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# Student behavior management : School leader's role in the eyes of the teachers and students

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**Student Behavior Management:  
School Leader's Role In The Eyes Of The Teachers And Students**

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### **Abstract**

This study explored the perspectives and viewpoints of the teachers and students in relation to the influence of the head teacher and senior leadership team on students' behavior management in the form of policies, procedures and support mechanisms in a secondary school in Karachi Pakistan. Two surveys were developed and employed, one for the entire teaching staff (N=43) and one for a sample of students (n=120). The majority of teachers (97%) and students (83%) reported that school leadership influences students' behavior management through policies and procedures. A large number of the teachers are of the view that sharing of personal experiences by the school leadership, supporting their staff members, and the leader's visibility in the school context helps them in understanding and coping with the behavioral issues of the students. The majority of the teachers (95%) and students (86%) feel that school leadership influences students' behavior management through providing awards to the students for good behavior rather than consequences for misbehavior. Awards are considered as a positive means of influence as compared to consequences. The sports activities and club activities were ranked as the favorite positive support systems by the students as well as by the teachers.

**Key Words:** Student Behavior Management, Awards and Consequences, Discipline, Support to Staff, Support to student, School leadership.

## Introduction

Student behavior management is one of the contemporary issues frequently being faced by the school community. Behavior problems such as bullying, violence in school and other major and minor misconduct issues lead to a poor environment for the school community and a sense of fear and frustration in the school culture. Many researchers (for example, Conoley & Goldstein, 2004; Kendziora & Osher, 2009; Liu & Meyer, 2005) have argued that in these circumstances, school can become unsafe. Disruptive student behavior can negatively affect both teachers and the students in the school milieu. On the one hand, students may interrupt lessons or even make it impossible to continue (Psunder, 2005; Wragg, 2001), and on the other hand, teachers may feel 'burned out' or forced to leave the profession (Evers, Tomic & Brouwers, 2004; Haydn, 2007; Liu & Meyer, 2005). For that reason, Obenchain and Taylor (2005), maintain that, "One indicator of successful teachers in middle and high school is the quality of their behavior management skills" (p. 7).

Barbetta, Norona and Bicard (2005) maintain that, "The most efficient way to eliminate misbehavior is to prevent the occurrence or escalation from the beginning. Using a proactive approach also allows us to focus more on teaching appropriate behavior rather than eliminating negative behavior..." (p.11). In this regard, Lane, et al. (2007) proposes the implementation of school-wide intervention for student behavior management. They argue that such a systematic approach should focus on preventing the development of new behavioral problems and provide the necessary support to manage the existing behavioral concerns. Algozzine and Algozzine (2005) emphasized the inclusion of students for proactive school-wide behavior interventions. According to them, student involvement can be in the form of student organizations for behavior improvement, self-reflection opportunities and including the student representatives in the formulation and implementation of school wide policies for student behavior. Therefore, it can be said that positive behavior management refers to the proactive policies and strategies focusing on prevention and intervention. It entails developing positive relationships between the students, their teachers, the school leadership and parents.

The school leaders play a vital role in managing the behavior of the students in a school through development of policies, procedures, rules and regulations. These school leaders are also expected to be the initiator and undertaker of a safe, collegial and caring environment in the schools. This study explored the perspectives and views of the teachers and students regarding the role of the head teachers and student behavior management in the school. Kinsler, (2013) maintains that school leaders play the important role of formulating and implementing policies, procedures and strategies for managing the students' behavior. Hence, the overall responsibility of students' behavior lies heavily on the shoulders of school leadership. As the 'captain of the ship', it becomes the responsibility of the school leader to have systems in place to prevent disruptive behavior for the smooth functioning and attainment of the school objectives. The school leadership occupies a central role to direct the school's progress and the pupils' safety and well-being and expects their teaching colleagues to do the same. In this regard, Chaplain (2003) states that, "heads are perceived as being responsible for providing leadership; strategic planning...plus overall responsibility for student behavior" (p.103). Similarly, the school climate, particularly the cultivation of trust, is a key responsibility of the school leadership.

Additionally, the school leadership plays a pivotal role in protecting the teachers from interruptions in their instructional time. These interruptions can be in the form of student problem behavior during class time (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; O'Donnell & White, 2005).

Every school and the school leadership operate in a particular society, culture and context, all of which play a critical role in the behavior management of the students. The norms, values, motivational bases of the values and traditions of every culture are somewhat different than those of other cultures. Some researchers (Simkins, Sisum & Memon, 2003; Walker & Dimmock, 2002) agree that the culture and context of the developing world impact the values, attitudes and norms of behavior which are markedly different from those used by school leadership in the developed world. Therefore, the set of 'acceptable' and 'desirable' behaviors for students and, accordingly, the strategies, procedures, policies and support mechanisms devised by the school leaderships, may differ from context to context and culture to culture.

There are many ways to explore the influence of the school leadership on student behavior management in the form of direct observation of the school leadership's practices and interviewing the school leaderships and the parents of the students. Another way is to directly investigate their influence through the perspectives of teachers and students. Exploring head teacher influence from the teachers' and students' perspectives affords important information from the recipient point of view which cannot be gained through direct interview or the observation of the school leadership's practices. The teachers and the students in the school are the ultimate receivers and implementers and are influenced by the school leadership's perspectives, policies and practices regarding the student behavior management. Therefore, the perspectives and viewpoints of the teachers and students can provide a practical aspect and an alternate avenue for the exploration of this influence. Hence, the purpose of this study was to explore the perspectives and viewpoints of the teachers and students in relation to the influence of school leaderships on students' behavior management in a school environment in the form of the policies, procedures and support mechanisms in the context of Karachi Pakistan. In this regard, the major question of the study was how and in what ways the school leadership influences behavior management of the students in a private secondary school context.

### **Literature Review**

The quality of education is not only dependent on the excellence of resources and quality content but also the ability of the teachers to deal with the problem behavior within the classroom environment (Simkins, Sisum & Memon, 2003). The role of the school leadership is critical for the cultivation of a school atmosphere where there are systems in place, strategies are formed and implemented and assistance is available for teachers. In other words, when teachers are unable to deal with problem behavior, they should feel confident that support is available and will be readily provided by the school leadership. De Grauwe (2000, as cited in Simkins, Sisum & Memon, 2003) maintains that, "Quality of education depends primarily on the way schools are managed, more than on the abundance of available resources, and that the capacity of schools to improve teaching and learning is strongly influenced by the quality of leadership" (p.277). The school leaders should aim to create an atmosphere whereby teachers are able to run organized and effective classrooms in which the abilities of individual pupils are given due opportunity for development (O'Donnell & White, 2005). School leadership can involve the parents in addressing their children's behavior problems. Parent's support can be valuable and beneficial

for the improvement of problem behavior of the children. Additionally, “parents may have keen insights into the causes of their children’s behavioral problems, and they should also be invited to work with teachers and help in their children’s education” (Liu & Meyer, 2005, p. 999).

### **Strategies and Policies**

Research conducted by Bevans, et al., (2007) suggests that a whole school approach to effective behavior management appears to positively influence student performance. A similar approach, suggested by O’Donnell and White (2005), maintains that in the eyes of the teachers, promoting the school learning climate is a significant instructional behavior of the school leadership. The school leadership can contribute by protecting and limiting the interruptions to instructional time, maintaining high visibility and speaking informally with staff members and students, attending co-curricular and extracurricular activities, covering classes when substitutes are late or unavailable and tutoring students or providing direct instruction to classes. O’Donnell and White also emphasize that behavioral expectations should be clearly communicated, consistently enforced and fairly applied. Likewise, Barbetta, Norona and Bicard (2005) argue that, “Classroom rules play a vital role in classroom management. To be more effective, classrooms should have four to six rules that could govern most classroom situations. Too many rules make it difficult for students to comply and for teachers to enforce” (p.13). To include students in their own behavior management, they further maintain that teachers should, “... conduct several short rule-setting meetings the first few days of school” (p.14). They are of the opinion that when transitions are made quickly and quietly it causes positive student/teacher interaction. Bevans, et al., (2007) argue that good classroom management requires careful planning of the environment by the teachers. An aesthetically pleasing physical environment can influence the way teachers and students feel, think and behave. Therefore, careful planning of the environment within the constraints of teachers’ daily schedules is an integral part of good classroom management (Weinstein, 2007).

### **Personal Practices of the School Leadership**

A study conducted by Keesor (2005), on a junior high school campus in the Midwest of America to evaluate the influence of an Assistant Head teacher on classroom instruction, indicated that an increased level of Head teacher visibility resulted in a decrease in student disciplinary referrals. He maintains that, many of the research studies have explored that the school administrators believe that their frequent patrolling of the school campus will become instrumental for taking the control of an issue before it becomes really problematic. Similarly, Gillborn (1997) suggests that when the head teacher is seen walking the corridors, visiting lessons and, most importantly, acting against indiscipline, this too can be supportive for the classroom teachers. In this regard, Gorman and Pauken (2003) maintain that,

Administrator presence outside their offices is a start. Principals must smile, say hello, make eye contact with their students, and learn the names of the children who are in the school. As an administrator touches another student with a smile or a ‘hello’ the web of care spreads, and communication barriers break down...prevention must be the overall answer (pp.32-33).

The behavior of the school leadership provides support to the teachers to deal with the student behavioral issues and directly contributed to the inculcation of positive behavior among the student body.

### **Support Structures for Students**

Research suggests that a powerful preventive component for behavior issues is to create a school-wide positive climate in which social skills and other expected behaviors are explicitly taught and effectively reinforced (Algozzine & Algozzine, 2005; Bradshaw et al, 2008; Sugai & Horner, 2008). Dobozy (2007) argues that, “Learning to understand and apply interpersonal concepts, such as ‘respect’, tolerance and equal rights’, is a slow and complex process...children need to develop an understanding of what ‘respectful conduct’ might mean and that requires time, adequate modeling, practice and maturity” (p.123). She further maintains that, the endeavors of student participation in managing their own behavior should intend to recognize them as social and political beings with certain rights and responsibilities rather than mere objects for care and protection.

Students work harder, achieve more, and attribute more importance to schoolwork in classes in which they feel liked, accepted, and respected by teachers and fellow students (Lewis et al., 1996). When a discipline problem does arise, it should be evaluated in the light of the circumstances in which it occurred and in view of the intent and understanding of the child (Levick, 2000). Therefore, Haydn (2007) argues, the student behavior management is a complex and complicated bustle and a pre-defined set of intervention cannot be effective for each problem behavior. Hence, the teachers have to always work hard by devising inventive approaches to handle the problem behaviors. Sughrue (2003) suggests a long term and continuous support for the child by an adult for managing the student behavior. An adult should nurture their growth by articulating the expectations, correct their mistakes and help them in acquiring the social skills and problem solving skills.

### **Motivation and Regulation**

Verbal reinforcement is possibly the most fundamental tool available to school leaderships and teachers, and is arguably the most powerful and meaningful for pupils (Barbetta, Norona & Bicard, 2005; Hayes, Hindle & Withington, 2007). Cameron and Pierce (1994) confirm that verbal praise has a greater impact in terms of effect size for increased motivation than either tangible rewards or no rewards.

Unlike punishments, rewards and incentives appear to enlist positive behaviors and in some cases, change behaviors (Lewis, 2001). This is based on Skinner’s (1953) theory, which states that positive behavior is reinforced by reward. Barbetta, Norona and Bicard (2005), suggest that instead of reprimanding students teachers should use non-verbal cues. These cues can be in the form of facial expressions, deliberately overlooking the behavior and diverting the attention of the child to a positive subject. In these ways the school leadership plays a vital role in empowering; guiding and motivating his/her team of teachers to assist them in managing students’ behavior.

## **Support Mechanism for Teachers**

The teacher plays a central role in the behavioral management of the pupils. Teachers consistently face the problems of poor social skills and a lack of classroom discipline (Corso, 2007; Ross, Romer, & Horner, 2012). Gable, et al., (2005), maintain that there are three prominent factors that can undermine a teacher's ability to respond successfully to behavior problems in schools. They include the ability to handle the diverse group of students, lack of skills to adequately assess student behavior and the identification of factors associated with problem behavior and the inability to develop the kind of academic interventions that provide for students' success and promote positive social interactions. Therefore, it can be argued that the teachers are the ones who are directly engaged in managing the behaviors of the students in the classroom. A teacher's background, professional preparation, and experience can influence his or her response to an aggressive behavior shown by the students (Gable, et al., 2005). These factors will also influence their thoughts about the student. A close and understanding relationship between teacher and students can be instrumental for preventing and handling the student behavioral challenges in a school environment (Gable, et al., 2005).

Bryk, et al., (2010) maintain that a, "framework of organizational supports for student learning starts with leadership as the driver for change... Central to making this work for children are an overall normative environment where children feel safe and are pressed and supported to engage with intellectual activity" (p. 64). Likewise, Liu and Meyer (2005) found moderately high levels of correlation between student discipline problems and professional support, suggesting that a collegial environment may lessen teachers' dissatisfaction with student discipline problems. Therefore, it is imperative that the school leadership and teachers work hand in hand and support each other. "When teachers feel confident in their overall effectiveness for structuring and maintaining a positive classroom environment, they also feel more ready, able and willing to support challenging students with specialized behavior management techniques" (Baker, 2005, p.59). Porter (2007) highlights the importance of support from school leadership and maintains that,

No teacher can work successfully with each other and every student, sometimes; support from the school administration is necessary. To give you assurance of this support, before you implement any disciplinary plan, you will need your principal to sign off on it. Then should your attempts at resolving ongoing behavioral difficulties fail; your principal will need to be willing to counsel students and their parents (p.41).

## **Research Method**

### **Survey**

In order to understand the attitudes, perspectives and opinion of the teachers and students regarding the influence of school leadership on students' behavior management; two surveys, one each for teachers and students, were developed and employed. The surveys focused upon the major question of the study, which was how and in what ways the school leadership influences behavior management of the students in a private secondary school context?

For the teacher survey, the respondents were the entire teaching staff (N=43) of the secondary section of the school. No sampling strategy was involved, as the study intended to understand the views of all the teachers about the behavior management strategies and practices adopted by school leadership, therefore, all 43 teachers were invited to participate in the study. A total of 37 teachers participated, representing a high participation rate of 88%. The sample (n=37) consisted of a majority of female teachers (90%) and only a few male teachers (10%), which is the total teaching staff of the middle and senior section of this school. The overall sample showed approximately equal participation between teachers from the middle section (grade six to eight teachers - 55%) and senior section (nine to tenth grade teachers - 45%).

In the case of the students, grade six, seven, eight, nine and O level students (tenth grade) (N = 520) were the target population for this study. Each of the above mentioned grades have four sections or classes; two for boys and two for the girls. There are a total of twenty sections and from each of these sections, six students were randomly selected for the sample. Student registration numbers were entered into SPSS, which in turn randomly selected six students from each section. Therefore, from a total of twenty sections, the sample of students (n=120) was selected.

### ***Profile of the Iqra Public School***

This study was conducted in an English medium private school in Karachi - “Iqra Public School” (pseudonyms). The school follows the British General Certification of Education (GCE) curriculum and students sit for O level examinations. It is a co-educational school; however in the middle and senior section of the school, boys and girls sit in separate classrooms for both religious and cultural desirability. Most of the students attending the school come from an upper middle class socio-economic background. The school has 520 students in the secondary section facilitated by 43 teachers and one head teacher and one assistant head as the school leaders. The school has a purpose built campus, which is well equipped with libraries, laboratories, playgrounds, an audio-visual centre and other important facilities.

### ***Teachers Survey***

The Teachers’ survey had two sections. Section A contained the demographic information consisting of six questions related to gender, length of service in the school, academic qualification, professional qualification, grades and subjects currently taught. Section B was divided into five broad categories:

1. Procedures and policies (consisting of 10 items)
2. Support to staff (consisting of 7 items)
3. Support to students (consisting of 8 items)
4. Awards and consequences (consisting of 12 items)
5. Parental involvement (consisting of 5 items)

Teachers were asked to give their views on these 42 items on a five point Likert scale of strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree. Following are some examples of the statements/prompts given to the teachers to explore their views.

- The annual whole school induction workshops by the head teacher help me in gaining useful insights for managing students' behavior.
- The needs-based counseling sessions about student behavior management by the vice principal / head mistress helps me in managing student behavior in the classroom.
- The assemblies conducted by the head teacher enhance students' learning about managing their own behavior.

### *Students Survey*

The students' survey also had two sections. Section A contained demographic information and consisted of six questions related to gender, grade and section and some basic information about the different awards and consequences for the students. Section B was divided into 3 broad categories:

1. Policies and procedures (consisting of 8 items)
2. Support to students (consisting of 8 items)
3. Awards and consequences (consisting of 15 items)

Students were asked to give their views on these 31 items on a five point likert scale of strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree. Following are some examples of the statements given to the students to explore their views.

- The code of conduct developed by the head teacher for various places in the school strengthens my positive and expected behavior in the school.
- The personal counseling by the vice head teacher helps me to overcome my behavioral difficulty.
- Certificates for good behavior motivate me to continue showing positive behavior.

Data obtained from the above mentioned surveys was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentages and number counts and is reported and discussed in the subsequent section.

## **Results: Teachers' Perspectives**

### **An Overview of Teachers' Attitude**

The data revealed that there is a general agreement among the teachers that school leadership has an influence on student behavior through establishing policies and procedures, providing support to staff and students, through awards and consequences and by involving parents in the behavior management of students. As revealed in Table 1, 93% of the teachers believe (strongly agree or agree) that the school leadership influences behavior management of the students by supporting their staff. Subsequently 88% of the teachers are of the view that the school leadership influences behavior management of students by involving parents. Likewise, 79% of teachers believe that the school leadership influences the behavior management of students through policies and practices. At a glance, Table 1 reveals that overall, 79% of the

teachers views are in agreement and nominal 3% teacher's views are in disagreement to school leadership's influence. Thus the teachers' responses reveal that, to a great extent, the teachers believe school leadership influences the behavior management of students.

Table 1: Overview of Teachers' Responses

<b>Subscales</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Not applicable</b>	<b>missing</b>
<b>Total responses</b>							
Policies and procedures	24%	55%	13%	4%	-		4%
Support to staff	38%	55%	3%	1%	-		2%
Support to students	19%	49%	22%	2%	-		8%
Awards and consequences	23%	45%	16%	7%	2%		8%
Parental involvement	31%	57%	11%	-	-		1%
<b>Mean</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>0%</b>		<b>5%</b>

### **Policies and Procedures**

The subscale of policies and procedures consists of 10 items. Teacher's responses revealed that, 79% are in agreement (strongly agree or agree) that school leadership influences behavior management of students through these policies. These positive responses were in the area of the school leaderships' policies and procedures related to arranging induction programs and classroom management workshops for teachers, which they indicated helped them to a great extent in student's behavior management. The teachers' responses also suggest that the policies of establishing ground rules between teachers and students, having a code of conduct for various places such as codes for drinking water, codes for morning assembly, ways of greeting each other and the influence of value-based teaching and practices also influences students to a great extent in managing their behavior. Teachers' responses for items on the policy of having transition management steps for students, the student body helping other students to manage their behavior and the policy of having a student behavior record register have comparatively less agreement, ranging from 65% to 49%. The teachers said that these are newly implemented strategies, therefore, these initiatives may not be as successful at the implementation level as it was thought at the policy planning stage or the teachers are having difficulty implementing them at this initial stage.

The only item with the maximum percentage of teachers disagreeing with the policies and practices is with the item related to how the student management body helps other students in managing their behavior, where 16% of the teachers disagreed. This suggests that the student body may not be very effective in managing students behavior. A potential explanation for this finding may be that it was the annual examination time and, therefore, the student management body may have temporarily been inactive. Thus it appears from the data that apart from one

policy, teachers tend to agree to a great extent to the influence of all the policies and practices implemented by school leadership for student's behavior management.

### **Support to Staff**

The second subscale of the teachers' survey dealt with seven items related to the school leaderships' influences on the behavior management of students by supporting their staff members. This subscale holds more weight as it is directly related to the participants. It is important to highlight that this subscale shows the highest percentage of teacher agreement (93%) to school leadership's influence on students' behavior management. These responses and scores suggest that the support for students' behavior management provided to the teachers by the school leadership has been perceived by teachers to be effective to a great extent.

The teacher agreement of the school leadership influences on students' behavior management through the classroom observations and by providing feedback to teachers to improve their behavior management skills is 100%. The only areas where the teachers have shown a comparatively more neutral response (11%) is in the item dealing with counseling sessions. It could be that these respondents had not had counseling sessions with the school leadership and hence their views are neutral. Apart from this one finding, there seems to be no significant difference in teacher views. The high mean scores for all the items also suggest that teachers strongly agree with the support provided to them by the school leadership. Thus it appears that the teachers feel the school leadership influences students' behavior management by supporting the staff members well.

### **Support to Students**

This subscale consisted of eight items. Teacher's responses for this subscale show that 68% of the teachers agree that the school leadership influences student's behavior by providing support directly to students. Results of these items suggest that sports activities, club activities and needs-based counseling sessions for students, strongly influence the students in managing their behavior. An area of concern is in regards to the item that interrogates teachers about the session to assist students in finding solutions for their behavioral issues. Here 49% of teachers' views are in agreement, 5% strongly agree, whereas 41% of teachers' views are neutral. Items of impact forum for self-esteem of the children SSTD5 and impact forum for motivating children for positive behavior SSTD5 also reflect 49% and 51% agreement respectively, which are comparatively on the lower side as compared to the other items. These two items are related to impact forums, a recent initiative by the school leadership, which are conducted for grade nine students onward. However, there is a probability that all teachers are not aware of its influence and hence these items reflect 19% and 16% neutral views of teachers.

### **Awards and Consequences**

This subscale consists of 12 items and more than 95% of teachers' views are in agreement with the provision of awards for positive behavior in the subscales of certificates for good behavior AC1, positive comments AC2, verbal appreciations, AC3, writing reflections AC4, and student behavior appraisal AC5. Conversely, teacher's agreement for consequences drops to 70% to 30% in the subscales of suspension of students (AC6), detention of students (AC7, AC8, and AC9), deduction of marks (AC10), stopping form gams, (AC11) and fines for misbehavior (AC12). Teachers believe that depriving students from participating in sports

activities does not help in discouraging negative behavior. This data illustrated that most teachers feel that the influence of awards on student's behavior is effective to a greater extent when compared to consequences.

### Parental Involvement

The Parental Involvement subscale consisted of five items. Overall, 88% of teachers are in agreement that school leadership influences behavior of students by involving parents. There is a consistency between items need based counselling sessions with parents (P3) and involving the parents in resolving the critical behavior issues (P4) subscales of parental involvement with 92% agreement and between circular sent to parents (P1) and orientation meeting with parents (P2) with 89% agreement. These figures illustrate that the school leadership involves parents in the behavior management of students by being in continuous contact with the parents through orientation meetings, circulars, and needs-base counseling sessions. Thus it appears from the teachers' views that school leadership influences students' behavior management by involving parents.

### RESULTS: Students' Perspectives

The students' survey was divided into three subscales containing a total of 31 items. As a first step, to get an overall glimpse of students' views and attitudes, a cumulative percentage of students' responses for these three subscales are shown. For the purpose of analysis, the responses 'strongly agree' and 'agree' are grouped together just as 'strongly disagree' and 'disagree'. Table 2 reveals that students' agreement towards these three subscales ranges from 71% to 58%, with more or less the same consistency in their responses towards disagreement ranging from 12% to 9%. However, in the subscale of awards and consequences, 30% of students have shown a neutral response that is quite high. Demographic information of students pertaining to awards and consequences illustrated that 75% of students have been awarded for their behavior in some form. Sixty nine percent (69%) of students have reported that they have misbehaved in school, out of which only 14% of students have reported that they have faced some form of consequence for their misbehavior. In light of this demographic information, it could be said that a very nominal percentage of students have faced consequences and not all students have been awarded for their good behavior. Hence, 30% of students have taken a neutral stance towards the influence of awards and consequences on their behavior.

**Table 2: Overview of Students' Responses**

Subscales	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not applicable	missing
Total responses							
Policies and procedures	38%	32%	18%	5%	4%		3%
Support to students	42%	29%	18%	6%	6%		2%
Awards and consequences	38%	20%	30%	5%	6%		2%
<b>Mean</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>5%</b>		<b>2%</b>

### **Policies and Procedures**

The items on policies and procedures, transition management, code of conduct, student behavior record register, and the values based teaching and practices and circulars sent to parents, show a sound percentage of student agreement (ranging from 83% to 72%) towards the influence of these policies on their behavior. There is just one policy and procedure, which is the student management body, which shows the lowest agreement (52%) and highest disagreement (19%) and some neutral (26%) views of students in this sub scale. This suggests that this body may not be very effective in helping students in managing their behavior.

### **Support to Students**

Students are involved in productive activities such as sports, community service and educational trips in order to bring about a positive change in their behavior. Overall, 71% of students' responses suggest agreement with the different support systems. The data reveal that sports activities and club activities rank as the favorite support systems with 92% and 78% agreement respectively. This data shows the interest of the children in sports and other co-curricular activities as part of their educational processes, which can be utilized for helping them with their behavior management.

### **Awards and Consequences**

Overall 86% of students are in agreement with the awards given to them. Thus the above data suggests that certificates, positive comments and verbal appreciation and addition of marks influence student behavior. Only 43% of students agree that consequences influence their behavior. This finding confirms previous research (Barbetta, Norona & Bicaud, 2005; Cameron & Pierce, 1994; Hayes, Hindle & Withington, 2007; Mortimore, 1998) that, unlike punishment, rewards and incentives appear to elicit positive behaviors. At the same time an equal percentage of students have shown a neutral stance towards rewards and incentives.

## **Discussion**

This study affirmed that school leadership are considered as being responsible for providing leadership, strategic planning and the overall responsibility for students' behavior (Chaplain, 2003; Sergiovanni, 2000). In the other words, the teachers and students feel that the head and the assistant head are the main gate of the school through which the particular culture, belief and norms of practices enter the school milieu (Johnson, 2003). The school head and the assistant head have woven all the different components of student behavior management into one single package influenced by Islamic culture and norms. While studying the school leaderships in a Pakistani context, Khaki (2005) affirmed this notion and maintained that, "the head's Islamic faith is the engine which largely drives her vision and moves her to adopt various strategies" (p.287). Teaching and practicing a pro-social behaviour is considered as a religious and moral obligation for Muslims (Ghani, 2004; Khzali, 2010). This supports the notion that head teachers mediate their existing knowledge within the context of the school (Hallinger & Heck, 2010; Wood, Spandagou, & Evans, 2012). The findings also support Wood, Spandagou, and Evans,

(2012) who suggested that the head teachers are also sensitive to the context of their schools in the way they use their knowledge and apply theoretical understandings. Furthermore, it is consistent with the leadership literature, which suggests that contextual differences influence the practices of the school leaders (Drysdale and Gurr 2011; Leithwood et al. 2008; Robinson 2007). Graham and Spandagou (2011), argue that the head teachers' knowledge, skills and attitudes are working as a chain of effects where the context influences knowledge, knowledge influences attitudes and practice, which again influences the context.

Under such inspirations, the head teacher and the assistant head in this study influence students' behavior management through different policies, procedures and practices. An exception to this is the influence of the student management body. Teachers and students relatively less affirmed the policy of involving the student body in the behavior management of the students as an influence of school leadership on student's behavior management.

The teachers are a dominant intervening force in the life of the children who have the opportunity to redirect their socio-emotional behavior towards healthier outcomes (O'Connor, Dearing, & Collins, 2011). Therefore, the school head and the assistant head keep themselves visible and accessible in the school and always remain in contact with their teachers. This informal discussion enables teachers to be well informed about any behavioral issue and consequently plan to find ways of resolution. This finding is consistent with Keesor (2005), who found that an increased level of Head teacher visibility resulted in a decrease in student disciplinary referrals. They provide constructive feedback to the teachers about their classroom management along with targets for improving. Likewise, the school head and the assistant head share their successful experiences with the teachers pertaining to the behavior management of the students. The head and assistant head conduct counseling sessions by providing teachers with information as to how to support high-quality relationships with their students (O'Connor, Dearing, & Collins, 2011) for the teachers who lack the skills and have difficulty managing the student behavior (Clements, 2012). A supportive and positive adult student relationship is a critical component for student behavior management (Tsai & Cheney, 2012).

In this study the teachers and students viewed the frequent visits of the head teacher as beneficial to them. These practices provide continuous backups and moral support to the teachers and students for bringing about an improvement in their behavior (Gorman & Pauken, 2003). In this way the head teacher and the assistant head provide contextually tested solutions about the student behavior management, enabling the teachers to better manage and cope with any problem related to the student behavior. The head and assistant head share effective practices with the teachers, not only to address the needs of the students but also help to reduce their own stress level. The more teachers believe in their ability, the more they are able to handle the children with behavioral difficulties (Gaudreau, et. al, 2013).

The school leadership influence student behavior management through classroom observations and by providing feedback to teachers to improve their behavior management skills. The teachers highly value the help and support provided. When teachers are provided with the required support by school leadership they feel more confident managing student behavior. When teachers feel confident in their overall effectiveness for structuring and maintaining a positive classroom environment, they also feel more ready, able, and willing to support the students with specialized behavior management techniques (Baker, 2005). The teachers need the assurance and full support of the heads before the implementation of any disciplinary plan. If in

case of the failure of a plan, the school heads should be willing to counsel students and their parents (Porter, 2007).

The school head and the assistant head influences student behavior by initiating different support systems for students. In this study, the sports activities and club activities were ranked as the most favorite support systems by the students as well as by the teachers. Additionally, students are involved in productive activities such as community service and educational trips in order to bring about a positive change in their behavior. The school leadership has initiated various in-house classes and sessions aimed at the personality development of the students through the inculcation of positive behavior, such as the impact forums. Different strategies, including, counseling students, writing reflection letters and observation of students provides students the opportunity to learn to manage their own behavior. It is in consistent with Breaux and Whitaker (2013) who argued that when children are given the responsibility to manage their own behavior; in most cases they demonstrate improved behavior. Dobozy (2007) supports this and maintains, "Acting respectfully may not be supported with an extensive list of dos and don'ts. Rather students were invited to reflect on their beliefs and actions and gradually develop understandings of the ethical dimensions of purposeful and respectful conduct" (p123). Therefore, it is important for the adults to aid children in their behavior by articulating expectations, by instructing children when they err, by establishing reasonable responses to undesirable behavior and by helping students develop better problem-solving and social skills (Peden, 2001). In this project, the school head and assistant head have tried to make the students responsible for their own behavior by giving them the choices between rewards and consequences. These awards and rewards include just a smile or pat on the back, to awarding certificates or verbal appreciation in assembly. Verbal appreciation is possibly the most fundamental tool available to head teacher and teachers, and arguably the most powerful and meaningful for pupils (Barbetta, Norona & Bicard, 2005; Hayes, Hindle & Withington, 2007). Pastor (2002) argues that, "As we seek to prepare children to be more productive citizens of a democracy, teaching them to understand and exercise their choices and voices becomes paramount" (p. 659). Similarly, at the collective level even offices are provided to the student, for various clubs and house bodies, as a reward for good behavior. However, another important aspect in this regard is the self-involvement and empowerment of the students. When students are given the opportunities to exercise their leadership skills they are more likely to show progress.

It is important that the school leadership use various ways of awarding students for good behavior. For misbehaviors there should also be consequences. However, the data in this project indicate that most teachers and students feel that the influence of rewards on student behavior is greater than consequences (Lewis, 2001). Students are comparatively more in favor of awards and against the consequences. However, awards without consequences or consequences without awards may not be effective for the student behavior management. Research has illustrated that both are needed in a balanced manner to cultivate a close connection between the rights and responsibilities of the students. Lewis (1999) argues schools need to emphasize a closer connection between students' rights and responsibilities, and found that many schools fail to balance their planned use of consequences with corresponding rewards and recognitions. Therefore, supporting the need for school leadership to bring about an effective balance between awards and consequences.

In this study, the school head and assistant head influence behavior management of the students by being in continuous contact with parents through orientation meetings, circulars, need base counseling session's influences students' behavior. Parents are considered an integral part of the policies and strategies employed in student behavior management. The school supports efforts to educate and help parents in managing the behavior of their children (Liu & Meyer, 2005). The teachers highly value the parental involvement in the behavior management of the students as compared to the students themselves. These findings echo the work of Maurice, Evanthia and Roger, (2007) who consider it critical for schools and families to work together in order to establish a constructive framework that can foster positive development.

### **Conclusion**

School leadership is considered to be an important decision making authority for any school and has the ability to influence any activity that is going on in the school (Penlington, Kington & Day, 2008; Sergiovanni, 2000). In this study, the views of the teachers and students affirm the influence of the school leadership on behavior management of the students. The teachers' and students' responses reveal that school leadership influences the behavior management of students in positive ways. These influences permeate into the school culture through the policies and procedures, which they devise and implement in the school.

School leadership influences student behavior management through a variety of ways. Their influence starts with their enthusiastic articulation and sharing of the school vision and the objectives of the school, which contain components for behavior management. In addition, the school leadership is personally involved in certain practices that directly facilitate the behavior management of students. These practices start with continuously nurturing confidence and providing moral support to t teachers and students. School leadership devises different support mechanisms that provide students the opportunity to learn to manage their own behavior.

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