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**RESEARCH PAPER**

**Effect of Collaborative Managerial Practices on School Performance  
at Elementary Level in the Punjab**

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**ABSTRACT**

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This article explores the level and the effect of collaborative managerial practices on school performance. Nature of the current study required the collection of quantitative data first and then for the explanation and confirmation of quantitative findings, it required the collection of qualitative data. Hence, confirmatory mixed method design was regarded appropriate for the current study. The teachers and head teachers of all public sector primary and elementary schools in the Punjab province were the population of the study. Respondents were selected through multistage sampling technique. The results indicated that existing level of the effect of collaborative managerial practices for the enhancement of school performance was at moderate level according to perceptions of teachers and head teachers. As a result, it is recommended that Assistant Education Officers, head teachers and teachers should exert more sincere efforts in order to increase school performance at elementary level in the Punjab.

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**Introduction**

Education is the most fundamental need of nations for attaining sustainable progress and growth. School education plays a huge role in imparting knowledge, skills and attitude to a child. Similarly, elementary level schools are at the core of entire education and school system. Schools not only help children in learning of knowledge but also in social and emotional development. Elementary level students' age group is the most spontaneous and responsive. It is where a variety of social changes create ineradicable prints in their lives. Elementary level schools offer education that support students in realizing their identities, concepts, abstraction, responsibilities and attitude towards the world (Martin & Dowson, 2009).

Elementary level education is acknowledged across the world as it lays the foundation for any higher level education (Mohammed et al., 2017). It offers the framework on that the qualities of further levels are anchored. It opens people up to numerous opportunities and enhances the worth and quality of one's living as well. Elementary level education in Pakistan and somewhere else establishes the framework for school education of a country. A decent and just society needs well-brought-up generation through decent essential schooling. But it is only feasible

when it is supervised by adequate management. These managers are key achievement factors who carry out its objectives and lead it to be successful. It is a cycle of persuading others in order to pursue the leader in accomplishment of the objectives anticipated by him (Samriangjit et al., 2016). Educational management plays a considerable part in up-gradation of schools by facilitating the stakeholders to be flourishing and to achieve their objectives efficiently (Smylie et al., 2005).

Elementary level schools are key institutions whose academic performance and everyday functional efficiency are all influenced by collaborative practices of educational managers who work in a close liaison with all stakeholders *i.e.* the head teachers, teachers, students, their parents and community (Roothaert et al., 2021). The settings in which they work, and the demands laid upon them by the public, are ever more complex. They endeavour to mentor teachers in preparing learners with a varied range of skills that they will need to survive in a world that is in constant progression (Valentine &Prater, 2011). This accelerates the requirement for the growth of more competence centred strategies which foster collaboration, alongside greater stress on learning outcomes.

In present scenario elementary level schools require effective management, supervision and dynamic leadership to make the role of the teacher more of a personal guide, a facilitator of learning and a co-ordinator (Dabke, 2016). Success of schools in the contemporary era rests heavily on collaboration among all the stakeholders. If teachers work individually having no on-the-job support and facilitation from head teachers or educational managers, they can play only a limited part in the improvement of the school climate and overall elevation of school performance. It is the collaboration that joins the bonds of mutual respect and collaborative teaching practices enhance classroom learning. When school management, teachers and administrators collaborate, miracles happen. School climate improves significantly and resultantly the school performance reaches to desired levels according to aims set forth for successful schools.

Schools in the Punjab province of Pakistan have also turned to the creative strategy of collaboration for improvement (Irfan, 2021). In the last few years, there is a visible urge in the Punjab to bring change and enhance the quality of education. In this context, it is imperative to study the leading factors which contribute significantly in enhancement of school performance.

School performance within a healthy school climate is directly related to how well teachers perform in and outside their classrooms. Consequently, effective communication among teachers, head teachers and AEOs is the heart of creating and maintaining a healthy school climate. The vertical and horizontal communication in schools creates healthy school climate which is indispensable for collaboration to take place and crucial for enhanced school performance (Rafferty, 2003).

In the last few years, the public sector elementary level schools in the province of Punjab are working dynamically on changing and enhancing systems that pave the way for quality of education and augment the performance. Previously, District Teacher Educators (DTEs) were providing on the job training to the teachers in classroom instruction in a systematic umbrella of continuous professional development (CPD) at elementary level. Their posts were abolished and they were adjusted at schools. In this context, roles and responsibilities of Assistant Education Officers (AEOs) in Punjab were changed through a paradigm shift and they were

assigned supervisory roles along with managerial responsibilities. They are now supposed to work on quality of education by doing classroom observation on tablet based Android App COT (Classroom Observation Tool) and mentoring teachers before and after the lessons. They are also supposed to collaborate with head teachers, teachers, parents and community for overall improvement of school performance as portrayed in School Improvement Framework (SIF) and data being shown on monthly, quarterly and annually data pack reports generated by PMIU through their monitoring mechanism (Shah, 2009).

To accomplish objectives at elementary level, to work on quality education, and to employ procedures that can prompt critical thinking and achievement, these resourceful and multitalented mobile administrators designated as AEOs need to acquire information, skill, morals, ethical quality, inventiveness, orderly reasoning, and great expert code of morals so they can provide great, proficient, and successful school organization and management. As an efficient school manager, an AEO has a grave level of influence; he can involve his capacity in school organization, accomplishing efficiency, goals and affecting change through capability, vision, great independent direction, relational abilities, morals and profound quality, and colossal performance.

At present, Assistant Education Officers (AEOs) are providing managerial as well as academic support to head teachers and teachers by mentoring, facilitating in order to enhance their administrative as well as instructional roles and responsibilities. They are expected to work jointly with head teachers, teachers and school councils to make sure that all policies and targets related to schools are adhered and are being achieved to improve overall school performance. The researcher detected through rigorous literature review that the current state of research exploring the effect of collaborative management at elementary school setting was not sufficient in providing basis for increased school performance. Same is the case with the researches on school climate exploring its effect on the school performance. Therefore, the school performance variable required to be investigated meticulously at elementary level. Moreover, the interaction of school climate between collaborative management and school performance was also investigated in detail to comprehend how much change occurs when it mediates significantly.

In a transformed elementary level public school setting where highly inspired, well educated and trained Assistant Education Officers (AEOs) were working collaboratively with extremely motivated and equally educated and trained heads and teachers for the purpose of positively changing public sector schools through implementation of innovative strategies. The new Continuous Professional Development (CPD) program was also supporting them through capacity building programs with are using blended learning approach and consists of both face to face and online refresher courses. These interactions were extremely subtle in nature and imperative to distinguish among collaborative managerial practices that support in creating positive school climate. This situation required to be explored rigorously so that the prevailing scenario might be comprehended and suggestions for improved school performance might also be incorporated.

## Literature Review

Collaboration is when individuals work jointly in a systematic way to accomplish the most appropriate team goals even if they do not have similar interests. Educational managers are gradually more turning to the collaboration strategy amongst stakeholders in order to influence successful school change (Jamali et al., 2015). But one has to keep in mind that collaboration may also be used for the achievement of specific goals whereas, collaboration is not a goal, other than a means to achieve specific results.

Collaborative managerial practices are characterized as an assortment of diverse administrative procedures which edify a feeling of cohesion and teamwork among educational managers and the teachers inside a school. It may be extensively perceived as the demonstration of cooperating collectively to achieve a shared objective within stipulated time period.

Collaborative managerial practices are a vital attribute of any successful school (Rubin, 2009). When school stakeholders respect and acknowledge each others' abilities and collaborative roles, everyone moves forward and a positive school climate is created. Collaborative management presents teachers with the opportunities so that they can develop their skills all the way through augmented management prospects. This also makes them feel being valued (Goddard et al., 2015).

Collaborative Management is a vast term and discussed differently in varied contexts. In this study the researcher outlined six dimensions after extensive literature review and detailed discussion with experts. The details of dimensions used in the study are *i.e.* Interpersonal Relationships, Task Effectiveness, Collaborative Teaching Practices, Enhancing Authentic Collaboration, Enhancing Specialization and Routine Procedures.

Successful school managers promote collaborative societies. Schools need committed, esteem drove, capable and profoundly energetic school managers who can support thoughtful practice and encourage discourse and participation among all school staff and with different stakeholders (Crowther et al., 2009).

When students see their teachers while working in a collaborative environment, by observing them they learn collaborative management skills and also learn active participation with democracy. New models of educational management perceive that adequacy in information put together conditions depends less with respect to the chivalrous activities of a couple of people at the top and more on cooperative administrative practices scattered all through a hierarchical recommending, consequently, a more powerful social idea of initiative has arisen (Hempsall, 2014; Uhl-Bien, 2006).

Hoy et al., (2002) advocated that a solid school environment is permeated with collaborative managerial practices executed by educational managers, head teachers, teachers and community who are connected with each other and foster trust, respect and care. Best practices for learning incorporate having educators, school staff and educational manager all add to a positive school climate exemplified by trust and caring connections (Donaldson, 2006).

As indicated by Gray (2013), at the heart of any prolific school improvement plan or transformation force are individuals who are responsible to explain and interpret objectives to all concerned. In elementary level schools, AEOs are the critical mediators of innovative projects and procedures that effect school performance significantly.

Elementary level Schools have also turned to the innovative approach of collaboration (Irfan, 2021). In the rapid changing educational situation in the province, the basic job of public school teachers has become augmented and now gone are the days when low qualified and non - prepared educators ran public sector educational systems. The new educational plan and ongoing drives demands a great deal of collaboration and teamwork from public sector teachers and educational managers in completing the commitments of nation building (Bogo & Vayda, (2016). Hasan (2019) affirmed that mentoring teachers is the core responsibility of educational managers in contemporary era. They should identify the barriers to learning by discussion with teachers in the respectful manner.

### **Hypotheses**

H1: There is no significant difference in teachers' and head teachers' perceptions regarding level of collaborative managerial practices at elementary level.

H2: There is no significant effect of collaborative managerial practices on school performance.

### **Material and Methods**

#### **Research Design**

Research designs of varied nature are being used in researches differently *i.e.* descriptive, correlational, experimental, quasi experimental, diagnostic, cross-sectional, explanatory, quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods (Gay, et al., 2009; Fraenkel, et al., 2011). Nature of the current study demanded the collection of quantitative data first and then for the explanation and confirmation of quantitative findings, it required the collection of qualitative data. In a nutshell, confirmatory mixed methods design looked more suitable for the present research study.

#### **Population and Sample**

Target population included all elementary level schools' head teachers and teachers of primary and elementary schools (public sector) in the Punjab province of Pakistan. Accessible population included all head teachers and teachers of all primary and elementary schools comprised of all one hundred and sixteen (116) male and female markaz in seven tehsils of district Sargodha Each markaz consisted of ten to fifteen primary and elementary level schools. The study was delimited to Sargodha district due to constraints of time and resources.

Multistage stratified random sampling technique was employed. At first stage, 32 Markaz out of total 116 were selected. They were further divided as 16 Male (8 Rural/ 8 Urban) & 16 Female (8 Rural/ 8 Urban). Each Markaz has 10 to 16 schools but 10 schools of each Markaz were selected randomly (all elementary level schools and remaining randomly selected from stand alone primary schools of selected

marakiz. At second stage, 2 teachers and head of these schools were selected conveniently. The sample was divided into two groups; male and female: urban and rural.

### Instruments

For the collection of quantitative data, these instruments were used in this study.

1. Questionnaires for Head Teachers
2. Questionnaires for Teachers

The researcher personally collected data. The researcher requested permission from all district level authorities, heads and teachers of concerned school before starting data collection. The detailed introduction of the study was discussed to extend rapport. It was ensured that the respondents fill them completely and return them as well.

### Results and Discussion

#### Quantitative Part

#### Analysis of Head Teachers' perceptions regarding Collaborative Managerial Practices (CMP) and its all dimensions

**Table 1**  
**Head Teachers' perceived level of Collaborative Managerial Practices (N=320)**

No	Description	SD %	D %	(SD+D) %	U %	A %	SA %	(A+SA) %	Mean	Level
1	Interpersonal Relationships	5.5	16.9	22.4	21.6	51.6	6.2	57.8	3.35	Moderate
2	Task Effectiveness	4.5	16.1	20.7	21.9	50.3	7.4	57.7	3.41	Moderate
3	Collaborative Teaching Practices	1.8	10.3	12.1	12.0	59.9	16.0	75.9	3.82	High
4	Enhancing Authentic Collaboration	2.6	9.4	12.0	11.5	56.2	20.3	76.5	3.79	High
5	Enhancing Specialization	3.5	8.8	12.3	11.4	57.8	18.5	76.3	3.81	High
6	Routine Procedures	3.3	8.6	11.9	10.8	54.6	22.6	77.3	3.83	High
<b>Overall average Percentages and Mean scores</b>		<b>3.6</b>	<b>11.9</b>	<b>15.6</b>	<b>15.3</b>	<b>55.3</b>	<b>14.3</b>	<b>69.6</b>	<b>3.67</b>	<b>Moderate</b>

Description of Range: *Low* (Range 1.00-2.33), *Moderate* (Range 2.34-3.67), *High* (Range 3.68-5.00) (Idrus& Abdullah, 2018).

Table 1 reflects overall the moderate level of collaborative managerial practices according to the perceptions of head teachers of elementary level public schools in Sargodha District. The data confirms that, on the whole, the existing level of collaborative managerial practices in elementary level public schools were reported at moderate level of mean score (3.67). High level of mean score was reported in four dimensions '*Collaborative Teaching Practices (3.82)*, '*Enhancing Specialization (3.79)*', '*Enhancing Authentic Collaboration (3.81)*' and '*Routine Procedures (3.83)*' whereas mean score of two dimensions '*Interpersonal Relationships (3.35)*' and '*Task Effectiveness (3.41)*' was at moderate level. This indicates that all stakeholders, especially educational managers need to focus more on building formal and informal relationships among themselves. They also have to divide all the tasks using collaborative practices in order to enhance task effectiveness. AEOs, heads and

teachers will have to focus more on these dimensions in order to improve schools' performance significantly.

### **Analysis of Teachers' perceptions regarding Collaborative Managerial Practices (CMP) and its all dimensions**

**Table 2**  
**Teachers' perceived level of Collaborative Managerial Practices**

No	Description	S D %	D %	(SD+D) %	U %	A %	SA %	(A+SA) %	Mean	Level
1	Interpersonal Relationships	1.1	11.5	12.6	21.4	34.1	32.0	66.0	3.85	High
2	Task Effectiveness	6.6	19.4	26.0	18.2	35.4	20.4	55.8	3.44	Moderate
3	Collaborative Teaching Practices	3.2	12.2	15.4	14.6	40.2	29.8	70.0	3.81	High
4	Enhancing Specialization	3.9	19.5	23.4	21.3	27.7	27.6	55.3	3.56	Moderate
5	Enhancing Authentic Collaboration	2.1	18.3	20.4	28.9	24.7	26.1	50.8	3.54	Moderate
6	Routine Procedures	1.3	21.6	22.9	32.3	21.7	23.1	44.8	3.44	Moderate
<b>Overall average Percentages and Mean scores</b>		<b>2.7</b>	<b>16.0</b>	<b>18.7</b>	<b>22.1</b>	<b>31.7</b>	<b>27.5</b>	<b>59.2</b>	<b>3.65</b>	<b>Moderate</b>

Table 2 reflects the level of collaborative managerial practices as perceived by the teachers of elementary level public schools in Sargodha District. The data in this table illustrates that, on the whole, the existing level of collaborative managerial practices in elementary level public schools were measured at moderate level (3.65). The existing level for its four dimensions 'Task Effectiveness (3.44) Enhancing Specialization (3.56), Enhancing Authentic Collaboration (3.54) and Routine Procedures (3.44)' was at moderate level whereas mean scores of its two dimensions 'Interpersonal Relationships (3.85) and Collaborative Teaching Practices (3.81)' were reported at high level. This indicates that all stakeholders, especially educational managers need to focus more on dividing all the tasks using collaborative practices in order to enhance task effectiveness and specialisation. Everyone needs to build healthy relationships based on mutual trust and sense of responsibility. In this way more authentic collaboration will be enhanced and so will be routine procedures which will significantly make climate of schools more conducive and positive. AEOs, heads and teachers will have to focus more on these dimensions in order to improve schools' performance significantly.

### **Analysis of Inferential Statistics (Independent Samples t-test)**

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant difference in teachers' and head teachers' perceptions regarding level of collaborative managerial practices at elementary level.

**Table 3**  
**Difference between perceptions of Teachers' and Head teachers regarding collaborative managerial practices**

Sr.#	Variable	Respondents	Mean	Mean Difference (Desired-Existing)	SD	t	P
1	Collaborative Management	Head Teachers	2.77	0.83	2.68	46.95	.000
		Teachers	3.60				

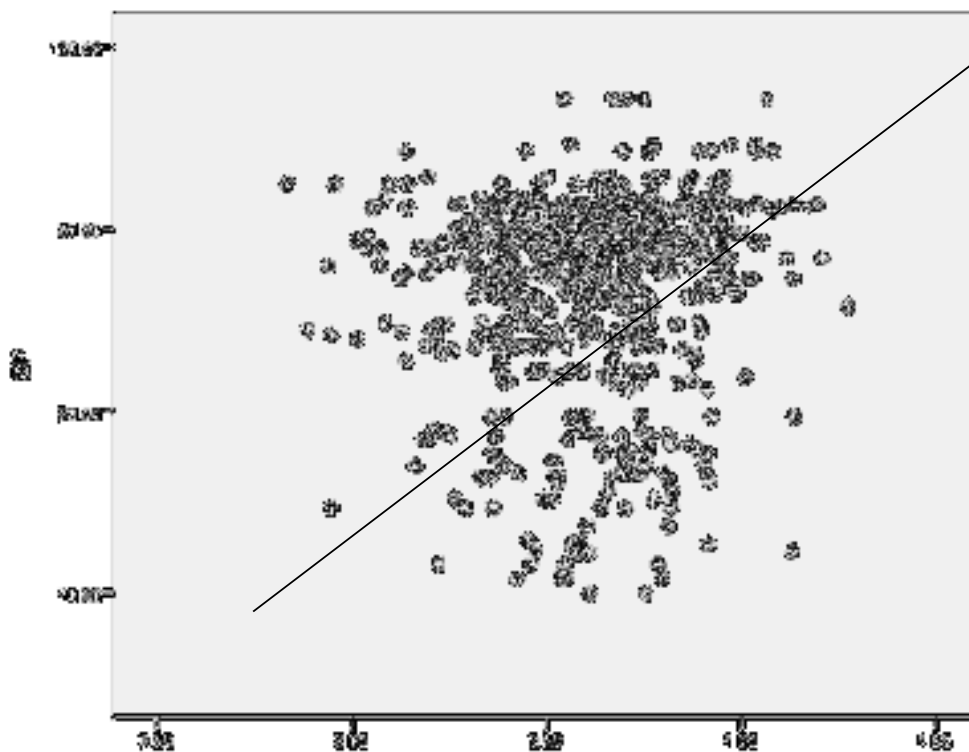
$df= 958, p<0.05$

Table 3 shows the mean difference between teachers' and head teachers' perceptions regarding level of collaborative managerial practices. The results of paired samples *t*-test confirmed the rejection of null hypothesis "there is no significant difference in teachers' and head teachers' perceptions regarding level of collaborative managerial practices at elementary level". Teachers' perceptions were more positive than the head teachers.

### Regression Analysis

#### Linearity of the variables

School Performance (Dependent) collaborative managerial practices (Independent)



#### CMP

Regression analysis was performed to check the linearity of the School Performance (DV) and Collaborative Managerial Practices (IV) variables. It was confirmed through the scatter plot. Results in the above mentioned scattered plot deny any significant relationship amid the both variables.

**Table 4**  
**Regression analysis of Collaborative Managerial Practices and School Performance**

#### Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.386 <sup>a</sup>	.149	.148	9.72203

a. Predictors: (Constant), Collaborative Managerial Practices



The table 4 shows the R and R Square values. Furthermore, the R value represents the sample correlation (.386) and R Square column points towards the extent total variation in the School Performance (DV), can be elucidated by Collaborative Managerial Practices (IV).

This ANOVA table reports that how adequately the regression equation predicted the DV as it is revealed under:

**Table 5  
ANOVA**

	<b>Model</b>	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
	Regression	15863.479	1	15863.479	167.836	.000 <sup>b</sup>
1	Residual	90548.201	958	94.518		
	Total	106411.680	959			

a. DV: School Performance (SP)

b. Predictors: (Constant), Collaborative Managerial practices (CMP)

This table designates that the regression model significantly well predicted the dependent variable *i.e.*, see the significant value (.000) in the regression row. It also points towards the regression model's statistical significance. Here the  $p=0.000$  value, which is less than 0.05, predicts the outcome variable. In addition, it also establishes whether collaborative managerial practices' statistical significance contributes to the model (*by looking at the "Sig" column*).The next table of coefficients presents essential data to predict collaborative managerial practices and school performance as it is shown under:

**Table 6  
Coefficients**

	<b>Model</b>	<b>Unstandardized Coefficients</b>		<b>Standardized Coefficients</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
		<b>B</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>	<b>Beta</b>		
	(Constant)	38.634	2.723		14.186	.000
1	Collaborative management	.309	.024	.386	12.955	.000

DV: School Performance (SP)

IV: Collaborative Managerial practices (CMP)

Linear regression distinguished the effect of Collaborative Managerial Practices (IV) on School Performance (DV).

**Equation**

$$Y = a + bx + E$$

$$SP = a + b (CM)$$

$$SP = 38.634 + .309 (CM)$$

P value (0.00) in the table shows that there is significant effect of Collaborative Management on School performance.  $F(1,958) = 167.836, p = .000$

The null hypothesis 'there is no significant effect of collaborative management on school performance as perceived by teachers and head teachers' was rejected. Results showed that there is significant effect of collaborative management in the improvement of school performance.

### **Results - Qualitative Part**

The participants generally agreed that they have seen positive outcomes from on the job mentoring of AEOs. It illustrates that if properly implemented, collaborative management and creating positive school climate is highly productive for public school teachers and head teachers and ultimately it enhances school performance. They further stated that they are expecting more encouraging results in near future. AEOs were hopeful that they would be able to transform schools under their jurisdiction by collaborative managerial practices if the top management considers it important and give AEOs ample time for this significant task. So, it can be concluded that desired outcomes from collaborative management and school climate can be seen where implemented.

The majority of participants also agreed that collaborative management also had positive effect on participants as it improved quality of teaching & learning, stronger peer relationships, greater job satisfaction, less stress on the job, increased results and student learning outcomes, students as confident learners, improved attendance, decreased dropouts, increased students' and their parents' satisfaction and it also increased school performance score measured by PMIU.

In a nutshell, the results of the current study suggested that school performance increased considerably where AEOs and head teachers collaborated to support and facilitate teachers and also each other in achievement of goals. If properly conceptualised collaborative managerial practices are implemented in its true letter and spirit, the climate of the school significantly changes positively and consequently performance of schools increases radically.

### **Discussion**

The overall findings of current research study are in accordance with Leithwood et al. (2019) who specified that educational management at school level has an undeniable impact on the overall quality of schools which eventually has positive effect on characteristics of school performance. The study by Hallinger (2018) who abridged those current studies on educational management which have increasingly formed empirical evidence indicative that school management influences school performance considerably. This study has similar findings that collaborative managerial practices enhance school performance significantly.

The findings are support the study by Putman (2013) which also revealed the impact of head teachers' shared leadership attributes on school performance He added that the teachers who get support and cooperation from their educational managers are more dedicated to increase school performance. The results of this study are also in agreement with current study as qualitative analysis postulates that school performance increases where AEOs and head teachers collaborate to support and facilitate each other in achievement of goals.

The findings are in line with the study of de Jong et al., (2019) which explored that collaboration at secondary schools level is very effective and fruitful for teachers'

professional education. Educational managers directly and indirectly influence teacher's execution of useful instructional strategies, skills and practices. It also endorses the findings of Wahlstrom et al. (2010) which established the effect of managerial practices on student learning and overall school performance. They asserted the reality that educational managers must engage all stakeholders in the pursuit for better school performance.

Arivayagan et al., (2017) specified that teachers perceived an overall high level achievement in secondary schools while the level of effective head teachers' managerial practices was at a moderate level. Deligiannidou et al., (2020) established that teachers were satisfied with their head teachers' managerial practices in Greece. A study by Fullan (2009) also maintains that management and teachers need to be collaborating as compared to work individually for improved output. As teachers work collaboratively, every one puts together a more unfathomable shared impact on achievement of students and more significantly on school performance than the isolated efforts which are much more restricted. A study by Ali and Yangaiya (2015) also supported the notion that the school level management who collaborated with teachers is more likely to promote interpersonal relationships and resultantly endorse progress and positive change which is based on a mutual understanding.

### **Conclusions**

1. It was concluded that collaborative managerial practices were at moderate level. Hence, all stakeholders at elementary level should exert more efforts in order to enhance their role in increasing school performance.
2. It was concluded that there was significant effect of Collaborative Management (CM) on School Performance (SP) and it leads to the conclusion that better collaborative managerial practices increase the School Performance (SP) considerably.

### **Recommendations**

1. It is recommended that AEOs should recognize their role to work in close collaboration with head teachers, teachers and school councils in order to plan, develop, implement and track progress of systems and frameworks that enhance school performance.
2. It is recommended that excessive workload and irrelevant assignments on daily basis create a big hindrance in achieving desired results regarding collaboration, positive school climate and improved school performance. Hence, it is highly recommended that higher authorities at secretariat level at Lahore, CEOs, DEOs and Dy DEOs at district and tehsil levels should address these genuine issues and support (*Reinforcement, Encourage, Reward* AEOs) in implementation of all collaborative managerial practices.

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