher voice ($r = .61$, $\beta = .55$, $R^2 = .38$), which explains 38 to the teacher voice outcomes in Pakistani secondary schools.

Self-awareness ($\beta = -.42$) and relational transparency ($\beta = -.38$) yield the best predictors of promotive voice in authentic leadership, which makes the intrapersonal and relational aspects of authentic leadership the most voice-enabling.

The teachers at private schools show a much higher voice than their colleagues in the public schools

($d = 0.54$) as a sign of structural governance difference, which determines the expression of authentic leadership and the involvement of teachers in the decision-making process.

Conclusion

The research was able to offer strong quantitative data that authentic leadership is a powerful and practically significant predictor of teacher voice behaviour in Pakistani secondary schools. The strength of the relationship ($R^2 = .38$, large effect) is in line with theoretical predictions as well as similar cross-national results and the moderation analyses indicate that institutional context, especially, psychological safety and school sector, significantly influences the circumstances in which authentic leadership can translate into voice participation. The subscale analysis also further narrows the results that self-awareness and relational transparency are the most voice-enabling authentic leadership dimensions, which provide specific targets in terms of investing in professional development.

The governance difference between government and private schools recorded in this paper indicates institutional injustices of professional empowerment of teachers which cannot be solved by mere leadership development. Reform in the public schools needs structural reforms, more principal autonomy, participative governance structures and clearly safeguarded voice mechanisms, as well as personal development of leadership. This study forms the empirical basis of those reform claims and presents policymakers, school administrators and professional development designers with a list of specific, evidence-based priorities in enhancing teacher voice as a fundamental element of school quality in Pakistan and other similar educational settings.

Recommendations

For School Leaders

Focus on the different facets of authentic leadership development of the self-awareness and relationship transparency dimensions through organized reflective supervision, peer coaching, and 360-degree feedback systems. These subscales have the highest individual effect on teacher promotive voice and are the most practical targets to invest in professional development. Develop psychological safety as a norm at the school level through modelling vulnerability, positively responding to teacher concerns, and creating formally guaranteed ways of raising prohibitive voice, especially in the context of teachers raising concerns about institutional practices that could be detrimental to students.

For Policymakers

Close the structural governance divide between public and private schools by granting more autonomy to principals in matters relating to professional development, technology governance and school improvement projects. The results of the moderation suggest that the returns on the investment on authentic leadership are enhanced by structural flexibility, and the gains are compounded in terms of teacher voice and institutional quality. Engulf the national teacher professional empowerment frameworks that set clear expectations regarding the role of teachers in the school-level decision-making processes, and accountability mechanisms involving protection against professional retaliation of teachers who use prohibitive voice.

For Future Researchers

Use longitudinal designs to determine the cause directionality of the authentic leadership- teacher voice association and to follow the impact of any leadership development intervention on voice behaviour with time. Generalize the research design to primary schools, urban-rural interactions, and other provincial settings to challenge the external validity of these results and discover other structural

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