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Teacher leadership: A case study of teacher leaders' professional development in an EFL institute of a Saudi Arabian university

Submitted by

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To

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Dedication

To my leader, Mr. Imran Khan Niazi, the lodestar of my life.

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Abstract

The key aims of this case study are to understand the notion of teacher leadership and identify factors that impact the professional development of teacher leaders in a foreign language institute. As little empirical research exists on how EFL teacher leaders acquire leadership skills and learn about leadership roles, this study explores factors contributing to the professional learning and growth of EFL teacher leaders in the Saudi EFL context. The study is an interpretive one, using semi-structured interviews as the primary data collection instrument complemented by an open-ended questionnaire. The detailed accounts of 12 EFL teacher leaders indicate that '*teacher leadership'* is a novel construct at the ELI where teacher leadership roles are positioned in the middle of the organisational hierarchy. EFL teachers in these middle-level leadership roles have titles such as head of professional development unit (PDU), head of academic coordination unit (ACU) and head of curriculum unit (CU). In spite of being a new concept at the ELI, leadership roles and responsibilities to a great extent share similarities with teacher leadership in western school contexts. However, teacher leaders encounter various challenges which are mainly due to the bureaucratic structures at the ELI. The data reveal lack of autonomy, inadequate professional support from the top management, and ineffectiveness of the existing professional development courses at the ELI.

This study provides insights into factors which support EFL teacher leader professional development. There are five main elements: a) previous experiential learning, both formal and informal; b) leadership knowledge, skills and abilities which are brought to their current roles and further improved through collaborative practices; c) intrinsic motivation and personal urge to do more learning and leading; d) learning from being in leadership roles; and e) reflective practices at individual and group levels. Despite the concurrent difficulties and uncooperative workplace environment, the EFL teacher leaders managed to acquire role-related leadership skills while learning on the job.

This thesis concludes by offering suggestions tailored to the professional development needs of teacher leaders in the EFL context, namely that top leadership should adopt flexible leadership approaches and that trainers should conduct more context-specific professional development courses on a regular basis. These supportive strategies should ensure sustainable professional development and raise the degree of professionalism among EFL teacher leaders at the ELI.

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List of abbreviations

TESOL: Teaching of English to the Speakers of Other Languages

ELT: English Language Teaching

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ESL: English as a Second Language

ELI: English Language Institute

HE: Higher Education

MHE: Ministry of Higher Education

ALC: Academic Leadership Centre

KSA: Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

PYP: Preparatory Year Programme

ACU: Academic Coordination Unit

PDU: Professional Development Unit

CU: Curriculum Unit

PD: Professional Development

CoP: Community of Practice

PLC: Professional Learning Community

ZPD: Zone of Proximal Development

SDL: Self Direct Learning

IELTS: International English Language Testing System

KSAALT: Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Association of Language Teachers

VD: Vice Dean

IT   Information Technology

UoE: University of Exeter

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1. Nature of the Problem

The growing complexity of educational demands worldwide has intensified the need for leadership practices that embolden teachers to go beyond their classroom responsibilities and play an active role as leaders. These increasing professional demands have led to the rise of the phenomenon of teacher leadership, a "process by which teachers, individually or collectively, influence their colleagues, principals, and other members of school communities to improve teaching and learning practices with the aim of increased student learning and achievement" (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009, p. 288). Although largely in western contexts, the process of teacher leadership empowers teachers to affect change in their schools and perform a variety of leadership roles. The knowledge of pedagogy, years of service to school community, deeper understanding of educational practices, and ability to influence others are the characteristics which have earned teacher leaders recognition as reform agents, policy implementers, subject specialists, guides to knowledge and role models for their colleagues (Tomal, Schilling, & Wilhite, 2014). Going beyond their pedagogical responsibilities, teacher leaders think not only of the achievement of their learners, but of the success of their schools as well. Nevertheless, in conjunction with teaching load, the added responsibility of leadership often challenges the leadership skills of teachers, thus requiring them to work on their leadership capacity building to ensure a successful discharge of their teacher leadership roles. Capacity building involves "…developing the collective ability---dispositions, skills, knowledge, motivation, and resources---to act together to bring about positive change" (Fullan, 2005, p.4). However, the majority of the teachers do not join schools with the essential knowledge and skills of exercising teacher leadership, particularly novice teachers who often need to learn about the school system and organisational structures (e.g. Muijs et al., 2013; Collinson, 2012; Anderson, 2008; Grimsæth et al., 2008).

Therefore, for teachers in leadership positions, professional learning about their leadership roles, school structures and organisational cultures becomes indispensable.

In TESOL, professional learning and development of leaders are emphasised like any other field. Liu (2008) suggests that, to meet global challenges in the ELT world and achieve professional excellence, every TESOL professional should take a range of active roles and contribute to the success of their organisation and the TESOL profession. He further states that personal success may not be attainable without effective leadership skills which are essential in all fields, but in ELT they directly affect the quality of language education and the soundness of a programme. Graddol (2008) too, emphasises the role of strategic skills for ELT professionals to run a successful language programme. Liu and Graddol's emphasis on leadership skills shows that, in language teaching institutes, individuals in top- and middle-level leadership positions should equip themselves with necessary skills in order to enhance their professional effectiveness, achieve organisational outcomes and contribute to the TESOL profession.

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate how English language teachers as teacher leaders develop professionally in the Saudi Arabian EFL context. The case study design offers an opportunity for EFL teacher leaders to share their perceptions of teacher leadership, leadership practices, and their learning experiences as teacher leaders at the English Language Institute (ELI).

1.2. Rationale for the study

The first and key rationale for this study is to recognise the language teachers' ability to develop into effective teacher leaders in EFL institutes. Language teachers, in general, have considerable qualifications and training in teaching but not in leading, so success in the ever-changing school environment might not be easy for them to achieve (Watkins, 2005). However, Bailey, Thibault & Nunan (2009) observe that, prior to assuming

leadership positions at the top level, TESOL leaders often have extensive leadership and TESOL related experience, knowledge of the field, and the required flexibility for the assigned roles. This could be true about different contexts around the world; however, the Saudi Arabian EFL context presents a dismal picture, as Shah (2014) reveals that the top leadership mostly hails from non-TESOL backgrounds and lacks the professional ability to have the vision for a language institute. Due to the absence of basic know-how of ELT/TESOL and their irrelevant professional fields, such as engineering or economics, the top leadership becomes reliant on teacher leaders in the middle-level roles for the operation of EFL institutes. As a result, the role of teacher leaders becomes crucial in undertaking operational and instructional leadership tasks. However, being classroom teachers, their leadership skills are often tested, requiring them to proactively respond to the challenges and meet the expectations of top management and fellow teachers. Their ability to effectively perform as teacher leaders prompts the question of how EFL instructors evolve into leaders and what conditions or factors support their professional development while operating as teacher leaders.

The second major reason that led to this study is my personal urge to understand how EFL teachers at the ELI, despite being classroom teachers, effectively perform as teacher leaders in middle-level leadership positions. These individuals, in roles such as academic coordinator, PD specialist or curriculum developer, often inspire me to learn from their professional guidance, mentorship and counseling. With their knowledge and skills, they build a bridge between the top leadership and fellow teachers. I always wonder how they learned the art of leadership and became effectively persuasive, inspiring and trustworthy teacher leaders. This curiosity motivated me to embark on a study which could determine factors contributing to the teacher leaders' professional learning and development at the ELI.

Finally, my renewed interest in the field of leadership and teacher leader learning came from the inspirational literature of Stephen R. Covey. His book *Principle Centered Leadership* was instrumental in my desire to conduct a research study on leadership development of EFL teacher leaders. In Covey's opinion, principle-centred leaders have three key endowments - character, competence and trust - which he believes can be learned, practised and mastered in any learning organisation. I often feel intrigued to know how language teachers as leaders develop their character, enhance their professional competence, and build trusting relationships at the ELI.

1.3. Significance of the study

Teacher leadership roles, such as curriculum coordinator, subject specialist, mentor and teacher trainers, are considered crucial to school development due to the teacher leaders' ability to undertake major tasks, influence changes and reforms, and serve as a bridge between the top leadership and fellow teachers. Their pivotal role in school functioning has convinced educational organisations around the world to invest in leadership capacity building of teacher leaders by offering opportunities, such as PD programmes, courses and workshops. Moreover, they are encouraged to learn by taking risks, experimenting and trying new things (Bennis, 2009), by being a protégé of their senior colleagues, or working in a community of practice (Stephenson & Howard, 2011). Teacher leaders' ability to create instructionally specific dialogues, develop trusting relationships and work in collaborative cultures lead to their professional learning (Portin, 2009 as cited in Stephenson & Howard, 2011). These opportunities, whether self-created or offered by their organisations, are vital for teachers who lack educational leadership experience, training and knowledge of leadership theories and practices. Since not many studies have sought to investigate this area before, it is vital to explore how teacher leaders develop their leadership repertoire in the field of ELT.

As the development of academic leaders in various higher education institutes around the world is a major concern, organisations offer PD opportunities to their staff with different foci and goals (Khathlan, 2010 cited in Al-Swailem & Elliott, 2013). In Saudi Arabia, academic leadership development started in 2007 when the Ministry of Higher Education commenced a project called 'Horizon' which incorporates a comprehensive view of developing academic leadership at the system and organisational levels. Academic leadership development is an integral component of the project; however, it mainly focuses on senior academic leadership, such as deans, vice deans, or heads of departments at universities, while completely ignoring the professional learning needs of the middle-level leadership, such as head of the units, academic coordinators, teacher mentors or trainers. Despite an emphasis on effective leadership skills for ELT professionals by Stephenson (2008), the Horizon project overlooks the context of language teaching institutes and Preparatory Year Programmes (PYP) at Saudi universities. Generally, the top leadership often lacks vision and knowledge of ELT, and EFL teachers in the middle-level leadership positions play a significant role in the operation of PYPs in Saudi universities. Since teachers in leadership positions are primarily EFL instructors and often lack leadership skills and experience, they need to be supported in their bid to learn and enhance the necessary leadership skills to facilitate their teacher leadership roles.

Acknowledging the significant role of teacher leaders and their improved leadership skills in the operation of a language institute, this study provides EFL teacher leaders a chance to reflect on and share their lived experiences of leadership roles and development as teacher leaders in the Saudi EFL context. As the Horizon project does not offer any support to leaders in the middle-level leadership positions, individuals in such roles in EFL/ESL and mainstream education can learn from the teacher leaders' experience to expand their leadership repertoire. In addition, the concept of *teacher leadership* is not frequently used in Saudi higher education institutions. In western contexts, teacher leadership has

been seen as a paradigm shift and a step in the direction of empowering teachers, to make them part of the decision-making process and enable them to play an active role in institutional reforms. Hence, exploring the meaning of teacher leadership from the perspective of EFL teacher leaders in a non-western ESL/EFL context may serve in-service ELT professionals, prospective EFL teacher leaders and those in decision-making positions to conceptualise teacher leadership and improve their leadership practices in traditional top-down leadership models such as those in Saudi Arabia.

1.4. Contribution to knowledge

Since the 1980s, the concept of teacher leadership has commonly been used in western school contexts; however, it is not a frequently used term in Saudi higher education institutes. In the immediate context of this research, which is an EFL institute, this study introduces the concept of teacher leadership in an attempt to bring awareness among the teachers, teacher leaders in middle-level leadership positions, top leadership and policy makers about the significance of teacher leadership and teacher leader development. Indeed, this qualitative case study explores new horizons in the EFL world by determining the factors that influence teacher leader development. It contributes towards an understanding of how EFL teacher leaders expand their knowledge and acquire new skills while experiencing middle-level leadership roles at the ELI. Moreover, teacher leadership has served as a change agent in western contexts in which individuals in such positions influence change, work in collaboration with colleagues and contribute to organisational outcomes. However, research has not found these features of teacher leadership in other EFL/ESL contexts. Thus, this case study explores EFL teacher leaders' perceptions of teacher leadership and leadership practices in the Saudi EFL context, which will help in assessing the professional directions and training that EFL teacher leaders receive at the ELI or elsewhere and how they impact on their professional development.

It is hoped that factors which influence EFL teacher leaders' development will be a new addition to the body of literature in mainstream education as well as in ELT.

1.5. Research aims

The participants of this study hold key teacher leadership positions, such as head of academic coordination unit, head of curriculum unit and head of professional development unit. Despite being ranked as excellent classroom teachers by the ELI, they often need to expand their leadership knowledge and skills based on the demands of their teacher leadership roles. In order to unpick the process of their leadership learning and their perception of teacher leadership at the ELI, this case study has the following three aims:

- To understand the notion of teacher leadership from the perspective of EFL teacher leaders at the ELI

- To identify the kinds of skills and knowledge teacher leaders need to have for the successful dispensation of their leadership responsibilities at the ELI

- To explore factors contributing to the professional learning and development of EFL teachers leaders at the ELI

1.6. Structure of the thesis

This thesis is organised into seven chapters. Following this introductory chapter, in Chapter 2 the contextual background of the study is explained. Chapter 3 is a review of the literature on the concept of teacher leadership and teacher leader development. Chapter 4 describes and justifies the chosen method and introduces the data collection and data analysis procedures. In Chapter 5, the findings of the study are presented. Chapter 6 discusses the findings in relation to research questions. Finally, Chapter 7

concludes the research project by summarising the key findings, outlining their implications and stating the limitations of the study.

Chapter 2. Research setting

This chapter describes the research setting of the current case study. It commences with a description of Saudi Arabian culture, and then explains the education system and the reform agenda introduced by the Ministry of Higher Education (MHE) in Saudi Arabia. The second section introduces the Academic Leadership Centre (ALC) and its role as providing professional development programmes for academic leaders in the Higher Education (HE) institutions in Saudi Arabia. The last part of the chapter provides a detailed overview of the immediate context of the research.

2.1. The description of Saudi Arabian culture

As leadership functions within cultural, social and religious constraints and parameters, the context of an organisation can influence the developmental process that includes professional interactions, sharing of learning experiences and the individuals' ability to learn and enhance their leadership skills (Anderson, 2008). Hence, to understand how EFL teacher leaders develop and how teacher leadership appears in the Saudi Arabian EFL context, a description of its cultural, social and religious characteristics is important.

Saudi Arabia, with a population of 28.7 million including 5.6 million expatriates, in 13 administrative provinces, is the largest country in the Middle East. As the birthplace of Islam, Saudi Arabia owns a special status owing to the holy cities of Madinah and Makkah, which are visited by two to three million Hajj pilgrims every year from all over the world. The name of the country is associated with the ruling dynasty, Al Saud. In the early 20th century, the founder of the country, King Abdul-Aziz bin Abdel-Rahman Al-Saud, united the peninsula and the kingdom was created on September 22nd, 1932 (Al-Abbas, 2010). The kingdom has a monarchical system which is limited to the sons of the founder and the citizens need to pledge allegiance to the king and his family.

In Saudi Arabia, Islam is practised by 99% of the population and the laws of the kingdom (Shari'ah) are based on the teaching of prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The teachings of Islam, in the form of the Quran, provide principles for living in a fair, equitable and egalitarian society with a transparent economic system (Ezzi et al., 2014). Shari'ah is practised in other Arab countries which share borders with Saudi Arabia; however, stringent social and cultural norms differentiate the kingdom from its neighboring states of Iraq, Jordan, Yemen and UAE.

Saudi culture is largely the combination of Islamic (religious) and tribal values or social traditions, which influence people's beliefs and dispositions at their personal, social and professional levels. The strict social codes of the Bedouin tribes, together with historically influenced patriarchal family structures, are the key features of Saudi society. These codes influence social interaction which manifests a strong gender segregation sanctioned by the government and society. To ensure gender segregation, there are separate schools, universities and banks for women across the kingdom (Ezzi et al., 2014).

The influence of tribal Bedouin culture can be seen in the functioning of educational organisations that are vested in hierarchical management models. The education system in Saudi Arabia is made to support and sustain gender divisions and power relations through gender-segregated educational institutions and differentiated curriculums for male and female students (Sanabary, 1994). In academic institutions and professional communities, managerial and pedagogical practices are influenced by the cultural, tribal and political norms and values of Saudi society (Al Lily, 2014).

2.2. Education System in Saudi Arabia

In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, general education comprises one year of preschool, six years of primary, three years of intermediate and three years of high school. High school education has two broad academic divisions, sciences and arts. After intermediate school,

students may choose three years of vocational education as an alternative to the academic high school programme. Students from high schools proceed to the universities where they have to complete the mandatory preparatory year programme (PYP). The PYP provides students with a foundation in English, mathematics, IT and other science and arts subjects. It also guides students towards choosing their intended field of specialisation, such as medicine, engineering or banking. At Saudi Arabian universities, the undergraduate degrees take a further four to five years to complete and can be followed by a one year master degree programme.

2.2.1. The nature of Saudi higher education and its reform agenda

Higher education in Saudi Arabia is a recent phenomenon that started with the foundation of the first university in 1957. The last decade has seen significant improvement, especially in the increased number of state owned universities which rose from eight in 2001 to 32 in 2011. In February 2007, the Saudi government launched a reform agenda with the approval of the *King Abdullah Project* for the development of public education. This mega project of $US 3.1 billion over a 5-year period aimed to enhance the Saudi education system. Funds were specified for initiatives such as professional development of teachers, curriculum development and textbook reviews, access to advanced forms of IT for teaching and learning, and programmes for developing innovative pedagogical practices. Simultaneously, the goals of the development fund were to deepen Islamic values, social norms, family allegiance, to appreciate national achievements and to preserve heritage (Smith & Abouammoh, 2013).

In the mid-1990s the Saudi government, through a centralised system, maintained heavy and direct regulations in higher education in the form of students' enrolment, admission procedures and recruitment policies (Alkhazim, 2003). However, due to the rapid growth in research-based Saudi universities in recent years, there has been an increased demand by the state owned universities to have the right to make their own decisions with regards

to fund allocations and other institutional policies (Al-Eisa & Smith, 2013). To realise these goals, governance reforms, minimal interference of the government and more competition between the Saudi universities were deemed inevitable (Christensen, 2011). This realisation has led to the establishment of nine private universities in the kingdom.

Reflecting the patriarchal social structures discussed above, higher education institutions are controlled by the Saudi government through a hierarchical power structure. The top authority is the Council of Saudi Higher Education, which is responsible for regulating and supervising the HE system. The council, being chaired by the Saudi king, consists of the presidents of state owned universities, members of the Ministry of Education, Higher Education, Labour, Economy and Planning, Social Affairs, Civil Services and Finance. The council directs HE policies at the national level, introduces rules and regulations, and approves the formation of new universities and programmes (Al-Eisa & Smith, 2013). The MHE ensures the successful implementation of these rules, policies and decisions, and supervises the progress of all the universities. These state owned universities abide by the regulations of the council, which offers a framework for internal governance (General Secretariat, 2007). The hierarchical structure helps the council to control and administer the day-to-day business of the universities across the kingdom. In line with the patriarchal social structures of Saudi Arabia, all the universities' presidents and vice presidents are males, who oversee the affairs of both the men's and women's campuses. Although Al-Eisa and Smith (2013) believe that the reform agenda of Saudi higher education intends to give autonomy to the universities in the decision-making process, the hierarchical structures, which are mainly concerned with compliance and control, do not allow the universities to have institutional autonomy. Arguably, this has resulted in an inappropriate infrastructure and flawed self-governance in most universities, which already experience the bureaucratic nature of academic authority. Hence, for effective operation of the universities, Al-Eisa and Smith (2013) emphasise the importance of a shift from centralisation and stringent regulations to autonomy and healthy competition

among the Saudi universities. They also warn the authorities that the existing model of governance is no longer able to overcome the challenges faced by the HE institutions and thus the MHE's monopoly needs to end to allow the universities to adopt practices that serve the students, faculty and administration.

2.3. The establishment of the Academic Leadership Centre (ALC)

Al-Swailem and Elliott (2013) state that, in light of the variety of challenges faced by the higher education sector in Saudi Arabia, academic leadership plays a crucial role in achieving the stated aims and objectives of the ministry. Due to this pivotal role, academic leadership is supported through leadership development and training programmes at the universities. For this purpose, the Academic Leadership Centre (ALC) was established in 2009 as an integral part of the *King Abdullah Project of Development,* which aims to enhance leadership excellence in higher education institutes across the kingdom. ALC offers advice to academic leaders and develops the leadership skills and competence essential for leadership roles in state owned universities. However, there is a serious lack of empirical research on its achievements and contributions to academic leadership development, which could be a researcher's future endeavour.

ALC aims to be a leading organisation in the region for leadership development in higher education institutions. It offers a range of professional training workshops and development programmes to institutional leaders and administrators in a bid to assist them with their leadership roles in higher education institutions across the kingdom (Al-Swailem & Elliott, 2013). ALC has five main goals:

1. *To contribute to the development and spread of a leadership culture that fosters innovation, success and excellence*
2. *To advance effective leadership behaviours and practices through services and programmes on matters of higher education leadership and management*
3. *To assist in decision-making through information and diagnostic assessments of the state of leadership and management*

4. *To facilitate leadership development and succession planning in higher education institutions*
5. *To be responsive to the evolving and changing leadership challenges and needs of the stakeholders.*   *(Al-Swailem & Elliott, 2013, p. 44)*

Al-Swailem and Elliott (2013) explain that ALC conducts research projects focusing on leadership practices in Saudi universities. It organises conferences and symposia and offers participants an opportunity to share experiences, discuss leadership practices and exchange knowledge and information on leadership theories. Furthermore, the centre has established a professional network of internationally recognised experts, educators, trainers and partner institutions. These shared practices aim to provide top-notch professional assistance and learning opportunities to further improve leadership practices. In spite of the research efforts, studies on leadership development are scarce or probably not published in peer-reviewed journals. Although not referring to its key achievements so far, Al-Swailem and Elliott (2013) consider the ALC a promising project that will help in developing models of academic leadership development in Saudi Arabia.

One of the key drawbacks of ALC is that it focuses on top leadership, i.e. presidents, vice presidents, deans, vice deans and non-academic administrators, and it completely disregards the crucial role that teacher leaders play in the success of a higher education institute.

2.4. The context of the English Language Institute (ELI)

This exploratory case study is carried out in the English Language Institute (ELI) of a state owned Saudi Arabian university. In the Men's campus of the ELI, more than 8000 EFL learners enroll on the PYP each year. The language learning needs of these learners are met by more than 250 EFL instructors from 27 different countries who offer 18 hours of language instruction per week. The PYP aims to equip students with the necessary English,

Mathematics, IT, and general learning skills for entry into professional colleges and departments. The key feature of the PYP is that all courses are taught in English instead of the learners' native language, Arabic. The ELI offers four English language courses to the PYP students, as follows:

COURSE CODE	COURSE	CEFR LEVEL	CREDITS
ELI 101	Beginner	A1	0
ELI 102	Elementary	A2	2
ELI 103	Pre-Intermediate	B1	2
ELI 104	Intermediate	B1+	2

2.1. Courses EFL learners require to take at the ELI (Adapted from the Faculty Handbook)

Students taking the ELI English programme are also required to study other university courses in other departments. These courses are mandatory and form part of the PYP. Students following the Science Track are required to take the following courses:

Course	Name of the Courses
ELI	Communication Skills
STAT 110	Statistics
PHYS 110	Physics
CPIT 100	Computer Skills
CHEM 110	Chemistry
BIO 110	Biology
MATH 110	Mathematics

2.2. Science track subjects (Adapted from the Faculty Handbook)

Students following the Administration and Arts Track are required to take the following courses:

COMM 101	Name of the Courses
ELI	Communication Skills
CPIT 100	Computer Skills
IS 101	Critical/Analytic Thinking Skills
ARAB 101	Arabic
MATH 111	Mathematics
ISLS 101	Islamic Culture

2.3. Administration and arts track subjects (Adapted from the Faculty Handbook)

The ELI courses are intended to take students from the Beginner Level (A1 CEFR) to the Intermediate Level (B1 CEFR) during the four modules of PYP. A total of six credits are assigned to the ELI courses whereas the largest allocation of 18 credit units are given to other courses shown in Tables 2.2 and 2.3.

ELI has a traditional top-down management model which is managed by the Dean and six Vice-Deans, who oversee the administrative and academic operations in the institute. The organisational chart of the ELI reflects the Bedouin patriarchal society of Saudi Arabia as the Dean of the Institute must always be a male who is responsible for both the men's and women's campuses. The ELI is supervised by the ELI Council and Expert House whose membership is composed of the Dean, the Vice-Deans, and three guest faculty members, all Saudi nationals. The ELI Council's decisions must be approved by the university president prior to official implementation.

English Language Institute	
Organizational Structure Based on Vice-Deanships and their Units	2014

ELI Dean

ELI Council

Expertise House

ELI Vice-Deanship for the Women's Colleges	ELI Vice-Deanship for the Women's Campus	ELI Vice-Deanship for Academic Affairs	ELI Vice-Deanship for Graduate Studies	ELI Vice-Deanship for Development	ELI Vice-Deanship
Administrative and Financial Affairs Unit	Administrative and Financial Affairs Unit	Regular Students Affairs Unit	Scholarship & Joint Supervision Unit	Evaluation & Academic Accreditation Unit	Administrative and Financial Affairs Unit
Academic Coordination Unit	Academic Coordination Unit	External Students Affairs Unit	Graduate Studies Unit	Quality Applications Unit	Public Relations & Media Unit
Regular Students Affairs Unit	Regular Students Affairs Unit	E-Learning & Distant Education Unit	Research Unit	Technical Support Unit	Faculty Affairs Unit
Professional Development Unit	Professional Development Unit	Testing Unit		Academic & Educational Development Systems Unit	Students Support Unit
Graduate Studies Unit	Graduate Studies Unit	Student Services Unit		Cooperative & Practical Training Unit	Total Quality Management Unit
Recruitment Unit	Recruitment Unit	Academic Coordination Unit		Alumni Unit	Recruitment Unit
	External Students Unit				

Figure: 2.1. The organisational chart of the ELI (Adapted from the Faculty Handbook)

The leadership positions in Table 2.4 are in the middle of the institutional hierarchy as shown in the organisational chart (Figure: 2.1). Individuals in these roles are principally EFL teachers who connect top leadership with teachers at the ELI. These roles fall precisely into the teacher leadership categories identified by York-Barr and Duke (2004), which are: academic coordination, curriculum development, professional development, quality assurance, tests and examination preparation, and teacher evaluation.

Administrative Units	Academic Units
Academic & Educational Development System Unit	Graduate Studies Unit
Student Affairs Unit	Student Support Unit
Academic Coordination Unit	Research Unit
Quality Application Unit	Testing Unit
External Student Affairs Unit	E-learning Unit
Faculty Affairs Unit	Professional Development Unit
Cooperative and Practical Training Unit	Curriculum Unit

2.4. Units run by EFL teacher leaders at the ELI (Adapted from Faculty Handbook)

The faculty handbook suggests that teacher leaders' positions in various units at the ELI are announced at the beginning of every academic year. The applicants are shortlisted, interviewed and selected by the Dean and the four Vice-Deans on the men's Campus and the two Vice-Deans on the women's Campus of the ELI. The potential teacher leaders are selected based on their leadership qualities, management experience, interpersonal skills, organizational skills, professional involvement, enthusiasm, cultural sensitivity, flexibility, and a solid background in the field of TESOL (Faculty Handbook).

Faculty members and EFL students interact with the institute through 21 units that assist with issues pertaining to curriculum, professional development, schedules, examinations and attendance. 14 out of 21 units are headed by non-Saudi nationals who are primarily English language teachers and have been assigned administrative and academic roles based on their expertise (Appendix 1). Other units are specified for Saudi nationals; however, all units work to connect the top leadership and the faculty members. For example, Academic Coordination Unit (ACU) is responsible for the management and administration of the learning environment to support instructional activities, supervise

overall directions of the academic staff and ensure the implementation of ELI policies. On the other hand, the Professional Development Unit (PDU) is responsible for conducting formal and informal classroom observations, giving teachers feedback and organising training workshops for teachers. Other typical day-to-day activities of teacher leaders at the ELI are summarised in Table 2.5.

• Supervise the teaching process to achieve curriculum goals, objectives, and learning outcomes within the expected time frames
• Delegate work to PDU members, i.e. classroom observation, arranging PD workshops
• Provide input to the ELI administration and curriculum committee regarding curriculum effectiveness and issues/areas requiring improvement or investigation.
• Prepare supplementary speaking/reading/writing/listening materials
• Develop and maintain teacher resource centre
• Provide examination support, including development, preparation, administration and examination grading.
• Maintain a record of students' grades
• Maintain a complete record of the assigned faculty members' schedules, attendance and office hours
• Advise students on academic issues
• Hold regular meetings to discuss research projects with fellow researchers
• Assist colleagues with data collection and data analysis

2.5. Typical day-to-day activities of teacher leaders at the ELI (Adopted from the Faculty Handbook)

Despite leadership responsibilities, teacher leaders at the ELI are not completely removed from classroom teaching as they have to teach a minimum of three hours per week as per the university policy. Based on the ELI appraisal scheme, these individuals possess excellent classroom teaching skills and enjoy the status of high rank language teachers. The professionalism of EFL teachers is assessed through a rigorous evaluation system which grades teachers on a scale of 1 to 5. The lowest grade is 1 which leads to teachers' termination or transfer to remote campuses whereas rank 5 teachers often assume leadership responsibilities. The evaluation scheme assesses teachers' instructional skills, their ability to effectively use classroom space and resources, rapport with learners, classroom management skills, lesson delivery, and linguistic competence (Faculty Handbook). As per the faculty handbook, teachers in instructional leadership positions are required to have excellent pedagogical skills, expertise in teacher training and general

management skills. For operational roles such as academic coordination, teacher leaders have to demonstrate high levels of competency in task achievement, flexibility, accountability, cross-cultural awareness, leadership skills, professional confidence and team work. As the faculty handbook suggests, EFL teachers are supported through a series of training workshops and courses throughout the year; however, to address the professional needs of the teacher leaders and achieve the abovementioned competencies, there is no mention of any courses or other training except for the informal mentoring of junior team members in the ACU and PDU.

2.5. Summary

This chapter has described the context of this study, which is an English Language Institute in a Saudi Arabian state university. Saudi Arabia is a monarchy, governed through Islamic Shari'ah law. Its religious significance, conservative outlook, strict social codes and tribal values distinguish it from other Arab countries in the region. The cultural, social and religious manifestations have influenced the HE system and created challenges for governance in universities. However, Saudi higher education has made progress over the past 10 years by focusing on academic leadership development in the form of establishing the ALC.

The ELI, where this study is conducted, has a typical top-down model in place which has the Dean and six Vice Deans at the top. In the middle of the hierarchy, teacher leaders operate in academic and administrative roles while facilitating the teachers and top leadership. It is on these teacher leaders in the middle-level leadership positions that the current study focuses to investigate their perceptions of teacher leadership and their professional development at the ELI.

Chapter 3. Literature review

This chapter reviews literature on the concepts of teacher leadership and teacher leader development mainly in mainstream education in different contexts. This chapter is divided into three broad sections. The first section explores the construct of teacher leadership, its historical evolution, various teacher leadership roles and the types of knowledge and skills required for teacher leadership roles. The second part explores the concept of teacher leader professional learning and development. The final section presents teacher leadership studies mainly in mainstream education, discusses their methodological positions and explains how they inform the current study.

3.1. The evolution of teacher leadership

According to York-Barr and Duke (2004), the concept of teacher leadership is extensively discussed in the literature with a focus on improving educational practices. The term 'teacher leadership' first appeared in 1916 in John Dewey's writing, where he proposed teachers' active role in school governance. However, in recent times it emanated from the 1980s educational reform movement in the USA (Rackley, 2006). Although teacher leadership cannot be chronologically linked to a strict timeline, it has continued to develop through three waves, as discussed by Silva, Gimbert and Nolan (2000). These three waves of teacher leadership (Table 3.1) provide a valuable insight into how this concept developed in various educational contexts around the world and specifically in US schools.

Teacher leadership evolution	Focus of Wave
First wave	Administrative leaders, i.e. head teachers, master teachers, department heads
Second wave	Instructional leaders, i.e. PD specialists, curriculum experts, mentors
Third wave	Team leaders, change agents, advocates of collaborative and shared leadership practices

3.1. The historical evolution of teacher leadership (Adapted from Silva et al., 2000, p. 1-3)

The first wave began in the early 1980s when teachers performed managerial and formal roles, such as department chair, master teacher and union representative, with top-down authority. The chief criticism of this wave is that these roles implied power structures that led to separation between teachers and leaders. In addition, strong bureaucratic principles resulted in managerialism and tight supervision of teachers and teacher leaders with a purpose to 'further the efficiency of school operations' (York-Barr & Duke, 2004, p. 260). Although teachers gained power and influence as leaders, this system threatened the traditional hierarchy of control as they were removed from their classrooms to fulfill hierarchical roles and replace administrators. On the other hand, teachers perceived them as an extension of the traditional administrators (Evans, 1996), whose aim was "[not] to change practice but to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the existing system" (Wasley, 1991, p. 4). Sams (2010) reveals that, in western schools, TESOL professionals during this time suffered from low job status in public education which denied many ESL teachers the opportunity to be in leadership positions.

The second wave of teacher leadership arose in the late 1980s in response to the limitations of the first one. It 'acknowledged the importance of teachers as instructional leaders' (Silva et al., 2000, p. 780). The pedagogical knowledge and expertise of teachers allowed them to assume more instructional leadership roles rather than administrative responsibilities. These instructional leadership roles were formal in nature and included positions such as team leaders, curriculum developers, professional development specialists and teacher mentors. According to Silva et al. (2000), these positions indicate the continuation of hierarchical roles. For instance, in the UK context, Frost and Harris (2003) carried out an analysis of the policy, research and theoretical perspectives with regard to the concept of teacher leadership, which established that teacher leadership in the second wave was a direct result of schools' existing hierarchical culture and leadership (Cited in Sanocki, 2013). In addition, teachers were perceived as middle managers with no objective of transformation or change. Similarly, in the US context, teachers'

pedagogical knowledge and expertise were acknowledged; however, their leadership roles were still apart from and not a part of teachers' daily work and these individuals were released at least part-time from their classroom teaching (Wiggenton, 1992).

The third wave emerged in the 1990s and was considered the emerging form of teacher leadership (York-Barr & Duke, 2004). This form of teacher leadership is still evolving in educational organisations around the world. In contrast to the other two waves, this wave focused on teachers' daily work as part of their leadership role and aimed to improve the teaching profession and contribute to institutional reforms. According to York-Barr and Duke (2004), these efforts lead to collaborative cultures in schools where instructional improvement and continuous learning take place at the same time. A major criticism of this wave is that it becomes difficult to distinguish between the second and third waves of teacher leadership since teachers are seen as leaders both within and beyond their classrooms (Kelley, 2011), which can at times result in ambiguities.

By the time the third wave emerged, TESOL had established itself as a field and had recognised issues of professionalism. Consequently, ESL instructors had opportunities to participate in collaborative activities (Sams, 2010). However, their identity as teacher leaders was still not developed.

Similar to the historical evolution of teacher leadership described by Silva et al. (2000), Leonard, Petta and Porter (2012) quote Harris (2005) who identified three developmental phases. First, formal positions, in which teachers are promoted from a teaching position to a department head or principal of a school. Secondly, instructional leadership positions, such as that of curriculum developer, are assigned to teachers based on their pedagogical expertise and skills. In the third and most recent phase, teachers are "viewed as central to the process of generating organisational development and change through their collaborative and instructional endeavors and efforts" (Harris, 2005, p. 206). These

three developmental stages can be used to conceptualise teacher leadership and its key characteristics in various contexts.

3.2. Definitions of teacher leadership

Although a plethora of definitions exists, some scholars believe that defining 'teacher leadership' is no easy task as its meaning and function vary from context to context. According to Muijs and Harris (2003), this is a complicated process as several definitions abound and the literature divulges overlapping and competing constructs. This wide variation is discussed by Leonard et al. (2012), who believe that most of the evolving definitions of teacher leadership reflect writers' ideals rather than the reality of contexts around the world. In a seminal work charting the development of teacher leadership as a concept from 1980 to 2000, York-Barr and Duke (2004) reviewed 41 studies that investigated teacher leadership over the past 25 years. They found a lack of consensus on a definition of 'teacher leadership' that could serve as a foundation in empirical research. However, disagreement among scholars aside, various interpretations and explanations by notable authors can enhance our understanding of the teacher leadership concept.

In Frost's (2010) view, teacher leadership refers to "taking the initiative to improve practice, acting strategically with colleagues to embed change, gathering and using evidence in collaborative processes, contributing to the creation and dissemination of professional knowledge" (p.210). In order to improve practice and transform teaching and learning, teacher leaders often need to possess expertise in specific areas, i.e. curriculum, professional development and assessment. Swanson, Elliott and Harmon (2011) argue that teacher leadership is the combination of "knowledge, skills and dispositions demonstrated by teachers" to further the efficacy of school operations (p. 153). In the same way, Bangs and MacBeath (2012) emphasise the core capabilities of teacher leaders and concisely define the concept of teacher leadership:

Most typically it refers to teachers' individual agency, often with reference to classroom management and pedagogy but in some cases referring to wider collegial influence with colleagues, with curriculum development and policy-making within or across schools. As well as being cast as an individual activity, teacher leadership may also refer to groups or teams of teachers with a leadership remit for aspects of policy and practice. (p. 331)

The definition by Bangs and MacBeath (2012) has the characteristics of transformative leaders who "enable their colleagues to do things that they wouldn't ordinarily do on their own to improve their professional practice" (Wasley, 1991, p. 4). This resonates with Murphy's (2005, p. 15) views that teacher leadership has an enabling component that is specifically about the collegial influence from teacher leaders for enhanced professional practices. York-Barr and Duke (2004) further elucidate the concept by considering teacher leadership: "the process by which teachers, individually or collectively, influence their colleagues, principals, and other members of school communities to improve teaching and learning practices with the aim of increased student learning and achievement" (p. 287–288).

Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) refer to the construct of teacher leadership as "a sleeping giant" (p. 2) and believe that teacher leaders' lead within and beyond the classroom, identify with and contribute to a community of teacher learners and leaders, and influence others towards improved educational practice (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001, p. 17). The idea of contribution to the community of teacher leaders resonates with Lave and Wenger's (1991) notion of 'community of practice' (CoP) that encourages distributed practices benefiting everyone in the group. Lave and Wenger (1991) define CoP as "a system of relationships [among] people, activities, and the world; developing with time and in relation to other tangential and overlapping communities of practice" (p. 98). Wenger (1998) states that schools with a goal to create a learning environment have to value all kinds of collaboration, including teacher leadership. This emphasises the pivotal role of shared, collaborative and participatory practices among teachers and teacher

leaders in educational institutions. Moreover, it indicates teacher leaders' sense of responsibility towards colleagues' learning and development. With an emphasis on collegiality, Suranna and Moss (1999) state that "a teacher leader is one who can take his or her qualities, and share them with other teachers for the good of the students" (p. 9). Similarly, Danielson (2006) believes that teacher leaders in a collaborative relationship with colleagues inspire others and persuade them to accept professional challenges and address the problems in a cooperative manner.

The definitions of teacher leadership by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) and York-Barr and Duke (2004) fit in the context of the current study. For example, teacher leaders at the ELI lead within and beyond the classroom premises and are not completely detached from classroom teaching. In addition, their leadership roles are assigned to them in the light of pedagogical and professional expertise which enable them to influence their colleagues, work together towards a common goal and achieve institutional outcomes.

These definitions by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) and York-Barr and Duke (2004) consider the organisational context and its members to be key to the successful implementation of pedagogical and administrative plans. To be more specific, the main concerns of teacher leaders are to ensure enhanced instructional outcomes, create positive relationships with staff and students, and provide enabling conditions for others to learn. However, as Gabriel (2005) points out teacher leaders have to think creatively in order to achieve their stated goals because they often lack power to influence others or implement their own decisions:

> *Teacher leaders possess a semblance of authority but no formal power—only the illusion of power. For example, a department chair cannot complete teacher evaluations. She cannot place a memo or letter in someone's personnel file, nor can she dismiss a teacher. As a result, she must find other ways to motivate, mobilize, and lead teachers. She must rely on intrinsic leadership abilities, knowledge of group dynamics, influence, respect, and leadership by example to boost the productivity of her department.* (Gabriel, 2005, p. 2)

The above quote indicates a shortcoming of teacher leadership as teacher leaders, despite being in key middle-level leadership positions and equipped with knowledge and expertise, cannot have decision-making powers. In the TESOL field, however, there is lack of research on the issue of teacher leader autonomy and how it impacts teacher leadership roles.

3.3. Teacher leader roles

Most of the literature on teacher leader roles in school settings comes from the US context (e.g. Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Teachers as leaders can take various roles in different domains which may be categorised into formal or informal roles. In formal roles, teachers undertake managerial and pedagogical responsibilities (Muijs et al., 2013) which are in line with the first and second waves of teacher leadership respectively. Such roles include department chairs, mentors, coaches, curriculum reformers, instructional leaders and subject coordinators who aim to implement decisions taken at a strategic level and find ways of encouraging staff to conform (Margolis & Doring, 2012; Thompson & Wolstencroft, 2015). On the other hand, informal leadership roles, which align well with the third wave of teacher leadership, involve teacher leaders in collegial tasks not only contributing to organisational improvement, but also to the professional learning of their colleagues. These roles include peer coaching, leading a new team, setting up action research groups and assisting in the development of school curricula (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001).

York-Barr and Duke (2004) have identified four key roles which can be linked to the first and second waves of teacher leadership: teacher leaders as middle managers, curriculum experts, staff developers, and mentors of new teachers. In these roles, teacher leaders as middle managers often perform operational duties similar to the first wave, such as maintaining records, preparing evaluation reports etc. The other three roles require knowledge and expertise in a particular area, a feature of the second wave.

3.4. Hierarchical structure as a barrier to teacher leadership

The definitions by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) and York-Barr and Duke (2004) illustrate that teacher leadership promotes a culture of collegiality in which teacher leaders collaboratively work to achieve organisational objectives and develop their professional expertise. However, promoting and developing teacher leadership might not be an easy task as educational contexts vary in terms of demands and challenges. Authors have found organisational and professional barriers that can impact teacher leadership and the development of teacher leaders in a school context. For example, Murphy (2007) states that highly bureaucratic and hierarchical school cultures of authority create an environment that hinders collaboration, learning and development. Sanocki (2013) and Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) also consider *organisational structures* one of the key barriers to teacher leadership as they believe that top-down leadership models still dominate in many schools (p. 79). Similarly, Silva et al. (2000) note that "organisational characteristics and structural components can adversely impact the work of teacher leaders" (p. 790).

Control and accountability are often the key features of hierarchical structures that make it difficult to reach a common goal and optimise the balance of formalisation, centralisation and standardisation in an educational institution (Tschannen-Moran, 2009). Tschannen-Moran (2009) warns that rigid bureaucratic structures would compromise efforts to create a collaborative professional work environment.

> *Bureaucratic structures—such as hierarchy of authority, division of labor with specialization, and written rules and policies—assist schools to deal with the magnitude and complexity of their resources and tasks. However, overreliance on these structures by leaders will interfere with organizational dexterity and be counterproductive to the goals that schools strive to achieve. As such, professional structures—such as opportunities for collective inquiry, scrutiny, reflection, and decision-making—will need to be more fully integrated into*

> *school bureaucracies to promote teacher professionalism and school success.*
> (p. 218)

Harris and Muijs (2003) identified "professional barriers" that are commonly found in technocratic set-ups in the form of administrative workload, lack of professional support and added responsibilities, which often lead to the teacher leaders' stress and burnout, and consequently hinder teacher leadership. Moreover, Harris and Muijs's (2003) meta-analysis indicates that teacher leaders often feel isolated from their colleagues and less connected to their peers when engaging in teacher leadership activities. This isolation is mainly the result of teachers' resentment and their lack of trust in teacher leadership roles as teacher leaders are perceived as an extension of top management.

3.5. The significance of leadership knowledge

Literature on educational leadership highlights the significance of leadership knowledge for educational leaders. Robinson, Loyd and Rowe (2008) note that leadership knowledge is essential and educational leaders must be knowledgeable about professional development and adult learning theories to contribute to the development of their institutions. Literature suggests a variety of knowledge that can facilitate teacher leader roles. For example, Levenson (2014) emphasises that "teacher leaders must be knowledgeable about how to mobilize colleagues who may not share their enthusiasm for yet another change initiative" (p. 100). On the significance of leadership knowledge, Backor and Gordon (2015) found that instructional leaders needed to develop knowledge about cultural diversity of the workplace. They also considered knowledge about instructional practices and top-notch technology important for the successful operation of leadership roles in educational institutions. Similarly, Le Fevre and Robinson (2014) believe that leaders with inadequate content knowledge about educational theories and practices will be reluctant to observe teachers and give them feedback. Siegmyer (2012) also considered content and contextual knowledge significant for teacher leadership. On

this subject, Knight and Trowler (2001) propose seven different types of leadership and management knowledge, which may support academic leaders in their roles. Inman (2007, p. 60-62) has succinctly summarised them as:

Control knowledge: Gaining control knowledge means knowing about self, which is learnt through reflection or working with others in leadership teams. This process emphasises the role of reflection and community of practice discussed in Section 3.7.1, which offers individuals an opportunity to learn from each other's experiences and contribute to the community of leaders.

Knowledge of people: To gain knowledge of the people, one needs to possess interpersonal skills that lead to collaboration and collegiality and facilitate consensus over different decisions. This form of knowledge can also be obtained through workshops, mentoring and discussions.

Knowledge of educational practices: This is a key to successful academic leadership which can be acquired through involvement in formal leadership activities. However, relevant courses, reading literature or colleagues' support and advice can also help to "gain, maintain and use educational knowledge appropriately" (Knight & Trowler, 2001, p. 168). This process involves personal effort on the part of teacher leaders to create opportunities for themselves in their work place and to pursue their professional development.

Conceptual knowledge refers to knowing about management and leadership concepts and research. Conceptual and process knowledge can be gained through management and leadership courses based on the teacher leaders' needs (Knight & Trowler, 2001). This requires needs analysis of the leaders and leadership roles, practices and context, which address the compatibility of programmes and courses in educational institutions.

Situational knowledge helps in understanding contingencies that have made the faculty what it is and what it might be in future. It helps individuals with understanding of situations in their schools.

Tacit knowledge integrates these six forms of knowledge in the expert practice of educational leaders.

More on leadership knowledge, Lovett, Dempster and Flückiger (2015) propose a heuristic tool to guide personal leadership learning, which is a device that helps individuals observe, investigate, experiment and discover new leadership knowledge (p.131). They divide this tool into five focal points which are elaborated in Table 3.2.

Focal Point	**Knowledge Required**
1: Pedagogy – leaders learning about teaching and learning	Leaders should have a minimum knowledge of: • growth, learning and development across the lifespan, particularly of students and teachers; • effective strategies for teacher professional development; • the rationale for and how to plan, coordinate, implement, monitor and evaluate teaching and learning; • the kind of data to gather and how to conduct evidence-informed professional conversations about teaching and learning.
2: People – learning about those with whom leaders work	Leaders should have knowledge of: • communication, including coaching and mentoring that enhances working relationships; • how to structure schools so that teachers, support personnel and relevant others operate as learning communities; • how and when to distribute tasks to engage others in leadership; • how to identify leadership talent and assist others to develop.
3: Place – leaders learning about the educational context	Leaders should have knowledge of: • international issues and their possible impact on practice; • national reforms, policies and programmes and their effects on schools; • school context and how to undertake a cultural audit; • key conditions for learning and how to optimise them.
4: System – leaders learning about the education system	Leaders should have knowledge of: • the education system's mandated policy, programme and procedural agenda; • the specific curriculum and assessment requirements of the system; • when and where leader discretion can be exercised; • tactics that aid discretionary decision-making; • system and peer networks that facilitate learning relationships.
5: Self-learning about 'me', the leader	Leaders should have knowledge of: • one's own personal professional moral position;

> - one's own professional ethics and related personal values;
> - tensions between system compliance and personal preference with respect to leadership decisions;
> - personal strengths and weaknesses with regard to educational leadership.

3.2. A heuristic tool to guide personal leadership learning. *Adapted from Lovett et al. (2015, p. 132-138).*

In the direction of self-learning, Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) developed a leadership readiness assessment tool, founded on four key questions: 'Who am I?' (Understanding self); 'Where am I?' (Understanding school environment); 'How can I lead?' (Developing leadership skills); and 'What do I do?' (Application of leadership). These four questions may help teachers to reflect on and assess their leadership skills and develop themselves as leaders, as the focus is both on learning how to lead and fostering leadership abilities.

The types of educational leadership knowledge reviewed in this section is summarised in Table 3.3. Their role in the professional development and leadership effectiveness of academic leaders is undeniable. However, there is dearth of empirical evidence on the practical role of leadership knowledge for teacher leaders in mainstream education and in the field of TESOL. Thus, it is significant to identify what types of leadership knowledge teacher leaders in ESL/EFL context need to possess.

1.	Leadership/management knowledge
2.	Knowledge of adult learning theories
3.	Knowledge about mobilising colleagues
4.	Content knowledge
5.	Contextual knowledge
6.	Knowledge of culture & workplace
7.	Control knowledge
8.	Knowledge of people
9.	Knowledge of educational practices
10.	Conceptual knowledge
11.	Situational knowledge
12.	Tacit knowledge
13.	Knowledge of the system
14.	Knowledge of self-learning

3.3. Knowledge required for academic leadership roles

3.6. Skills required for teacher leadership

As teacher leaders can have a wide range of roles, it is important to discern what types of skills they need to possess in order to be effective in leadership positions. First and foremost, pedagogical excellence of teachers is considered a key to effective teacher leadership as "one cannot be an effective teacher leader if one is not first an accomplished teacher" (Odell, 1997, p. 122). Lack of knowledge about classroom practices or lack of credibility as a teacher might negatively influence teacher leader roles. According to Snell and Swanson (2000) and York-Barr and Duke (2004), expertise as a classroom teacher is a critical aspect of teacher leadership, which gives a teacher credibility among peers and colleagues. Hence, teacher leadership is a means by which credible teachers exercise influence over supervisors, colleagues and members of the school community through shared or collaborative relationships that advance pedagogical practices (Poekert, 2012). The review of literature by York-Barr and Duke up to 2004 indicates that:

> *Teachers who lead are respected as teachers by their colleagues and administrators. They assume a learning orientation in their work and demonstrate or are viewed as having the potential to develop leadership knowledge, skills, and dispositions.* (2004, p.289)

Besides pedagogical expertise, Tomal et al. (2014) point out that teacher leaders should be skilled in areas, such as "mentoring and coaching teachers, leading and motivating staff, improving curriculum instructions, managing resources, building collaboration, managing school change, communicating to staff, conducting teacher evaluation, and building community relations" (p.26).

Literature gives a useful insight into various other skills that can facilitate teacher leadership roles. For instance, interpersonal and intrapersonal skills are important for teacher leaders in school contexts (Angelle & Beaumont, 2008). For ELT professionals in leadership roles, key skills are; time and self-management, ability to collaborate, cooperate and delegate (Murphy & Brogan, 2008), ability to encourage and motivate

others (Bailey, 2008; Quirke & Allison, 2008), strategic planning skills (Christison & Murray, 2008), and technical and IT skills (Siskin & Reynolds, 2008). Similarly, Stephenson, Dada and Harold (2012) found effective communication and ability to build relationships as important skills for teacher leaders. For ELT leaders in particular, Coombe, England and Schmidt (2008) recommended public speaking and presentation skills to be effective in their roles. However, for the utilisation of these skills academic leaders should have cultural consciousness skills (Al-Swailem & Elliott, 2013) that inform their actions in line with cultural norms of the organisation. Table 3.4 summarises the key leadership skills reviewed in this section.

Teacher Leader Abilities
Interpersonal & interpersonal skills
Ability to encourage & motivate others
Communication skills
IT & Technical skills
Time & self-management skills
Strategic planning skills
Pedagogical skills
Cultural consciousness skills
Ability to delegate
Public speaking & presentation skills

3.4. Skills required for teacher leadership

Scholars also associate personality traits with effective teacher leadership practices in educational contexts. For example, teacher leaders have "creativity, efficacy, flexibility, life-long learning, humor, willingness to take responsibility and risks" (Angelle & Beaumont, 2008, p. 775). They are open-minded and respectful to others showing optimism and enthusiasm, confidence, and decisiveness (Danielson, 2007, p. 16). Moreover, teacher leaders are honest, competent, forward-looking, and inspiring individuals who derive strength from character and competence; rather than from their middle-level leadership positions (Chapman, 2008). In the TESOL domain, literature has no reference to empirical studies on personality attributes of teacher leaders.

It can be concluded that leadership knowledge and skills are interdependent concepts that complement each other to facilitate teacher leaders in educational leadership roles. Knowledge may only provide an understanding of a leadership role or a task; however, to practically perform it one needs to have leadership skills.

The next section discusses the significance of professional learning for teacher leaders and how they can acquire the various types of leadership knowledge and skills reviewed in Sections 3.5 and 3.6.

3.7. Teacher leadership development

Teacher leadership development refers to acquiring a wide range of knowledge and skills, such as curriculum expertise, pedagogical competence, ability to train teachers and knowledge of adult learning. In addition, knowledge of school culture, organisational improvement, and models for professional collaboration are important aspects of teacher leader development (Sato, Hyler & Monte-Sano, 2014, p. 3). Continuous and sustainable professional development for teacher leaders in these areas is considered important "to serve as exemplary practitioners" (Yendol-Hoppey & Dana, 2010, p. 2010).

The professional development of teacher leaders can take various formal forms as described by York-Barr and Duke (2004), such as university coursework, district-sponsored professional development programmes, graduate programmes, workshops, and on-the-job training, which can help teacher leaders to foster leadership skills. Similarly, Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) propose four modes of formal professional development that include, conducting action research, certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, attending professional development schools, and connecting to professional networks. The suggested PD strategies by York-Barr and Duke (2004) and Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) are formal in nature and may help teacher leaders gain the various types of knowledge given in Table 3.3; however, research indicates that current preparation programmes and in-service professional training for

educational leaders are considered inadequate and ineffective in many educational contexts around the world (e.g. Hallinger, 2003; Brundrett & Crawford, 2008). Due to the inadequacy and inefficiency of formal PD programmes, teacher leaders rely on informal learning opportunities that occur when they work with other members of the community, reflect on their practices and collaboratively resolve professional matters (Knight & Trowler, 2001 as cited in Inman, 2007). Literature on informal learning in collaborative school contexts is further reviewed in the following section.

3.7.1. Teacher leadership development in collaborative learning communities

In addition to formal learning and development, there is informal on-the-job or situated learning, which was first proposed by Lave and Wenger (1991) as a theoretical description of learning in a community of practice (CoP). In such a community, its members work together and support each other in learning about tasks and their application in a given context. In his later work, Wenger states that "communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly" (Wenger, 2008, p. 1). This regular interaction occurs when novice and expert members of a group participate in the socio-cultural practices of CoP (Wenger, 1998), which enables a newcomer to acquire knowledge and skills in the presence of a more knowledgeable member of CoP.

> *Legitimate peripheral participation provides a way to speak about the relations between newcomers and old-timers, and about activities, identities, artefacts, and communities of knowledge and practice. A person's intentions to learn are engaged and the meaning of learning is configured through the process of becoming a full participant in a socio-cultural practice. This social process, includes, indeed it subsumes, the learning of knowledgeable skills (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 29).*

CoP values social and professional networks as related to knowledge creation and its dissemination as well as the informal learning process that occurs in and among individuals (Blankenship & Ruona, 2007). However, CoP focuses more on social learning

than organisation specific learning, hence its members might resist the change initiatives in their organisations and might fail to learn from their collective efforts (Blankenship & Ruona, 2007). In the field of education, the notion of professional learning community (PLC) emerged which emphasises the organisational learning that individuals often require for the effective operation of their roles. PLC is "an ongoing process in which educators work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve. PLCs operate under the assumption that the key to improved learning for students is continuous job-embedded learning for educators" (DuFour, 2014, para. 1). PLCs are based on sharing a common mission, vision and values that promote collaboration and support. Such communities are built on collective commitment of the participants that set the directions of the institution and determine decisions and actions (DuFour & Eaker, 1998).

PLC and CoP might appear identical constructs, however, they are distinct in nature. According to Blankenship and Ruona (2007), PLC focuses on team or group learning and addresses individuals' professional development needs. It places greater emphasis on the organisational level learning in terms of building a culture of collaboration that would lead to the achievement of a common goal. Leadership and school culture play a critical role in the formation of PLCs as they provide guidance in terms of achieving a common goal. On the other hand, CoP emphasises social interaction and sharing of ideas while focusing on the improvement of practices. It signifies the social aspect of learning in the formation of new knowledge while giving less importance to the role of leaders external to the community or on the culture outside the community (Blankenship & Ruona, 2007, p. 5).

In educational contexts, the promotion of a positive learning environment has been linked to the creation of professional learning communities, which impact the professional growth of teacher leaders. Lewis and Murphy (2008) believe that teacher leaders' efficacy of personalised, work-based and process-rich experiences with time to reflect and receive support and constructive feedback on their practices, can maximise their leadership

learning. Pasternak, Rigoni and Roberts (2012) explored the influence of a professional community on the leadership development of induction-year teachers in the US. Adopting an instrumental case study approach, they examined the development of two induction-year teachers through their participation in a PLC. The results showed that their participation in a professional network helped them to stay in the profession and supported their continued growth as teacher leaders. Moreover, teachers improved their content and pedagogical knowledge and awareness of professional practices. Thus, it can be inferred that collaborative practices in a PLC can lead to improved leadership practices in educational settings.

Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) draw a picture of an ideal school context where the collaborative nature of professional activities breed learning. They argue that conscientious teacher leaders take responsibility for building relationships with others by communicating and interacting. Such social interactions contribute to teacher leadership development more than training, experiences, personal characteristics, ability or the formal structures within the school (Hart, 1990 as cited in Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009). Moreover, these interactions allow teachers to maintain collegial relationships with colleagues while assuming leadership roles, which are critical to building a PLC within a school. It shows that adversarial relationships will not allow professional learning communities to flourish and thus a culture of collegiality should be encouraged (Barth, 2006), which includes debating about practice, sharing craft knowledge with peers, observing each other's teaching, and ensuring everyone's success (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009). Irrespective of the context, this assertion indicates the significance of learning leadership skills while collaboratively working in PLCs.

Literature highlights the significant impact that collaborative practices can have on leadership development. Through a case study approach, McCauley-Smith, Williams, Gillon and Braganza (2015) investigated leadership development in the UK school context. The reflective accounts of their student-leaders suggest that a collaborative and shared

leadership approach helped them to learn about their practices by working in the community of leaders. This shows that when teachers are involved in collaborative endeavours, they get a chance to observe and practice small-scale leadership as well as recognise colleagues' areas of expertise, build trusting relationships, and engage collectively in problem-solving and task completion (Lieberman & Friedrich, 2007). Similarly, Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) believe that when teacher leaders engage with others in professional learning endeavours such as data examination, collaborative planning, instructional improvement tasks, and mentoring; they impact others' learning as well as promote their own learning. They also state that teachers' informal learning about effective use of leadership skills; for example, communicating effectively, performing group leadership roles, or listening to identify thoughts and feelings of others, contribute to establishing collaborative relationship with peers.

3.7.2. Mentoring and coaching as professional support for teacher leaders

In collaborative learning organisations, mentoring is considered another means of professional learning and development. According to Roberts (2000): "Mentoring is a formalised process whereby a more knowledgeable and experienced person actuates a supportive role of overseeing and encouraging reflection and learning within a less experienced and knowledgeable person, so as to facilitate that person's career and development" (p. 162). As mentoring is a means of professional growth, Levenson (2014) notes that it can help teacher leaders to understand institutional change and learn how to survive political currents in their workplace. Similarly, Day and Halpin (2004) believe that helping people learn from their experiences is one way we can help leadership develop, which motivates teachers to become fully alive when their schools and districts provide opportunities for skillful participation, inquiry, dialogue, and reflection in the company of others. Such environments evoke and grow teacher leadership.

Mentoring can be seen in the form of one-on-one coaching that is another feature of collaborative professional context. In a case study, Blackman (2010) investigated the use

of one-on-one coaching sessions and workshops as a professional development tool for education sector professionals in Australia. The first stage of the study consisted of a one-day workshop held with 18 participants. Stage two consisted of a series of one-on-one coaching sessions with three participants starting one month after the initial workshop. Through a quasi-experimental methodology, evaluations were conducted at the end of the workshop and with all participants at the end of the one-on-one sessions. Blackman found that opportunities for the development of leadership talents and coaching was a potential way to help teachers fulfil, support and encourage their leadership skills. The findings of her research indicated that teachers found the workshops and one-on-one sessions beneficial for their continuous professional development in their workplace. However, it is unclear whether the workshops were context specific and specifically designed to address the needs of the teacher leaders, as Kedian, Giles, Morrison and Fletcher (2015) believe that leadership development workshops are often non-context-specific which "show minimal concern for the situational and contextual realities of the leader" (p. 2). In addition, the case study findings by Blackman (2010) may not be generalisable to other contexts especially that of EFL/ESL, and thus more research beyond the Australian perspective may benefit other teacher leaders. Nonetheless, the findings of this study indicate the significance of continuous professional development for teacher leaders in their workplace.

Professional learning of teacher leaders in the form of coaching and mentoring can be associated with the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). ZPD is "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable potential peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). ZPD seems to support the concept of mentoring and collaborative learning as more capable and experienced members of the community work with less experienced ones and expand their existing knowledge in a supportive environment. The assistance

provided by an expert or more capable peer so that the novice can perform beyond their actual level of development is known as 'scaffolding', as a result of which learning occurs and the novice moves from assisted to independent performance. Poekert (2012) argues that scaffolding in the form of professional interaction helps developing and maintaining professional relationships with various stakeholders at the workplace.

Day, Harrison and Halpin (2012) point out that the level of support individuals receive from the environment and context also shapes their ZPD. This support can be in the form of feedback, modeling, as well as reinforcement, which are associated with a formal intervention that can help individuals to overcome certain weaknesses and allow development to ensue. On the contrary, individuals' ZPD may not reach its potential owing to the absence of contextual support. Therefore, contextual support should be maximised through motivation to engage in the experience to learn, which will ultimately lead to professional development (Day et al., 2012).

Demir (2015) believes that a supportive work environment is essential for the professional development of teacher leaders, in which they experience cooperation from the top management. In this respect, Levenson (2014) emphasises the role of school principals in teacher leaders' development:

> *Principals need to help teacher leaders learn new skills and dispositions that enable them to function effectively in an instructional institution that is part of a larger political context. This involves helping teacher leaders understand how the school functions as an organization, and what their options are when they make mistakes or encounter resistance.* (p. 94)

Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) and Anderson (2008) also support this idea that contextual support can contribute to the professional development of teacher leaders. This support may not only come from collaborative peers in PLCs, it can be in the form of context-specific PD activities, which should specifically focus on aspects of teacher leader roles in their immediate context (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001). Due to an emphasis on

context-specific PD activities, the newly adopted practices by trainers, developers and facilitators are mainly experiential, grounded and contextual, in that they specifically target the contextual demands (see Giles & Morrison, 2010).

Despite its significance, a number of studies have noted the lack of support for teacher leaders. Although teacher leaders operate in formal roles to make the reform policies work in their contexts, they are offered little guidance from the very administrators who formalise their roles (Draggo-Severson, 2007, p. 70). Levenson (2014) observes that "aspiring teacher leaders often express frustration about the lack of support they receive in their schools" (p. 75). In the context of North Cyprus, Mertkan (2011) examined the head teachers' continuing professional development provision. She conducted a mixed-method study with a dominant qualitative core, using an open-ended survey questionnaire with 43 head teachers from primary and secondary schools followed by qualitative interviews with 13 head teachers. Her findings revealed a widespread dissatisfaction among the head teachers with existing provision of professional development and preparation programmes. Emphasising the role of collaborative culture and CoP, she noted that the failure was mainly due to the lack of on-the-job leadership opportunities and dearth of collaboration and support in schools. Thus, she suggested that PD activities should be internationally informed but locally relevant and context-specific in addressing the professional learning needs of the head teachers.

3.7.3. Experiential learning

In contrast to formal learning activities, such as university courses, training and certification, experiential learning is usually informal, unstructured and based on individuals' efforts (Burgoyne & Stuart, 1991). This kind of learning is often context-specific and role-based, considering the individuals' professional development needs.

Experiential learning theory was first introduced by Kolb (1984), who defines it as "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience.

Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience" (Kolb, 1984, p. 41). The term 'experiential' is employed to distinguish experiential learning theory from behavioural learning theories that do not consider the role of subjective experience in the process of learning, and cognitive learning theories, which tend to emphasise cognition over affect.

Kolb believed that all learning styles were the result of constructivism. Constructivism was founded by Dewey (1938) as an approach which differed from the traditional and progressive learning theories. Dewey hypothesised that learning occurred through the construction of experiences. Thus, constructivism is the theory of learning that the user creates personal learning outcomes through reflecting on previous experiences. As each learner has their unique experiences, they create their own lens to understand new knowledge. In Kolb's opinion, experiencing difficult situations and then making sense of those challenges is a meaningful learning process for individuals at all levels. Day et al. (2012) also support the idea that the ability to make sense of one's difficult experience is critical to learning and directly linked to the development of individuals, a process that is indicative of experiential learning.

Kolb (1984) sets out the theory of experiential learning by proposing a cycle of four phases: a) concrete experience, b) reflective observation, c) abstract conceptualisation and d) active experimentation.
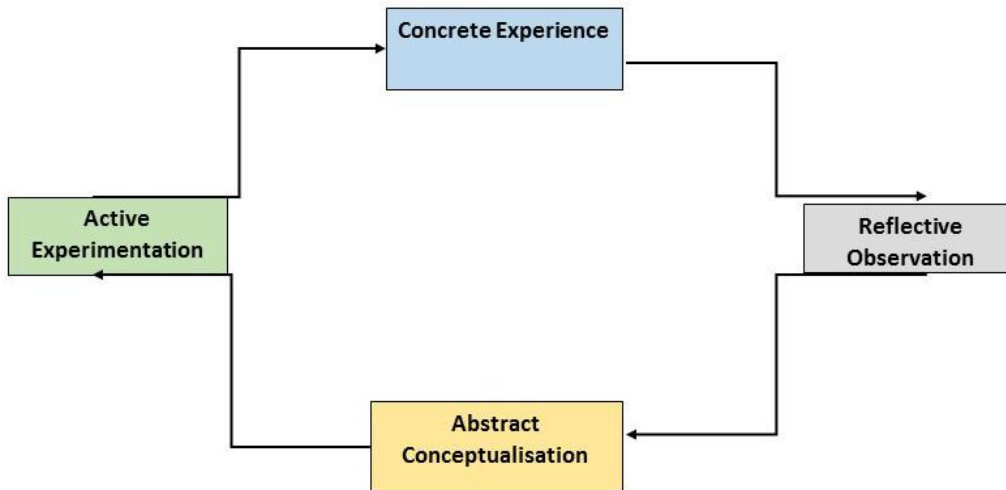
Figure: 3.1. Kolb's model of experiential learning (Kolb, 1984, p. 42)

Table 3.5 gives descriptions of Kolb's experiential learning model and explains the four learning phases.

Learning Phase	Description
Concrete experience	It refers to 'learning by encounter', which can be in the form of specific experiences related to people or their feelings in a specific context.
Reflective observation	It means 'learning by reflecting' that involves observations and careful consideration of issues and understanding of professional matters from different perspectives and making sense of them.
Abstract conceptualisation	It denotes 'learning by thinking' that requires logical analysis of ideas, deliberation on strategies, systematic implementation of plans and developing understanding of professional workplace.
Active experimentation	It pertains to 'learning by doing' that is done on the job by exhibiting skills and abilities to achieve tasks, take risks and influence people and events.

3.5. Experiential learning phases. Adapted from Kolb (1984, p. 42)

Guthrie and Jones (2012) indicate that these phases are interconnected and one stage often leads to the occurrence of another. However, individuals should take both intentional and accidental learning experiences into account in order to construct meaning of their actions.

The theory of experiential learning enables us to understand leadership learning and the process through which educators enhance their leadership capacity in educational

contexts. In various fields, experiential learning is a common approach among professionals. Thus, it can be said that despite a lack of evidence on how teacher leaders can develop through experiential learning, this theory may contribute to the professional growth of those in teacher leadership roles.

Moon (2004) draws a distinction between 'learning from experience' and 'experiential learning' and cites an example from Usher and Solman's work:

> *Learning from experience is taking place in the lifeworld of everyday contexts. In contrast, experiential learning is a key element of discourse which constructs experience in a particular way, as something from which knowledge can be derived through abstraction and by use of methodological approaches such as observation and reflection.* (Usher & Solman, 1999 cited in Moon, 2004, p. 104)

Moon offers further explanation by emphasising the role of conscious effort in learning: "the intention to learn is mainly what makes experiential learning worth considering as a specific form of learning, otherwise, it is little different from incidental and everyday learning" (Moon, 2004, p. 122).

Experiential learning can be seen in teacher leadership roles which provide teacher leaders with an opportunity to experience and realise learning on the job. Rogers (2005) and Bowman (2004) suggest that teachers in leadership roles should experience the opportunity to develop professionally through their experiences and expand their professional repertoire. Similarly, Collinson (2012) states that teachers in leadership roles may enhance the leadership and contextual knowledge that ultimately contribute to their professional growth. These assertions indicate that, before assuming leadership responsibilities, teachers may not have sufficient background knowledge of the context, which they gain through experiential learning in their roles. In other words, these roles enable them to unpick contextual realities and develop their knowledge, skills and expertise through drawing meaning from situations (Krisko, 2001). This type of knowledge, acquired in the individuals' immediate context, can help them with their roles more than knowledge gained from outside (Camburn, 2010). While performing various

roles (see Section 3.4), teacher leaders experience different situations on which they make an effort to reflect and learn through experimenting on-the-job. This cyclic experiential process helps them establish themselves as effective teacher leaders (Reeves, 2008).

3.7.4. Learning through reflective practice

Reflective thinking or "Reflection is a form of mental processing that we use to fulfill a purpose or to achieve anticipated outcome. It is applied to gain a better understanding of relatively complicated or unstructured ideas and is largely based on the reprocessing of knowledge, understanding and possibly emotions that we already possess" (Chelliah & Arumugam, 2012, p. 145). Experiential learning and reflection are interlinked processes and there may be no learning without reflecting on the experience. Dewey (1933) recognised that experience cannot be educative without reflection on it, and suggested that learners should reflect in order to grasp full adequate significance of the event. Similarly, Sullivan and Wiessner (2010) posit: "To learn from experience individuals must reflect on it; without reflection learning may not take place, or the learning may be dysfunctional" (p. 42). This idea is supported by Densten and Gray (2001) who argue that reflection on experience can maximise individuals' potential in leadership roles. Guthrie and Jones (2012) also believe, "experiential learning and reflection are critical to maximize leadership learning" (p. 53).

Dewey's work related to thinking introduced the concept of reflective practices in education. Dewey (1933) believed that reflective action leads to learning and development as it entails "active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in light of the grounds that support it and the further consequences to which it leads" (p. 9). Norsworthy (2008) summarises the distinct features of Dewey's work.

> Dewey's notion of reflection is the distinction between "routine" and "reflective" thinking. For Dewey (1910) the process of reflection is

predominantly a cognitive process that identifies and judges the grounds of belief which informs and sustains one's actions. Effective reflection leads to the development of three pre-requisite characteristics: open-mindedness, wholeheartedness and responsibility. The context needs to be a place which invites and encourages curiosity, and attention needs to be given to the individual within that context (Norsworthy, 2008, p. 28).

The seminal work by Schön (1983) "The Reflective Practitioner" affirms the contribution of Dewey rather than adding to it (Norsworthy, 2008). Schön offers three distinct facets of reflection: Reflection-in-action that means thinking on the spot which helps develop a repertoire of professional practice by recognising the tacit knowledge acquired in a role; Reflection-on-action which refers to retrospective thinking on experiences in a structured and planned manner; Reflection-for-action that is the desired outcome of the first two types of reflection. Sullivan and Wiessner (2010) consider these forms of reflections as experiential learning that lead to leadership development.

Wallace (1991) proposed a reflective model in ELT that is based on the assumption that teachers can develop professionally by reflecting on their practices. His work is considered a continuation or extension of Schön's work. Wallace argues that received knowledge (theories, concepts, skills studied as courses) does not contribute to the competence of teachers, and thus "ways should be found of making the relationship (between received knowledge and experiential learning) reciprocal, not one-way, so that the trainee can reflect on the received knowledge in the light of classroom experience, and so that classroom experience can feed back into the received knowledge sessions" (1991, p. 55).

Of all three models, it can be said that Dewey's work considers reflection a cognitive process in a social context which encourages individuals to reflect on their actions, whereas, Schön does not consider the social context an important aspect of reflection as he emphasises the procedural side of it by outlining three facets of reflective practices based on individuals' professional needs. Wallace (1991) makes reflection a cyclic process

in which both received knowledge and experiential knowledge contribute to practice which is followed by reflection. The recurring process of reflection towards practice results in professional competence and bridges the gap between theory and practice.
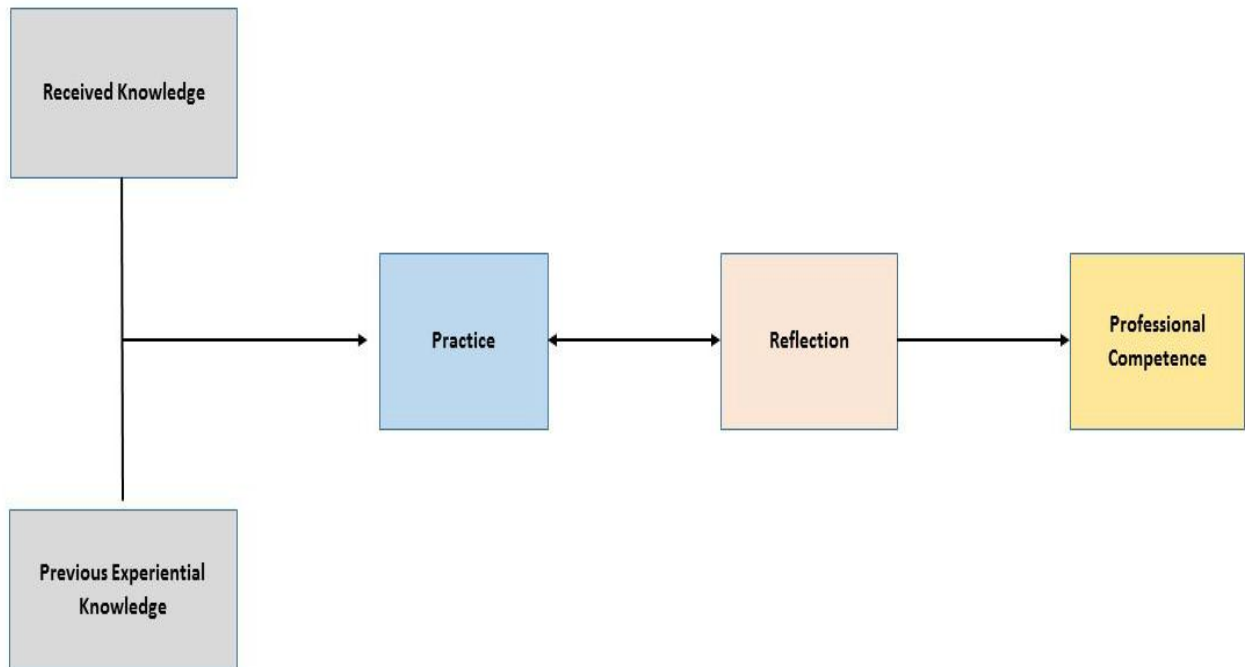
Figure: 3.2. The reflective model (Wallace, 1991, p. 54)

Literature suggests various reflective strategies that can prove effective for leadership learning. For example, reading, group discussion, the use of critical incidents, autobiographies, metaphor analyses, critical friends, teacher interviews, classroom ethnographies, peer observations, self-assessment, journal writing, portfolios, and action research (Norsworthy, 2008; Guthrie & Jones, 2012). However, awareness of different activities and their appropriateness are important factors that can maximise the learning outcomes. Moreover, in a deliberate effort to maximise the learning outcomes, individuals need to take responsibility for involving in reflective activities.

Intentional reflection for the purpose of making sense of and learning from experience for the purpose of improvement...Reflection requires linking existing

58

knowledge to an analysis of the relationship between current experience and future action...They go on to say that reflection aids in the reflective processes themselves, thereby building or expanding knowledge (McAlpine & Weston, 2002, p. 69).

As reflection is considered a key process which helps individuals to extract knowledge from their experiences (Illeris, 2007, cited in Guthrie & Jones, 2012), Moon (2004) believes that reflective practices encourage the use of reflection in complex professional activities as a means of coping with ill-structured or unpredictable situations. Inman (2007) also observed that self-learning through reflection on individual and collective work can increase contextual knowledge, self-awareness of the challenges and ability to neutralise the impact of those challenges. These practices may prove effective in supporting teacher leaders in different educational settings including EFL.

3.7.4.1. Criticism on reflective practices

Although reflective practice is considered a key component of teacher development processes, its theoretical grounding remains problematic (Collin, Karsenti & Komis, 2013). Literature shows that there is a lack of clarity and consensus on the definition of reflective practice, which is mainly due to a fast growing body of literature on this issue. Grimmett, Erickson, Mackinnon, and Riecken (1990) believe that, "A close examination of this rapidly accumulating body of literature on the nature of reflective teaching reveals a diversity of meanings that are attached to this and similar terms" (p. 20). Fendler (2003) states that "These days, the meaning of reflective practice is riddled with tensions between Schön's notion of practitioner-based intuition, on the one hand, and Dewey's notion of rational and scientific thinking on the other hand" (p. 19), which leads to ambiguity and confusion. Similarly, Ecclestone (1996) argues that, "Completely different models of knowledge and learning can underpin ideas about reflective practice" (p. 153). Beauchamp (2006) has also pointed out "the problem of the variety of ways in which reflection is perceived" (p. 59), which often distorts the notion and meaning of 'reflective practice' in teacher

education. As Collin et al. (2013) calls it a fuzzy concept, they cite Fendler's (2003) reservations related to reflective practice and its wide range of meanings:

> *Today's discourse of reflection incorporates an array of meanings: a demonstration of self consciousness, a scientific approach to planning for the future, a tacit and intuitive understanding of practice, a discipline to become more professional, a way to tap into one's authentic inner voice, a means to become a more effective teacher, and a strategy to redress injustices in society. It is no wonder then that current research and practices relating to reflection tend to embody mixed messages and confusing agendas (p. 20).*

It is also worth noting that the observation and recording of reflective practice 'in practice' is a difficult task. Collin et al. (2013) argue that researchers have yet to establish a mechanism to determine what is going on. Korthagen (2001) has succinctly explained this point:

> *Another fundamental problem in researching reflection is that much of what we are attempting to measure takes place in the teacher's head. Although techniques such as stimulated recall …, the analysis of supervisory discourse, or logbooks may be helpful, there is always a question concerning whether these approaches present us with valid data about what really happened inside the person (Korthagen, 2001, p. 91 as cited in Collin et al., 2013).*

Norton and Campbell (2007) have also argued that, "reflection in itself does not necessarily lead to action" (p. 142), and thus its outcome and impact as an evidence are difficult to realise. Knight (2002) has found several problems with reflective practices and cautioned against putting too much faith in reflections. Norton and Campbell (2007) has succinctly summarised Knight's criticism which includes:

- The term itself has been used in different ways and this has resulted in confusion.
- Reflection can be easily devalued by being confused with any type of thinking (Parker, 1997).
- Reflection may become *closed-circle thinking which confirms one's original feeling of rightness of thoughts*.
- Reflection is not necessarily proved to be a failsafe way of converting one's tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge**.**

(Knight, 2002 cited in Norton & Campbell, 2007, p. 142)

Apart from a lack of measurability of reflective practice, literature shows criticism on its applications and outcomes. In this regard, Wallace's (1991) reflective model did not receive much criticism since he was mainly following the works of Schön (1983, 1987). Schön's work was the center of criticised as it was also considered the continuation of Dewey's (1933) ideas. Ur (1996) believes that there is a chance of over-privileging of experiential knowledge in Wallace's model, which she considers the drawback of Schön's works as well.

> *My only reservation is that this model can tend to over-emphasize experience. Courses based on it have sometimes used the (student-) teachers themselves as almost the sole source of knowledge, with a relative neglect of external input - lectures, reading, and so on - which help to make sense of the experiences and can make a very real contribution to understanding. As I see it, the function of teacher reflection is to ensure the processing of any input, regardless of where it comes from, by the individual teacher ... Thus a fully effective reflective model should make room for external as well as personal input (p. 6).*

There is no doubt that Schön's model of reflection has been influential in teacher education and it may prove effective in teacher leader professional development; however, it has been heavily criticised by some notable authors, such as Peter Knight, Paul Hager, Jenifer Moon, Phil Hodkinson, and Michael Eraut. For example, Eraut (1995) has a concern about Schön's (1983, p. 49) claim of proposing a new "epistemology of practice" in the construct of reflection-in-action. He argues that "reflection in-action is a process of knowledge creation, not a new kind of knowledge which is somehow different from knowing-in-action" (p. 12). He further maintains that in order to develop a new epistemology of practice, Schön should have carried out in-depth research on his notion of knowing-in-action as the process of reflection-in-action leads to developing new knowing-in-action. Similarly, Knight (2002) points out Schön's inconsistency in distinguishing between reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. Furthermore, Eraut (1995) observes that "Schön fails to appreciate the importance of the time variable in

understanding professional behaviour. When time is extremely short, decisions have to be rapid and the scope for reflection is extremely limited" (p. 14). This idea is also supported by Bleakley (1999) who believes that a teacher or practitioner might fail to promptly respond to the situation and solve the problem on the spot. S/he might lack the capacity or the element of immediacy in reflection-in-action, which can frustrate them and lead to a complete standstill. Thus, reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action cannot be considered sustainable learning strategies. Therefore, Schön's distinction between reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action seems to be contradictory on theoretical and methodological levels (Eraut, 1995; Moon, 1999).

In the same direction, Hager and Hodkinson (2011) criticised Schön's work highlighting its cognitive and decontextualized nature of learning in a specific context. They believe that Schön ignores the significance of social context in the process of learning. Despite the fact that the professional knowledge of Schön's reflective practitioner's undergoes a process of construction and reconstruction, and as a result of their reflection-in-action practitioners reform and transform their practices; however, critics do not consider his work a constructivist in nature. Hager and Hodkinson (2011) have summarised the limitations of Schön's reflective practitioner, which include:

1. It focuses sharply on individual practitioner.

2. It focuses almost exclusively on the rational, cognitive aspects of practice.

3. It tends to present practice as thinking or reflection followed by application of the thinking or reflection. In this respect, it retains vestiges of this 'acquisition' and 'transfer' metaphors.

4. Points 1–3 taken together mean that learning from, and during, practice is assumed to be akin to formal learning, thereby favouring the acquisition metaphor.

5. It fails to acknowledge sufficiently the crucial roles that social, organizational and cultural factors play in learning from, and during, practice (Hager & Hodkinson, 2011, p. 41).

The above criticism is interesting as it finds similar issues with Schön's works and questions his professed epistemological position, which he himself found in Dewey's (1933) writings. He questioned Dewey's work on the same grounds considering it centered in technical rationality. Although the abovementioned authors have rightly pointed out Schön's inclination towards individual practitioner, their criticism may not be justified as Schön values the crucial role of "interpersonal theories of action" and dialogue in reflective practices at a workplace (p. 210). This could be seen as a positive aspect of his work which is closer to constructivist's view; however, he fails to succeed in theorizing reflection as a social practice (Marshall, 2006).

This section of the chapter has provided a theoretical model (Figure 3.3) based on four major concepts from the literature which can assist teacher leader development in an informal fashion. According to Lave and Wenger's (1991) practice based theory, learning occurs in the context of lived experiences through social participation in CoPs, which provide a platform for social interaction, situated experiences and collaborative activities. Similarly, DuFour and Eaker's (1998) PLC has the potential to offer organisational centred learning to transform individuals' dispositions and develop their skills in a collaborative school culture. Commitment to organisational effectiveness is the key feature of PLC as DuFour (2014) states: "PLCs are dedicated to the idea that their organization exists to ensure that all students learn essential knowledge, skills, and dispositions" (para. 6). Teacher leaders can benefit from CoP and PLC as both enable learning and development, however, in school context their collaborative efforts and interactive activities with colleagues can help them increase their ZPD and enhance their task-achievement abilities.

Experiential learning theory and reflective models can also support teacher leaders' professional learning. In spite of criticism on reflective practice, the works of Dewey (1933), Schön (1983) and Wallace (1991) can be considered as an ongoing, evidenced-based introspective practice that can inform teacher leaders' actions to make decisions

about their leadership practices. They can learn in an informal and unstructured manner through experiencing leadership roles, reflecting on their practices, giving meaning to their actions, and making sense of their difficult experiences.
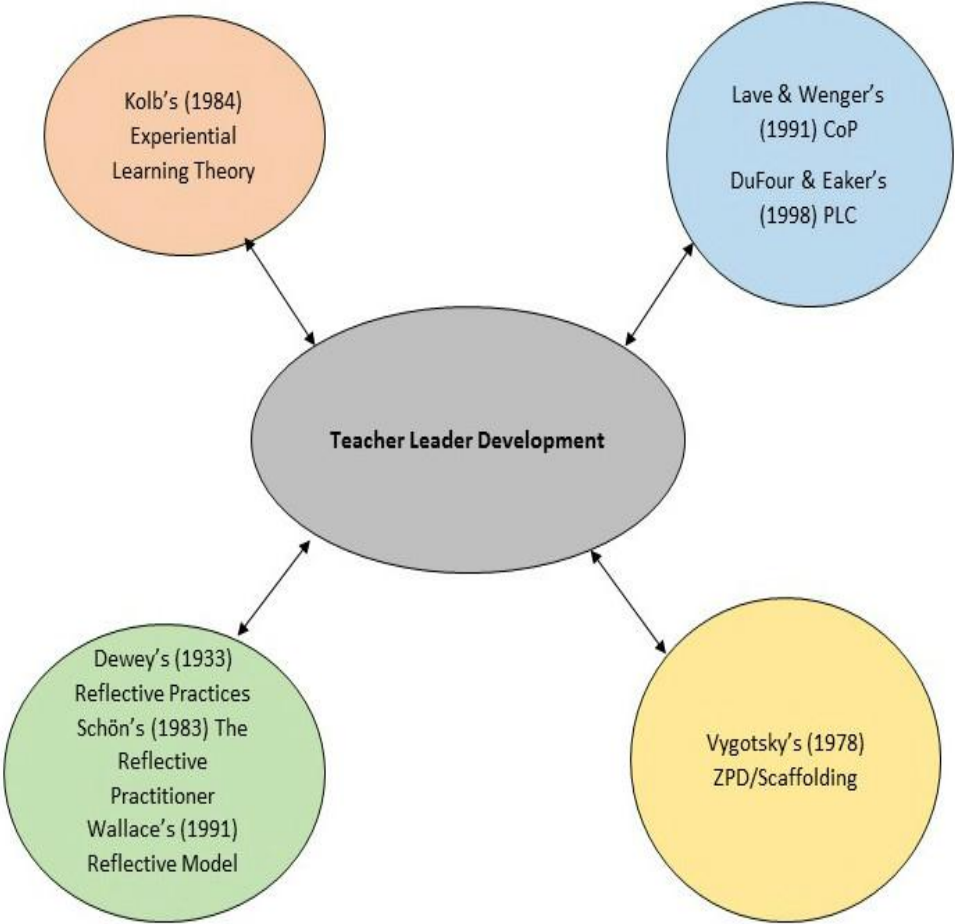
Figure: 3.3. Teacher leader professional development model

3.8. Studies on professional development of teacher leaders

Studies investigating teacher leadership development have mainly been conducted in western contexts. Table 3.6 outlines the key studies on teacher leadership and summarises their methodological positions and major factors that influenced teacher leader professional development.

Study	Purpose	Method	Sample Size	No. of Months	Factors Facilitated Leadership Development
Inman (2007)	To explore the lifetime experiences of leader-academics & understand how they learned to lead in the UK universities.	Semi-structured biographical interviews	Eighteen academic leaders	6	Critical incidents/Influence of significant people /Self-learning /On-the-job informal learning /Formal mentoring /Participation in networks /Reflection on practices
Rhodes & Brundrett (2009)	To explore factors assisting leadership development of teachers in the US context.	Focus group interviews & a questionnaire	191 Middle-leaders & 168 classroom teachers of 70 primary & secondary schools	24	Collaborative efforts/Commitment to professional learning/Availing opportunities for direct leadership experience/Mentorship.
Newsom (2010)	To understand the development of urban elementary teacher leaders in the US context.	Semi-structured interviews & post-interview written reflections	5 teacher leaders	3	Formal & informal PD activities/Commitment/Self-efficacy/ Ability to switch between various leadership roles/Develop constructive working relations with their colleagues and administrators.
Stephenson (2012)	To explore leadership perspectives and identity formation of TESOL leaders from around the globe.	Biographical interviews	5 TESOL leaders	3	Critical events in professional lives/ The influence of significant people/ The impact of shared leadership practices.
Stephenson, Dada & Harold (2012)	To investigate the impact of the professional learning process on teacher leadership development in UAE schools	Focus group interviews, dialogue, observations, filed notes & retrospective analysis	8 teacher leaders	7	The impact of shared form of leadership roles/ Understanding of school and cultural issues/ Shared motivation/ Formal and informal leadership roles/ Content and pedagogical knowledge/Critical reflection/Interpersonal skills.
Hunzicker (2012)	To understand how elementary teachers learned to exercise informal leadership in the US context.	Reflective writings/ questionnaire responses & focus group discussions	Multiple Case-studies/ 10 middle & elementary school teachers	12	Learning through exercising leadership/ Exposure to research-based practices/Self-efficacy/ Serving beyond the classroom
Hunzicker (2013)	To know the key dispositions of emerging teacher leadership that help teachers to exercise informal leadership in the US context.	Reflective writings, questionnaire responses and focus group discussions	Multiple Case-studies/ 8 middle & elementary school teachers	12	Collegial professional relationships/ Student-centered mindset/Constant pursuit of professional growth.
Sanocki (2013)	To understand the process of becoming a teacher leader and how teacher leadership is distributed in US schools.	Face-to-face interviews & multiple e-mail correspondences	8 teacher leaders	3	Leadership roles/ Operate & communicate in a PLC/ Commitment to organisational effectiveness.
Higgins (2013)	To investigate teacher leadership and professional learning in a secondary school in USA.	Face-to-face ethnographic interviews, observations, & document analysis	5 math teacher leaders	6	Informal experiential learning/Experiencing leadership outside workplace/Learning from formal PD opportunities/
Alexandrou, Swaffield & MacBeath (2014)	To explore ways and activities that helped teachers develop their leadership capacities in Scottish schools.	Face-to-face interviews, focus groups & written reflections	2 secondary school teachers & the Assistant General Secretary of CPD programme	11	Interactive activities PD opportunities/Powerful learning experiences of the past/Self-confidence/Professional collaboration.

Fairman & Mackenzie (2015)	To explore ways through which teachers lead tasks with colleagues and improve teaching, learning and understanding of their work as leaders in the US context.	In-depth interviews	24 elementary and high school teachers	12	Professional relationships/ Informal collaboration/ Trust/ Collegiality.

3.6. Summary of the reviewed studies on teacher leadership development

A wide range of studies offers insight into how teachers in leadership roles develop into effective teacher leaders. In the US school context, Hunzicker (2012) explored the lived experiences of eight elementary teachers to understand how they learned to exercise informal leadership. The data was collected utilising three different tools; reflective writings, questionnaire responses and focus group discussions. Her findings revealed three factors that facilitated teacher leadership; exposure to research-based practices, increased teacher self-efficacy, and serving beyond the classroom. She believed that teachers learned to exercise leadership gradually, over time as they accumulated professional experience. Her conclusion was that teachers' professional development should aim to improve teaching practice and build leadership skills, paired with job-embedded collaboration. However, her findings overlooked various factors that might affect the realisation of these goals. For example, language teachers with no prior research experience might not be in a position to pursue research-based practices. They may fail to achieve increased self-efficacy in less supportive organisations. Moreover, job-embedded collaboration might not be realised in centralised and hierarchical leadership structures.

In the same US context, Hunzicker (2013) investigated the experiences of eight elementary and middle school teachers to identify the key dispositions of emerging teacher leadership that helped teachers to exercise informal leadership. The data tools were reflective writings, questionnaire responses and focus group discussions. Hunzicker revealed that three dispositions facilitated teacher leadership: collegial professional relationships, a student-centered mindset, and constant pursuit of professional growth.

Her findings indicate the significance of PLCs that encourage collaboration and teamwork among the community of teacher leaders. Her participants built collegial relationships by expanding professional networks, leading by example, and seeking feedback from colleagues. These activities can take the form of on-going and long term professional endeavours that may go beyond their working contexts. However, the participants in this study were mainly teachers in informal leadership positions with no formal authority, whose perceptions might differ from those in more formal roles in the context of the current study. One of the limitations of this study is that it does not explain the role of the workplace environment and the leadership model which can directly impact the learning outcomes.

Similarly, a qualitative case study on teacher leaders' leadership journeys by Alexandrou, Swaffield and MacBeath (2014) explored ways in which teachers engaged in teacher union activities that helped them develop their leadership capacities in a Scottish school context. The data were collected via face-to-face interviews, focus groups and written reflections. They found that interactive activities offered PD opportunities such as mentoring and training for the teachers in their teacher leadership roles. Moreover, their powerful learning experiences gave them more confidence in their roles as teachers and teacher leaders. They further established that:

> *the development of these teacher leadership capacities was seldom planned, and the pursuit of leadership roles per se seldom sought. Rather, leadership skills were often acquired 'accidently', to the point where those involved frequently did not recognise the full extent of their own personal development as leaders (Alexandrou, Swaffield & MacBeath, 2014, p. 215).*

Their findings give a picture of a cooperative school culture where teachers from a homogenous background are dependent on each other in a collaborative environment. Moreover, the findings suggest that the context offered experiential learning opportunities to the teacher leaders that contributed to their capacity building.

In the area of higher education in the UK, Inman (2007) sought to explore the lifetime experiences of eighteen leader-academics through a narrative inquiry. She conducted semi-structured biographical interviews between November 2005 and April 2006 at six chartered and statutory universities in the south of Wales and the west of England to understand their views of formative years of learning, career trajectories, motivational factors, and formal and informal learning experiences that helped them acquire leadership skills. She noted that complex and demanding nature of leadership required middle-level leaders to learn various management and leadership skills mentioned in Table 3.3. However, there was a lack of formal professional development activities to facilitate the learning of new skills and thus they mainly relied on informal learning. Her findings revealed that critical incidents and significant people impacted middle-level leaders' learning, but they were mainly self-taught who learned leadership on the job through mentoring, participation in networks and reflection on practices. These strategies reflect the features of experiential learning and shared practices in the form of PLCs. They also offer useful insights into the middle-level academic leaders' informal professional learning in a university context.

In a similar narrative inquiry, Newsom (2010) aimed to understand the development of urban elementary school teacher leaders in the southeastern part of the United States. The data were collected from five teacher leaders through semi-structured interviews and post-interview written reflections over the course of three months. The narrative analysis, analysis of narrative and cross-case analysis revealed that teacher leaders adopted formal and informal means to meet the demands of their roles. They displayed commitment, self-efficacy and ability to switch between various leadership roles which enabled them to develop constructive working relations with their colleagues and administrators. They collaborated on various institutional initiatives, shared responsibilities and worked towards a common vision and goal, which are indicative of a PLC. As teacher leaders, they learned about their roles, enhanced their communication and management skills and

developed their cultural competence through mentorship and personal urge to effectively perform in their leadership roles.

In another narrative inquiry in TESOL domain, Stephenson (2012) explored the leadership perspectives and identity formation of five TESOL leaders from around the globe. The data were collected over a summer vacation and the participants were interviewed electronically. Her findings suggest that critical events in the professional lives of TESOL leaders shaped their leadership experiences. They were also influenced by significant people in the field of TESOL. More importantly, they shared leadership practices in various ways across the globe to work with and influence others, building relationships based on mutual respect and learning. This study acknowledges the fact that distributed and collaborative practices are common among TESOL leaders around the world. Although, this is a rare study on leadership development, it does not include teacher leaders or leaders in middle-level leadership roles in EFL/ESL contexts as its focus is on top leadership.

With an objective to understand teacher leadership and the professional learning and development of teacher leaders, Higgins (2013) conducted an ethnographic study in a secondary mathematics department of a high school in Florida USA. The qualitative data were collected from five high school math teachers via face-to-face interviews, observations and document analysis. Her results showed that it was the school environment that offered opportunities for teacher leaders to share their expertise in an informal setting and learn from one another. The participants also experienced teacher leadership outside the department when they had opportunities to lead professional development seminars and to practice leadership through role modeling. Higgins noted that one-on-one, formal and informal workshops organised by colleagues were the key sources of professional learning. The leadership model applied in the school context might have influenced teacher leadership practices; however, Higgins does not mention it. As this study was guided by social learning theory (Wenger, 1998), its findings have

similarities with other qualitative studies which have established the potential impact of informal, collaborative and shared form of leadership practices on teacher leader professional development.

Furthermore on leadership development in school settings, Rhodes and Brundrett (2009) reported the findings of a study funded by the National College for School Leadership in the UK. They aimed to explore factors that assisted in leadership development of teachers at various stages of their careers. The data were collected through focus group interviews and a questionnaire to secure perceptions of heads, middle leaders and classroom teachers about leadership development and succession planning in a sample of 70 primary and secondary schools. Rhodes and Brundrett (2009) identified three major themes, contextual, cultural and developmental which influenced the talent pool development and leadership succession planning. Contextual theme showed potential context-specific barriers to leadership succession and development. The cultural theme illustrated the significance of collaborative efforts and commitment to professional learning. The developmental theme emphasised opportunities for direct leadership experience in the form of mentorship (Rhodes & Brundrett, 2009, p. 393). The findings suggested a coherent and coordinated approach towards leadership learning and development in school contexts, supported by senior leaders. The support of senior leaders shows that the context offers 'scaffolding' opportunities in the form of mentorship and the members work in a community that contributes to their professional learning.

Stephenson, Dada and Harold (2012) investigated the impact of professional learning process, such as collaborative action research, mentoring and coaching on teacher leadership development in two UAE schools. In a longitudinal qualitative case study which continued for over six-months, eight teacher leaders participated in the data collection process. Stephenson et al. (2012) used focus group interviews, dialogue, observations, field notes and retrospective analysis to collect data. The findings of this study reflected

experiential learning through reflective and collaborative practices, which contributed to the professional development of teacher leaders. The impact of professional learning process can be seen in the sharing of leadership roles, understanding of school and cultural issues, shared motivation, formal and informal roles, content and pedagogical knowledge, critical reflection and interpersonal skills. Although, this study on teacher leadership was conducted in the Middle Eastern context, it did not include EFL teacher leaders.

Apart from studies on teacher leadership learning and development, researchers have also looked into the process of becoming a teacher leader, which helps in understanding factors that support teacher leadership in educational organisations. Sanocki (2013) adopted a grounded theory approach to understand the process of becoming a teacher leader and how teacher leadership was distributed in schools in the Midwest state of USA. The data were collected through face-to-face interviews and multiple e-mail correspondences with eight teacher leaders over a period of three months. The key findings suggest that teacher leaders are classroom teachers first and teacher leaders second with a primary focus on learners' outcomes. Secondly, they are introspective about their roles, which shows their ability to reflect on their practices and assess their strengths and weaknesses. Thirdly, they gain confidence in their roles by overcoming their fears and ensuring egalitarianism in schools. Fourthly, they positively build, maintain, operate and communicate in a professional learning community, which add to their leadership learning and development. Lastly, showing urge to contribute to organisational effectiveness, teacher leaders engage themselves in collaborative tasks and influence others towards a positive change in schools. The participants of this study showed the characteristics of experiential and reflective learners who contributed to the effectiveness of their organisations by working in PLCs.

In relation to collaborative tasks, Fairman and Mackenzie (2015) researched ways through which teachers undertook tasks with colleagues to improve teaching, learning and

understanding of their work as leaders. It was a case study of seven Maine schools in the US. Qualitative data were collected through 24 interviews conducted in two elementary and three high schools. The findings illustrate that teacher leaders considered professional relationships, informal collaboration, trust and collegiality as important factors in supporting teacher leadership development and school improvement. Although Fairman and Mackenzie have not explicitly mentioned the existence of PLC or CoP, the findings signify the role of a professional learning community in building collegial relationships and enhancing organisational learning. Moreover, the context of the study allows teachers and teacher leaders to adhere to collaborative practices. The findings reaffirm the fact that collegiality and informal collaboration can be effective developmental strategies irrespective of the context and setting that teacher leaders operate in.

As can be seen that most of the studies reviewed in this section were conducted in the UK or US contexts, highlighting the significance of teacher leadership development in western contexts and revealing the dearth of research on this issue in EFL/ESL settings. It is worth noting that these eleven studies were in the orbit of interpretivist paradigm considering the subjective meanings and understandings of individuals in teacher leadership roles. The researchers' chosen methodologies, such as case study, narrative inquiry, ethnography, mixed-method and grounded theory were in line with their constructivist paradigmatic stance that they adopted. Since they aimed to explore and understand the perceptions and lived experiences of teacher leaders about their leadership development, they employed qualitative data collection tools, such as semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews, reflective journals, and observations. Although, these studies were carried out in different educational settings, the qualitative data collection methods yielded results that were largely very similar. The common factors that facilitated teacher leader learning were; the individuals' efficacy, exposure to leadership roles, collaborative practices, critical incidents, powerful learning experiences,

the influence of significant people, reflective practices, interactive activities, and mentoring. The findings of these studies are significant for various reasons. Firstly, it is obvious that teacher leaders were mainly experiential learners who had the ability to reflect on and give meaning to their role-based experiences. Secondly, their collaborative activities, the impact of mentorship and the influence of significant people show that they were operating in PLCs which contributed to their context-specific learning. Finally, it is interesting to note that these eleven studies have not found leadership knowledge important for teacher leadership roles.

3.9. Teacher leadership in the Saudi Arabian context

As has been demonstrated above, the concept of teacher leadership is widely researched in western contexts; however, in Saudi Arabia, there seems to be a lack of research on this issue. The existing studies show that the majority of researchers investigated the roles and challenges of 'head teachers' or 'principals' and neglected teacher leaders in Saudi state schools. Moreover, there has hardly been any study in the HE context that focuses on teacher leadership learning in EFL institutes in the state owned universities of Saudi Arabia. However, Stephenson (2008) states that issues which make principalship more complicated can be applied to ELT professionals as well. Thus, studies conducted in the Saudi school context can facilitate an understanding about the leadership practices and their inherited challenges in the EFL higher education institutes in Saudi Arabia. Four such studies are summarized in Table 3.7.

Study	Purpose	Method	Sample Size	No. of Months	Findings
Alsharari (2010)	To investigate the professional development needs of head teachers in primary & secondary schools of Saudi Arabia	Mixed-method approach. Survey questionnaire & semi-structure interviews	470 head teachers. 36 interviewed.	12	Lack of training in the areas of information technology, administrative tasks, staff development and student affairs
Alkarni (2014)	To investigate head teachers' challenges and how they become more effective while working in the centralised system of Saudi Schools	Semi-structured interviews & survey questionnaire	10 Secondary school head teachers	3	The negative influence of centralised system/ lack of support/lack of autonomy and professional freedom/ de-motivation.

					Existing knowledge, their professional beliefs and values helped them manage their roles.
Alsalahi (2014)	To ascertain English teacher leaders' challenges and how they managed to practise their identity and agency as leaders within and beyond their classrooms in Saudi Schools	Semi-structured interviews	Three middle school teachers of English language	1	Teacher leaders' marginalization/ lack of decision-making powers/ negative influence of hegemonic practices of head teachers/ Ineffective teacher training programmes/lack of preparation for leadership roles
Shah (2014)	To understand the impact of top-down management system on EFL teachers' practices in a Saudi Arabian university	Semi-structure interviews	5 EFL university teachers	2	The absence of appreciation & celebration/ lack of collaboration/no interpersonal trust/Ineffective leadership style of leaders/oppressive policies

3.7. Summary of the reviewed studies on leadership in the Saudi context

In the Saudi context, Alkarni (2014) investigated the challenges faced by head teachers which affected their leadership roles in secondary schools. He aimed to learn how head teachers could be more effective while working in a centralised system. He adopted a mixed-methods approach to collect data through semi-structured interviews with 10 head teachers followed by a survey questionnaire. His findings suggest that head teachers had mainly operational duties in a typical top-down management system. Alkarni identified the impact of the centralised system on head teachers' autonomy and professional freedom, which led to their de-motivation. Nonetheless, they utilised their existing leadership knowledge, their professional beliefs and values to manage their day-to-day work. In addition, the lack of professional development and support which head teachers required for their roles was noted.

With a similar focus, Alsalahi (2014) aimed to ascertain teacher leaders' challenges in a Saudi school. His study introduced the construct of 'teacher leader' in this context in order to explore whether Saudi teachers of English in the school context were able to enact their identity and agency as leaders within and beyond the classroom. In this small-scale qualitative study, he conducted semi-structured interviews with three teacher leaders. The findings revealed the teacher leaders' lack of decision-making powers due to the hegemonic practices of head teachers. Although teacher leaders considered themselves

legitimate leaders, the school culture of mistrust, accountability and top-down policies led to a disempowerment that impacted their leadership practices. The findings showed that teacher training programmes neglected teachers' professional needs and there was no support or material available to teacher leaders in schools. One of the study's aim was to understand how teachers developed their professional identity as leaders; however, the findings failed to explicitly indicate the identity development processes of teacher leaders.

The above studies by Alkarni (2014) and Alsalahi (2014) identified a top-down management model and its related challenges in Saudi Arabian state schools. Similarly, Shah (2014), in the area of higher education in Saudi Arabia, established that bureaucratic practices led to the disempowerment of EFL teachers. In a small-scale qualitative study, he interviewed five non-Saudi EFL teachers to see the impact of the top-down management system on EFL teachers' practices. His key findings were the absence of appreciation and celebration of language teachers, lack of collaboration among teachers or interpersonal trust, an ineffective leadership style, and oppressive policies. These factors led to teachers' lack of autonomy, resulting in their challenge to the top-down management system and demand for distributed leadership, in order to have a sense of ownership and fulfillment by being involved in decision-making processes. Although this study focused on university EFL teachers, the context-specific leadership practices suggest the top-down nature of leadership models in Saudi higher education.

In another study, Alsharari (2010) investigated the professional development needs of head teachers in primary and secondary state schools of Saudi Arabia. Adhering to a mixed-method approach, a survey questionnaire was completed by 470 head teachers which was followed by face-to-face interviews with 36 head teachers. The findings showed that head teachers required training in the areas of information technology, administrative tasks, staff development and student affairs. Staff development in particular, was a major challenge for the head teachers as they lacked teacher training

experience and qualifications. This study recommended changes in the policies related to appointment of head teachers and suggested training courses and qualifications based on head teachers' professional needs.

The reviewed studies on leadership in Saudi context were mainly conducted in state schools which investigated the head teachers' professional development needs and their leadership challenges. The existing studies were largely positioned in the interpretivist paradigm which adopted qualitative approaches to understanding the participants' views about their leadership roles. These four studies identified a centralised and bureaucratic system in Saudi educational institutions which impacted teachers' autonomy. Lack of collaborative activities, ineffective PD programmes and absence of appreciation for teachers indicate that there was no concept of CoP or shared leadership practices in Saudi state schools.

It is worth noting that head teacher positions are only held by Saudi nationals in state schools whereas the teaching staff has both Saudi and non-Saudi teachers. From the findings of the above studies, it can be inferred that the centralised school system and headship positions specified for Saudi nationals reflect the patriarchal nature of the society, in which head teachers derive strength from their hierarchical positions within organisational power structures.

In view of the above studies, the current research introduces the concept of teacher leadership in the HE institutions in Saudi EFL context with a focus on teacher leaders operating in middle-level leadership positions in a foreign language institute. As majority of the studies have investigated leadership roles in Saudi school settings, the current research considers the case of a Saudi university to explore factors that support EFL teacher leadership. Although Alsalahi (2014) acknowledges the role of teacher leaders in Saudi Arabian schools, he has mainly considered the challenges that might hinder teacher leadership. Moreover, he has not specifically focused on the aspects of professional

learning and development of EFL teacher leaders. Since there is no research in the area of teacher leadership learning in the Saudi EFL as well as in many other ESL contexts, particularly in higher education institutions, this study aims to fill that void and contribute to the body of literature.

3.10. Conclusion

This chapter explored the concept of teacher leadership, its historical evolution and the number of roles teachers can perform as leaders in school contexts. The teacher leadership roles largely reflect the individuals' expertise, such as PD specialist, mentor and curriculum reformer; however, these roles often have operational and managerial components based on the organisational demands. As literature acknowledges the vital part teacher leaders play in the functioning of educational institutions, they often need to possess improved leadership skills and knowledge to facilitate their leadership roles. As most teachers do not come prepared to assume leadership responsibilities in their institutions, they acquire essential leadership knowledge and skills either formally by attending training courses or informally by relying on their experiential learning and working collaboratively in PLCs. The latter form of professional development is more common among teacher leaders and it involves role-based and context-specific reflective learning.

A plethora of studies on the concepts of teacher leadership and leadership development of teachers has been carried out in UK and US contexts. Authors have largely adopted interpretivist approaches and utilised qualitative tools, such as face-to-face interviews, focus group interviews and observations to understand teacher leaders' perceptions and experiences of their professional learning. Specifically in the Saudi context, leadership studies have focused on head teachers' challenges and their professional development needs; there has been no study which considers teacher leadership and teacher leader development in HE institutions. Moreover, there is a serious dearth of teacher leadership

studies in the TESOL domain that unpick the processes of teacher leader development (Stephenson, 2012). This study aims to contribute to the body of knowledge by answering the following research questions:

RQ1: How do EFL teacher leaders perceive 'teacher leadership' and their leadership roles at the ELI?

    a) What kind of knowledge and skills do they consider important for teacher leadership roles at the ELI?

RQ2: What factors contributed to the EFL teacher leaders' professional development at the ELI?

The reviewed literature on the topic of teacher leadership in this chapter constitutes the basis of methodology, which is described in the following chapter.

Chapter 4. Methodology

The main goals of this qualitative case study are to explore teacher leaders' perceptions of teacher leadership and factors that contribute to EFL teacher leaders' learning and development in an EFL institute. To achieve these goals, this study intends to pursue the following aims:

- To understand the notion of 'teacher leadership' from the perspective of teacher leaders at the ELI

- To identify the kinds of skills and knowledge teacher leaders need to have for the successful dispensation of their leadership responsibilities at the ELI

- To explore factors contributing to the professional learning and development of EFL teachers leaders at the ELI

This chapter seeks to explain and justify the research methodology that underpins this study. First, I will rationalise my philosophical assumptions by explaining the ontological and epistemological stance of this study, which will enable me to validate my underlying conceptualisation of the research strategy chosen for this study. Then, I will describe my research methodology, methods of data collection and data analysis procedures. At the end, I will explain the trustworthiness of the data, ethical considerations and limitations of the study.

4.1. Paradigmatic assumptions

The term 'paradigm' was first introduced by Kuhn in his seminal work *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Kuhn defined a paradigm as "an integrated cluster of substantive concepts, variables and problems attached with corresponding methodological approaches and tools" (cited in Flick, 2009, p. 69). Similarly, Guba and Lincoln (1994) considered a paradigm "a basic system or worldview that guides the investigator" (p.

105). Hussain, Elyas and Nasseef (2013) believe that the term 'paradigm' can be utilised in three ways in human sciences: it can be adopted for the institutionalisation of intellectual activity, for the broad groupings of certain approaches and perspectives to the study of any subject, and for the description of broad approaches to research, for example, the positivist or interpretive paradigms (Grix, 2010).

The philosophical underpinnings of a research process reflect what researchers 'silently think' about research (Scott & Usher, 1999). According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000), research is "concerned with understanding the world and that this is informed by how we view our worlds, how we take understanding to be and what we see as the purpose of understanding" (p. 3). Therefore, I seek to clarify the philosophical assumptions, which are necessary for the identification of the ontological stance of this study and my own epistemological position, based on which the methodological foundation of this study was developed.

4.1.1. Ontological assumptions

To conduct quality research, it is essential that the researchers' choice of paradigm suits their underlying assumptions about the nature and understanding of the world. In social sciences, these assumptions are mainly related to ontology, epistemology and methodology.

Ontological assumptions are related to the nature of the world and the essence of external reality as well as those which are produced by individual consciousness (Cohen et al., 2000). Ontology is the "study of being... concerned with 'what is', with the nature of existence, with the structure of reality" (Crotty, 2003, p. 10). To recognise different perspectives of reality, Mason (2002) emphasises that a researcher needs to establish and understand his or her own ontological position. The concept of reality is discussed from the perspectives of nominalists/interpretivists and realists/positivists. Nominalists view reality as being of the individual's own making whereas realists consider reality external

and imposed on individuals (Cohen et al., 2000). These two extremes of reality provide a choice to the researchers to place themselves somewhere in the middle of this subjective/objective divide. In this respect, my own understanding is that reality in some situations may not be constructed by the individuals and thus it can be imposed upon them. Such external realities can be seen in the form of policies and practices that educational institutions adopt and staff members abide by. At the same time, I have a strong conviction that the individuals' perceptions and interpretations of 'reality' are a creation of their social, cultural, educational and professional experiences. This can be true particularly of those individuals who share their understanding of learning experiences of leadership roles. Thus, this research subscribes to the subjectivist approach and nominalist ontology which are in line with the perspective of interpretive paradigm.

The ontological stance of interpretivists considers the existence of multiple realities within the social world and assumes that the social phenomena and their meanings are being constructed and accomplished by social actors (Bryman, 2008). Hence, these realities are characterised by being abstract, multifaceted, context-bound and subjective, which can be studied through their holistic and distinctive features (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). This further suggests that a specific social phenomenon under investigation is not only the product of social interaction; rather, it is constantly changed and revised. Adhering to interpretivists' ontology, I believe that the phenomenon of leadership learning and development cannot be studied as an external reality, nor considered independent of the EFL teacher leaders' consciousness. In fact, learning and development are subjective meanings based on the understandings and experiences of EFL teacher leaders which they associate with developing leadership skills and knowledge in their workplace context. Therefore, I consider it important to study these subjective meanings, understandings, and experiences because they represent the individuals' interpretation of 'teacher leadership' in the Saudi EFL context.

4.1.2. Epistemological assumptions

Epistemological assumptions are concerned with the nature and foundation of knowledge, which depends on the researchers' ontological view. Epistemology is a philosophical stance that enables researchers to judge what can be considered as knowledge (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). Denzin and Lincoln (2000) suggest that the word 'epistemology' defines the standard of evaluating and conceptualising individuals' reality and image of the world. It has different types such as: objectivism, subjectivism and constructionism. Epistemological questions help researchers to generate knowledge and explanations about the ontological constituents of the social world (Mason, 2002). Realists may argue that knowledge is hard and real and can be transmitted in a tangible form (Trochim, 2002), whereas nominalists' counter argument may be that knowledge is subjective, based on individuals' experience and insight (Denscombe, 2003). There is an emphasis on the underlying epistemology of research which needs to be made explicit, as Scott and Usher (1999) state "most of the time the epistemology is either unrecognised or taken for granted" (p. 11).

Recognising the significance of epistemology, my epistemological assumption for this research is subjectivism, which is consistent with interpretive paradigm. I view knowledge as subjective and not controlled or regulated by the theories and laws of science. As learning is generated from individuals' own experiences through a process of constructing meaning out of experience (Muir, 2014), knowledge about the concept of teacher leadership and leadership learning and development would be based on and best understood from the experiences of EFL teacher leaders' subjective understandings and interpretations.

4.2. The paradigmatic choice for this study

A study is designed under a particular paradigm indicating its research approach and principles that signify the area of investigation (Grix, 2004). I chose to approach my inquiry

with an interpretive position. It must be noted that adopting an interpretive approach could mean various things. According to Grix (2004): "Interpretivism is an umbrella term which covers just as many variations of approach to social enquiry as positivism" (p.82). In his attempt to write about the evaluation and analysis of different versions of interpretivism, Howe (2003) states that the analysis would require him to negotiate "some pretty treacherous conceptual ground" (p.65). He elucidates that different terms used in discussions about different versions of interpretivism, such as interpretivism, postmodernism, constructivism, deconstructionism etc.—hold different meanings to different people. However, the subtle variations of meaning in the way these terms are used by different authors are not within the scope of this study.

Interpretive research seeks to understand values, beliefs and meanings of social phenomena and thereby extract *Verstehen* or an empathetic understanding of human social activities and experiences (Smith & Heshsius, 1986). Interpretivists believe in the inseparability of understanding from interpretation. They see all social research as interpretive because all such research is guided by the researcher's desire to understand and interpret social reality. Thus, the interpretive paradigm assumes that there are no facts, only socially constructed interpretations (Bhattacharya, 2008). As interpretivist research aims to explore individuals' perceptions, share their meanings and develop insights about the observed cases (Grix, 2010), the focus of research should be on an understanding of this construction and the multiple perspectives it implies (Richards, 2003). This outlook holds a position that knowledge and truth are created rather than discovered and that reality is pluralistic.

Interpretive research has been criticised for being too impressionistic. The subjective and contextual nature of interpretive research findings prevent researchers from generalising results to different organisational settings (Grix, 2004). As researchers' views are reflected in the interpretive research process, their personal subjectivity may influence the research outcomes and compromise the participants' privacy and autonomy and lead to

the unintended discovery of secrets, lies and oppressive relationships (Howe & Moses, 1999, p. 40). Owing to participants' lack of control over the researcher's subjective interpretations, critics argue that interpretivists often "theorized accounts that represent the researchers' sociological understandings of the social worlds of children and adults" (Danby & Farrell, 2004, p. 41). Scheurich (1997) counters this argument and contends that analysing interviewees' accounts through an interpretivist lens is not "the development of an accurate representation of the data, as the positivist approach assumes, but a creative interaction between the conscious/unconscious researcher and the decontextualized data which is assumed to represent reality or, at least, reality as interpreted by the interviewee" (p. 63). This creative interaction between the researcher and the data lead to the creation of knowledge that takes the form of explanation, interpretations and co-construction as the researcher presents the inter-view of the researched (Edwards & Holland, 2013, p. 17).

As the subject of this study, 'teacher leadership and leadership development of teacher leaders' is subjective in nature and it can be attributed to multiple factors; therefore, the chosen methodology should be in line with the interpretive approach to gain knowledge of the participants' lived experiences and their perceptions of their reality.

4.3. Research methodology

Methodology is defined as "the strategy, plan of action, process or design lying behind the choice and use of particular methods and linking the choice and use of the methods to the desired outcomes" (Crotty, 2003, p. 3). It seeks to describe, evaluate and justify the application of particular methods (Wellington, 2015). Despite a wide array of research methods available to researchers, not all of them are equally appropriate for investigating different topics. Hence, researchers are required to pay considerable attention to various elements of a research project to guide them in their choice of methodology (Poteete & Ostrom, 2008). As argued above, an interpretive outlook is appropriate for this study as

it explores people's perceptions, their experiences, and the meanings they attribute to the realities they interact with in their daily lives. Thus, this study adopts a qualitative case study methodology to gain insights into how EFL teacher leaders perceive teacher leadership and develop their leadership knowledge and skills at the ELI.

Case study is a commonly used approach in educational research because it considers the research context, individuals, programmes or sub-units within it as a 'case', and examines it to achieve deeper understanding of the phenomenon (Bush, 2002). This methodology suits the nature of the current research, as case study is "an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context …where multiple sources of evidence are used" (Yin, 1994, p.13). Similarly, Cohen et al. (2011) refer to the nature of a case study:

> *A case study provides a unique example of real people in real situations, enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly than simply by presenting them with abstract theories or principles. …contexts are unique and dynamic, hence case studies investigate and report the real life, complex dynamic and unfolding interactions of events, human relationships and other factors in a unique instance.*
> (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 289)

According to Adelman, Kemmis and Jenkins (1980), case study is "an umbrella term for a family of research methods having in common the decision to focus an enquiry around an instance" (p.94). These methods include interviews, observation and documentary analysis. Although observation and interviews are commonly used techniques in a case study, no other method can be excluded as they are selected according to their appropriateness for the task (Bell, 1993). Moreover, the data collected in a case study through various techniques are grounded as educational organisations are real institutions with a rich context for research (Adelman et al., 1980). However, Nisbet and Watts (1984) associate certain weaknesses with case study research: a) "The results may not be generalisable except where other readers/researchers see their application, b) They are not easily open to cross-checking, hence they may be selective, biased, personal

and subjective, and c) They are prone to problems of observer bias, despite attempts made to address reflexivity" (cited in Cohen et al., 2011, p. 293).

4.4. The role of the researcher

The role and positionality of a researcher are crucial aspects of a research process. As I possessed intimate knowledge of the community and its members at the ELI (Merton, 1972 as cited in Greene, 2014), I considered myself an insider; however, Hellawell (2006) notes that having knowledge of a community does not imply that one must be a member. Although I had been part of the Institute for almost eight years I was not involved in teacher leadership roles at the ELI, so in my role as a researcher, I was somewhat an outsider as regards teacher leadership roles and I was sufficiently unfamiliar with the views of the participants. Nevertheless, my pre-existing knowledge of the contextual, cultural and social norms and my familiarity with the participants themselves enabled me "to ask meaningful questions and read non-verbal cues," in order to "project a more truthful, authentic understanding of the culture under study" (Merriam, Johnson-Bailey, Lee, Kee, Ntseane, & Muhamad, 2001, p. 411).

A number of issues can influence a research process and the richness of its data. For instance, in a qualitative study, the role and distance between the researcher and the researched can have implications for bias within the study (Creswell, 2007). In a familiar context, interview sessions can bring the participants and researcher close to each other as they talk about a topic of mutual interest. For the researcher, the selected topic "…reflects a personal interest and the selection of colleagues as subjects raise the spectre of insider bias" (Van Heugten, 2004, p. 207). In my case, despite close relations at the professional level with the participants, there was a risk of inevitable influence because the interviewees might be partially aware of my own understanding and experience of leadership practices at the ELI. Moreover, in traditional centralised leadership structures,

the participants might have preferred not to share their opinions on politically or culturally sensitive issues, understanding the repercussions of their criticisms.

Semi-structured interviews were used as the primary data collection method. Bassey (1999) states that, in such interviews, participants might find themselves having to construct an ad hoc position rather than express deeply held convictions when they are faced with questions they have not thought about in advance. Being aware of this, I shared the research aims and key interview themes with the participants ahead of time, which allowed them to develop their understanding of the topic. I had a predefined set of questions which I used flexibly, allowing the participants to speak at length and giving me an opportunity to listen to them and probe unanticipated ideas. By listening to their learning experiences, perceptions and understanding of teacher leadership, I became a researcher and an outsider.

I was aware of the positions of the teacher leaders in the hierarchy of the institute. They were primarily teachers with an additional identity as leaders at the ELI which distinguished them from the rest of the teachers, so I was mindful of the potential distortion which could result from the power relationship. Acknowledging their identity as leaders, I interviewed them in their offices where they felt comfortable. Nevertheless, an obvious power relation might have impacted on how and why they answered particular questions.

It is also important to acknowledge that I was part of the collection, transcription, reduction, abstraction and interpretation of the data. Thus, my subjective influence cannot be ignored. Therefore, I recognise the impact of my own background on the interpretations of research findings due to my personal, professional, cultural and historical experiences. However, to minimise my own influence on the data, I adopted a respondent validation technique to allow the participants to make changes in the interview transcripts as needed and improve the accuracy of the data.

4.5. Data collection methods

Research methods are "the techniques or procedures used to gather and collect data related to some research questions or hypotheses" (Crotty, 2003, p. 3). Working within an interpretive paradigm, I considered qualitative methods to be the most appropriate data collection tools for the purpose of this case study. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2003), qualitative approaches help researchers to capture the verbal descriptions, analyses and interpretations of the participants' views. A case study design within the qualitative research framework enabled me to explore the complex social phenomenon of teacher leadership in the real-life context of the ELI, where boundaries between the context and the phenomenon are not clearly defined (Yin, 2011). Keeping this in mind, I opted for semi-structured interviews as the primary tool for gathering qualitative data, complemented by an open-ended questionnaire. The open-ended questionnaire allowed me to further explore and enrich the categories which emanated from the data analysis and required more depth. However, I could not use other tools, such as document analysis, archival records, direct observation or physical artefacts (Yin, 2011), mainly due to the practical constraints of the traditional top-down bureaucratic system described in Section 2.4.

4.5.1. Semi-structured Interviews

An interview is "a conversation that has a structure and a purpose. It goes beyond the spontaneous exchange of views in everyday conversations, and becomes a careful questioning and listening approach with the purpose of obtaining thoroughly tested knowledge" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 3). For educational researchers in qualitative research, interviews are an important data collection tool. For instance, Scott and Usher (2010) state that the main goal of qualitative researchers is to seek in-depth understandings about the experiences of individuals and groups, commonly drawing from a small sample of people, selected purposively. This goal could be achieved through semi-

structured interviews, which is an active and collaborative effort in which two or more people create meaning (Fontana & Prokos, 2007).

My conviction to utilise semi-structured interviews for the data collection was mainly based on the assertion by Cohen et al.:

Interviews enable participants—be they interviewers or interviewees —to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live, and to express how they regard situations from their own point of view. In these senses the interview is not simply concerned with collecting data about life: it is part of life itself, its human embeddedness is inescapable. (Cohen et al., 2011, p.409)

The above quote suggests that qualitative interviews aim to describe and clarify individuals' experiential life "as it is lived, felt, undergone, made sense of and accomplished by human beings" (Schwandt, 2001, p. 84). It is a means of providing insights into the life world and its meaning for the people (Ponterotto cited in Schultze & Avital, 2011). In addition, through interviews "the researcher can reach areas of reality that would otherwise remain inaccessible such as people's subjective experiences and attitudes" (Peräkylä, 2008, p. 869).

According to Robson (2002), "there are three main types of interviews; the fully structured interview, the semi-structured interview and the unstructured interview" (p. 270). Although there are similarities between the structured and semi-structured interview, as both have pre-determined questions, they are not the same in terms of flexibility. The semi-structured interview is more flexible and allows the researcher to alter the order of questions, rephrase them, omit inappropriate ones, or add more questions as needed. Besides flexibility, the semi-structured interview enables multi-sensory channels to be employed; verbal, non-verbal, spoken and heard (Cohen et al., 2011). Due to these strengths, I was convinced that semi-structured interviews would best serve the purpose of eliciting data which would reflect an in-depth understanding of the participants' experiences as EFL teacher leaders.

The interview questions were generated in the light of my personal observations of leadership practices at the ELI and the key areas identified in the literature on teacher leader development. The twelve interview questions in Appendix 5 revolve around the following nine themes:

- Teacher leaders' professional career (teaching/administrative)
- Perceptions of teacher leadership
- Role as a teacher leader at the ELI (e.g. head of a unit)
- Expertise needed for leadership roles at the ELI
- Leadership practices at the ELI
- Professional development activities for teacher leaders at the ELI
- Individuals' means of professional development at the ELI
- Formal/informal professional training acquired as teacher leaders
- The role of professional circle/colleagues in PD of teacher leaders.

4.5.2. Open-ended questionnaires

The current case study utilised an open-ended questionnaire as a supplementary data collection tool. The questionnaire is a commonly used and a useful instrument for collecting information in any type of research (Cohen et al., 2011). Although it seems easy to prepare and implement a questionnaire, it requires careful planning to fit with the research approach and its objectives. Cohen et al. (2011) assert that "the larger the size of the sample, the more structured, closed and numerical the questionnaire may have to be, and the smaller the size of the sample, the less structured, more open and word-based the questionnaire may be" (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 381). As there were twelve participants in this case study, the open-ended questionnaire fitted its purpose.

According to Cohen et al. (2011), researchers can choose from a wide range of questionnaires such as structured, semi-structured and unstructured questionnaires. A closed and structured questionnaire leads to observing and comparing the responses that

are suitable for collecting quantitative data. On the other hand, open-ended questionnaires can be used to gather qualitative data as it is up to the "respondent to decide the wording of the answer, the length of the answer and the kind of matters to be raised in the answer" (Denscombe, 1998, p. 101). However, a questionnaire cannot be considered completely unstructured as some format has to be followed in order to get relevant responses from the participants. Thus, the open-ended questionnaire is a powerful tool as its structure, focus and sequence remain clear while the open-ended format enables respondents to reply in their own terms.

Cohen et al. (2011) state that in a site-specific study, qualitative, less structured, word-based and open-ended questionnaires can capture the specificity of a particular situation and produce rich personal data. These questionnaires consist of open-ended questions which "enable the participants to write a free account in their own terms, to explain and qualify their responses and avoid the limitations of pre-set categories of response" (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 382). However, the data generated through open-ended questions can lead to irrelevant and misleading information, thus thorough attention is often required.

The use of the open-ended questionnaire suited the interpretive nature of this case study research as it allowed participants to respond to the written questions, share their lived experiences and describe their viewpoints in depth. As Jenner, Flick, von Kardoff and Steinke (2004) state, interpretive research considers participants' understanding of research phenomena instead of seeking cause and effect relationships, thus the formulation of the open-ended questionnaire gave participants an opportunity to reflect on the complex nature of teacher leadership and on their own learning and development. This further helped in minimising any pressure on participants and allowed them to write their responses freely in the absence of the researcher (Gillham, 2008). The use of the open-ended questionnaire also offered me a chance to probe the views which emerged during the interviews in more detail.

The open-ended questionnaire utilised for this study stemmed from the qualitative data analysis of the interviews, as explained in Sections 4.7.3 and 4.7.5. The key objective was to further enrich the categories that were not fully saturated and needed more depth. The open-ended questionnaire was mainly aimed at the following five areas:

- The impact of bureaucracy
- Leadership skills
- Collegiality
- Shared leadership practices
- Experience vs training.

4.6. Selecting and approaching participants

The quality of a piece of research not only depends on suitable methodology and instrumentation, but also on the suitability of the sample (Cohen et al., 2011). The significance of sampling is widely cited, and while the concept is most closely associated with positivist research, an appropriate sampling strategy is equally important to qualitative researchers (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007). There are three extensively used approaches to selecting a sample in interpretive research: convenience, purposive and theoretical. The most important of these techniques is purposive sampling, because it is the most likely to yield relevant information (Cohen et al., 2011). Basic to the purposive sampling technique is the importance of selecting 'information-rich' cases from which one can learn most about pertinent issues that are important to the study. It is the researchers' responsibility to find people who can and are willing to provide the information by virtue of knowledge or experience (Lewis & Sheppard, 2006). Such informants are called good informants. For the purpose of this study, Morse's criteria (cited in Flick, 2009) of a 'good informant' are used as a guide to select information-rich cases (p.123). These criteria require participants to have the necessary knowledge and experience of the issue or object at their disposal for answering the questions in the

interview, to have the capability to reflect and articulate, to be ready to participate in the study, and to have time to participate in the study.

Purposive sampling fitted the nature of this study and allowed me to seek in-depth information from experienced EFL teacher leaders who were in a strong position to give it (Cohen et al., 2011). The biographical notes (Appendix 2) of the participants indicate the diversity of the academic, professional and ethnic backgrounds which they brought with them to the ELI. Nevertheless, as per the ELI evaluation criteria, they were all established ELT instructors who were promoted to teacher leadership roles based on their professional and pedagogical expertise. Their varied professional and learning experiences gave more depth and richness to the data, which might offer useful insights into leadership learning of EFL teacher leaders at the ELI.

In qualitative research, there are no set rules for the number of participants and it is on the researchers' discretion to determine the sample size after taking into consideration various factors such as time, resources, purpose and depth of the study (Flick, 2009). Having taken these factors into consideration, I decided to approach all 14 EFL teacher leaders at the ELI. Since they were easily accessible, I met them at the Institute in their offices and sought their participation in the study. In the meeting, I briefed them about the aims and objectives of the research. In addition, I explained the two stages of the data collection - interviews and open-ended questionnaire - and clarified what they should expect from the two data collection tools. Those who expressed their interest in the study, were given the informed consent form (Appendix 3) and a convenient appointment was made.

Initially, all 14 participants expressed their interest in the study. As the data collection process started at the end of the academic year (May to mid-July 2015), all of them had ample time to participate in the study. However, two participants withdrew at the eleventh hour owing to their travel arrangements and domestic commitments.

As I gave participants the choice of time, date and place for the interviews, all of them preferred to be interviewed in their offices between 1 and 4pm. With their permission, all 12 interviews were recorded on a Sony digital recorder and saved on a password-protected laptop with audio tracks labelled under their pseudonyms. The pseudonyms used in this study were chosen by the participants. All the participants used English language for the interviews and each interview lasted roughly 50 to 60 minutes.

Pseudonym	Nationality	Leadership Role	Academic Qualification	Previous Profession	Years of Leadership experience outside ELI	Years of EFL Leadership Role at ELI
Gray	British	Head of Graduate Studies Unit	PhD in Applied Linguistics/MA Education/CELTA	Electrical Engineering	4	2
Hamza	Australian	Head of Academic & Educational Development System Unit	B.SC Engineering/CELTA M.Ed.	Mechanical Engineer	8	5
Harrison	British	Head of Research Unit	MA in Educational Management & Leadership	Secondary School Teacher	2	3
Ibrahim	Pakistani Canadian	Head of E-learning Unit	PhD in Educational Leadership	Bureaucrat	20	3
Ismael	Algerian	Head of Student Support Unit	MA in Educational Leadership	State Agent	4	7
Khan	Pakistani	Head of Testing Unit	MA in Educational Leadership	College Level Teaching	0	7
Moh	British	Head of Student Affairs Unit	BS in IT/CELTA	IT specialist	0	9
Natlus	Pakistani	Head of Academic Coordination Unit	MA in Applied Linguistics	Teaching & Research	0	5
Omar	Pakistani	Head of Quality Assurance Unit	MA in English Literature	University Teaching	3	9
Peter	American	Head of Professional Development Unit	MA TESL	University Teaching	0	5
Rahat	British	Head of External	PGCE/CELTA	Secondary School Teaching	0	3

		Student Affairs Unit				
Sachin	Canadian	Head of Curriculum Unit	MBA/TEFL Certificate/CELTA	Hotel Management	6	4

4.1. Details of the participants

4.7. Data collection Procedures

4.7.1. Seeking approval

First of all, I sought the permission of the Vice Dean for Higher Studies and Research at the ELI to conduct research on the site of the Institute. At the same time, I sent the ethical approval form (Appendix 4) to the Ethics Committee at Exeter's School of Education. After seeking approval from both the authorities, I decided to conduct a pilot interview.

4.7.2. Piloting the semi-structured interviews

Since an interview is a well-planned event different from everyday conversation, requiring researchers to set up and prepare (Cohen et al., 2011), I felt the need to better prepare myself before embarking on the data collection process. I approached a senior colleague who was once in a leadership role at the ELI and asked him for a pilot interview to which he agreed. After sending him the key themes of the interview, I asked him to read through them in order to have a picture of the interview. His feedback and my own reflections on the 45 minute interview gave me some useful ideas about the structure of the interview and composition of various questions. For example, I had 16 questions written for the pilot interview which, I realized, was too many and contained overlapping and redundant ideas. It was also pointed out by the interviewee that questions pertaining to professional development were repetitive, so I removed some of them. Hence, the final draft of the semi-structure interview had 12 questions (Appendix 5). I also took into consideration the valuable feedback of the interviewee on the vagueness of some questions which needed to be rephrased or modified. For example, a question; *what do you believe the role of a teacher leader is?* was changed into a more personal question, such as *what is your role*

as a teacher leader at the ELI? In addition, I asked some of the questions in an abrupt way that disturbed the flow of the interviewee's responses. Accordingly, I worked on conducting interviews with a more natural atmosphere of discussion.

Another issue was that I found myself too engaged with the questions that I had in front of me, and this diverted my attention from the interviewee's responses so that I failed to use more prompts in order to get rich data. Therefore, I decided not to stick to the sequence of questions but to rely more on the major themes, which gave greater flexibility and a more natural flow to the interviews.

My role as a colleague allowed the interviewee to give me an honest opinion and critical feedback on my performance. It enabled me to take his comments positively as the purpose was to improve my shortcomings. In order to fully comprehend his feedback, I listened to the recorded interview again and tried to evaluate my own performance as an interviewer. This gave me an idea about my weaknesses, such as hesitations, lack of responsiveness to certain questions, unpreparedness to expect an answer and making the interview into a natural discussion. My prolonged contemplation on these issues prepared me for the first interview of this data collection process, which was a week after the pilot interview.

4.7.3. Piloting the open-ended questionnaire

The open-ended questionnaire (Appendix 6) was the second data collection tool, which was utilised after collecting, transcribing and analysing the interview data. The key objective of the open-ended questionnaire was to further investigate unsaturated categories and enrich the existing data to the level of saturation. These categories emerged as a result of inductive analysis which involved my reflection and deliberation. They were significant factors which contributed to the participants' professional learning; however, inadequate references were noted. Thus, I planned to further probe these ideas to learn everyone's views. For instance, two to three participants shared their opinions

about the positive influence of hierarchical leadership model on their leadership learning. Thus, it was further probed in the questionnaire to see whether it had impacted other participants' learning at the ELI. Similarly, other unexplored categories, such as leadership skills, collegiality, shared leadership practices, and experience vs training were further explored in the open-ended questionnaire.

The open-ended questionnaire was sent to the same colleague who participated in the pilot interview. He responded to the questions and gave me detailed feedback on the appropriateness of every question. After reflecting on his comments, I removed a redundant question and reduced the number of questions from seven to six. The edited version of the questionnaire was emailed to the participants for their responses.

4.7.4. Conducting the interviews

Setting up and conducting interviews was the first and major phase of the data collection process. As the purpose was to know about the participants' perception of teacher leadership, those who were unaware of the term 'teacher leadership' were given the definitions by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009)[1] and Danielson (2007)[2]. They were asked to read and relate any features of their roles to the characteristics of teacher leadership stated in the definitions. This helped in understanding the nature of their leadership roles at the ELI.

I jotted down my reflections after every interview, which helped me refine my interviewing skills and understand the depth of my data. Below is a sample of my memo diary after the second interview:

> *It was the longest interview so far that lasted for an hour and 16 minutes. The participant spoke at length with great freedom. There were digressions at times, but there were some interesting facts and information about the various*

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[1] 'The process by which teachers, individually or collectively, influence their colleagues, principals, and other members of school communities to improve teaching and learning practices with the aim of increased student learning and achievement' (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009, p. 288).

[2] 'Teacher leaders exhibit important skills, values, and dispositions in that they are open-minded and respectful of others' views. They display optimism and enthusiasm, confidence, and decisiveness' (Danielson, 2007, p. 16).

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aspects of learning and development. In short, this was an informative interview which helped me learn a lot about the system and leadership learning which I never considered before. In terms of the focus of the interview, the digression led to serious criticism of the system which was not the scope of this study. (Entry 2)

The above entry is a specimen of how the interviews were conducted. It indicates that interviews were carried out in a pleasant environment which is important for collecting rich data. I felt more like a colleague than a researcher while the interviewees were openly sharing their experiences, which I expected. I believe my eight years of professional affiliation with the ELI enabled me to develop a rapport with my senior colleagues. As they did not feel vulnerable and expressed their views with confidence, it also resulted in digressions. However, I unwearyingly listened to them and reverted them to the point when appropriate.

4.7.5. Conducting the open-ended questionnaire

Each interview was followed by transcribing and then reading the transcript to get a general sense of the data. The data analysis was a continuous and iterative process that gave me insight into new and emerging categories which were considered in the subsequent interviews. The interview analysis revealed five categories which required more depth and input from the participants. For example, the impact of bureaucracy, leadership skills, collegiality, shared leadership practices, and experience vs training. Thus, these unsaturated ideas became part of the open-ended questionnaire. After piloting the questionnaire, amendments were made in the light of the colleague's feedback and my personal reflections. This was emailed to all twelve participants with a request to respond to the open-ended questions and email it back to me. It took four weeks for the participants to send me the completed questionnaire; however, despite repeated requests and reminders, only eight of them completed it. As the questionnaire did not contain any personal information, the completed ones were saved in a password protected laptop under the pseudonyms of the same participants.

4.8. Data transcription and analysis

I personally transcribed each interview before starting the next one. After converting audio files into text, I was able to look closely at the ideas represented by the words. Also, I was aware of what Cohen et al. (2007) suggest that researchers need to decide "…to what extent, and how a transcription is useful for the research" (p. 367). In other words, I stuck to Drew's simple transcription conventions (as cited in Flick, 2009, p. 300) that focused on the ideas held by the EFL teacher leaders, not the words they used to convey these ideas, and this helped make the transcripts more intelligible. I forwarded the transcripts to participants for their feedback. The final copy of the transcripts received from the participants were used for the analysis (Appendix 7).

According to Creswell (2011), "There is no single, accepted approach to analyzing qualitative data, although several guidelines exist for this process…It is an eclectic process" (p. 238). For the purpose of data analysis in this study, I adopted an eclectic approach by combining the guidelines given by Creswell (2012) and Saldaña (2009). Saldaña (2009) suggests that precoding and preliminary jottings are a good way to start with data analysis; however, I chose not to pre-code the data. Creswell (2007) states that '"using 'prefigured' codes or categories…serves to limit the analysis to the 'prefigured' codes rather than opening up the codes to reflect the views of participants in a traditional qualitative way" (p.152). According to de Casterlé et al. (2012): "Using a preconceived framework runs the risk of prematurely excluding alternative ways of organising the data that may be more illuminating" (p. 3). The process of data analysis was completed in the following six steps:

1. First, I did an initial reading of the transcripts to obtain a general sense of the data as suggested by Creswell (2012). This prepared me for the coding process of the data for which I used NVivo 10. Overall, the initial reading reflected the professional and academic backgrounds of the teacher leaders, the leadership roles they had performed over the years, and the PD activities they experienced.

2. The second step involved a more thorough reading to code the transcripts, following the recommendations by Tesch (1990), Creswell (2007) (as cited in Creswell, 2012, p. 244-245) and Saldaña (2009). A code was understood as Saldaña (2009) defines it that "a code in qualitative inquiry is most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data" (p.3). Therefore, in the first cycle of coding, the data was openly coded with no preconceived notions and there were 180 initial open codes. Most of the codes were descriptive in type. As pointed out by Saldaña (2009), the first cycle of coding involves both decoding and encoding. Reflecting on a passage of data in order to decipher its core meaning is called *de*coding whereas determining its appropriate code and label it is an *en*coding process. So, each code was generated as a result of reflecting on a passage and then it was labelled according to its explicit meaning.

3. I did not follow Creswell's (2012) guideline to divide text into segments of information as the data was in NVivo 10; rather, I identified common patterns and assigned initial codes using NVivo nodes. Other repetitive patterns, passages, excerpts and consistencies were dragged into the same code which helped in organising the data. Instead of using similar codes for identical patterns, which is common in analysing data manually, NVivo made the process more convenient.

4. This step was based on both Creswell (2012) and Saldaña's (2009) suggestions. The open coding was followed by the second cycle of coding in which nodes identical in nature were grouped together "not just because they were exactly alike or very much alike, but because they might also have something in common – even if, paradoxically, that commonality consists of differences" (Saldaña, 2009, p. 6). For example, codes that described the 'top-down management' had both positive and negative opinions of the interviewees, however, they had a similar subject. Consequently, the first cycle of codes were refined and reduced to 119 open codes (Appendix 10).

5. After the two cycles of open coding, in the second phase of data analysis, 119 codes were subsumed under 18 broad categories, which encompassed codes with identical concepts. The entire coding process was iterative as I went back to the codes, refined them, renamed and reworded them in order to make them more representative of the interviewees' talk.

#	Categories
1	Bureaucratic Experience
2	Hierarchical Structures at ELI
3	Collegiality
4	Educational Management Background
5	EFL Leadership Experience
6	Experience vs Training
7	Formal learning
8	The Impact of Bureaucracy
9	Intrinsic Motivation
10	Leadership Skills
11	On the Job Learning
12	Pedagogical Skills
13	Personality Traits
14	Reflection
15	Shared leadership practices
16	Teacher Leader Roles
17	TESOL Knowledge
18	Understanding Teacher Leadership

4.2. Major categories

6. As suggested by Saldaña (2009), the 18 categories were checked in the light of the research questions. The grouping of categories under the research questions made it easy to reflect on them and develop themes. Saldaña (2009) considers a theme as an outcome of coding, categorisation and analytic reflection, thus after reflecting on categories, identical ones were grouped together that led to four overarching themes (Table 4.3). I checked whether the themes were answering the research questions.

#	Themes	Category	Description
1	**The nature of teacher leadership**	• The Impact of Bureaucracy • Hierarchical Structures at ELI • Teacher Leader Roles • Understanding Teacher Leadership	The existing bureaucratic structures in Saudi higher institutes with a focus on control and accountability and its effects on leadership development have both positive and negative influence on teacher leader roles. Teacher leaders perform a wide array of formal roles to fulfill instructional and administrative responsibilities. EFL teacher leaders express their understanding of teacher leadership and how it appears in the current context. They also share their understanding of the nature and characteristics of the teacher leader's job that make their role more challenging.
2	**Teacher leader competence**	• TESOL Knowledge • Personality Traits • Pedagogical Skills • Leadership Skills	Teacher leaders share a wide range of skills, expertise, knowledge and personal attributes that they considered important to accomplish teacher leadership tasks.
3	**Learning from the context**	• On the job learning • Reflection • Shared Leadership Practices • Collegiality • Intrinsic Motivation • Formal learning	The context offers formal and informal learning opportunities to teacher leaders, which help them learn about leadership. Teacher leaders are mainly dependent on their experiential learning which involves reflective and collaborative practices, contributing to their professional development at the ELI.
4	**Lessons from the past**	• Bureaucratic Experience • Educational Management Background • EFL Leadership Experience • Experience vs Training	Learning is based on individuals' professional and academic experience in various contexts and their contribution to their professional development. Management and leadership learning in the form of training, certification or role-based experience are considered important aspects of acquiring, practising and mastering leadership skills and knowledge.

4.3. Major themes and their descriptions

As the completion of the fifth stage of analysis led to the emergence of 18 categories, I decided to write the open-ended questionnaire based on my understanding of the unexplored and unsaturated categories that emerged from the analysis of the interview data. The data collected through open-ended questionnaires were not separately presented as the aim was to enrich the data and add more depth to the existing categories. Therefore, the open-ended questions emerged from five key categories which required more information, as discussed in Sections 4.7.3 and 4.7.5. The completed

questionnaires were imported into NVivo 10 and the participants' responses were dragged into the existing categories. The questionnaire mainly targeted categories such as: the impact of bureaucracy, leadership skills, collegiality, shared leadership practices, and experience vs training.

4.9. Trustworthiness of the qualitative data

In positivist research, validity, reliability and objectivity determine the value of quantitative data, whereas, in interpretivist research, trustworthiness is considered important to assess the quality of qualitative data. Trustworthiness is "a set of criteria advocated by some writers for assessing the quality of qualitative research." (Bryman, 2008, p. 700). To ensure trustworthiness of qualitative research, researchers often explain the research procedures in depth and take into account four key criteria in order to produce an authentic piece of research. These four criteria are; credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability of the qualitative data (Bryman, 2008; Given, 2008).

Credibility is "the methodological procedures and sources used to establish a high level of harmony between the participants' expressions and the researcher's interpretations of them" (Given, 2008, p. 138). As qualitative researchers usually derive results from multiple constructed realities, they should assure that their interpretations of the realities match the research participants' views (Gass & Mackey, 2005). In the current research, credibility of the data was achieved by employing two strategies. First, for the accuracy of the participants' interpretations, I used a member-check technique (Holliday, 2001). I returned the interview transcripts to the participants for their final approval of the data. Secondly, my experience of the research context and familiarity with the participants enabled me to earn their trust and develop rapport with them (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003), which allowed me to gain fuller understanding of their perspectives.

Transferability refers to the researchers' awareness of the similarity and applicability of the data to other contexts (Given, 2008). The transferability of qualitative data depends on three aspects; diversity of sampling, thickness of the descriptions of the context and the degree of abstraction of the concepts in the data analysis (Punch, 1998). Since this case study has taken care of these aspects, its findings can be transferable to other EFL institutes in the context of Saudi Arabia, if the sample diversity, detailed descriptions of the context and level of abstraction in the data analysis are ensured.

Dependability is "the process of the enquiry and the inquirer's responsibility for ensuring that the process of the enquiry is logical, traceable and documented" (Schwandt, 2001, p. 258). In this case study, I have addressed the issue of dependability by describing and explaining the process of enquiry in great detail. The data were collected in two stages (Semi-structure interviews and open-ended questionnaire) and the analysis were completed in six phases to understand the professional development of EFL teacher leaders.

Confirmability refers to the researchers' endeavor to ensure that the findings of the study match the views, opinions and interpretations of the participants (Given, 2008). In this case study, I have not made any claims which cannot be supported by the data. During the data analysis process, the codes, categories and themes were made representative of the participants' views. As stated above, the participants' feedback on their transcripts further ensured the confirmability of the data.

4.10. Ethical considerations

Wellington (2000) suggests that "ethical concerns should be at the forefront of any research project and should continue through the write-up and dissemination stages" (p.3). Therefore, all necessary ethical issues were taken into consideration that might have affected the research process, the participants or the findings. This case study was guided by ethical guidelines suggested by BERA (2011) before, during and after the

process of qualitative data collection from the EFL teacher leaders at the ELI. As I was aware of the research ethics, the context and the participants' leadership positions, I took the following steps to produce an ethical piece of research:

1. First of all, I submitted a Certificate of Ethical Research approval form to the Ethics Committee of School of Education at the University of Exeter (Appendix 4). The completed form contained details about the aims, objectives and procedures of the research. In addition, it had information about the participants, context and data collection tools. The form was reviewed and approved by the committee confirming that adherence to research ethics would be ensured.

2. I submitted an application to the Vice Dean for Higher Studies and Research at the ELI to seek permission for carrying out research on the site. The application contained all the details about the project; its aims, objectives and contribution to the institution. All these things were discussed with the VD in a scheduled meeting who allowed me to conduct the study at the ELI.

3. I downloaded the informed consent form from the UoE website, which had all the necessary information required for the participants to consider before agreeing to participate in the research. The form explicitly stated the right to participate voluntarily and the right to withdraw at any stage of the research. Alongside it, I developed a letter for the participants explaining the purpose and procedures of the research (Appendix 3).

4. Although the letter had all the necessary details which could give an idea about the nature of the research, its purpose, the data collection procedures, confidentiality and anonymity of the participants, I considered it important to meet the participants in order to brief them on my project before they decided whether to participate. Thus, I met all of them individually, gave them the hard copies of the consent form and showed them the letters of approval from UoE and

ELI Vice Deanship for Higher Studies and Research. As they agreed to participate, they signed the consent form and returned it to me.

5. As I was aware of the issues of confidentiality and anonymity, I used the pseudonyms chosen by the participants. In the interviews, I made sure that the participants were not called by their true names. After the interviews were transcribed, the MS Word files were labelled under the pseudonyms and the audio files were permanently removed from the laptop. Similarly, the open-ended questionnaire had no mention of the participants' details and they were received without their actual names and saved under relevant pseudonyms. I acknowledge the fact that the participants might be identified through their positions, roles and ranks; however, I have done everything possible to avoid it.

6. I was also cognisant of the teacher leaders' hierarchical positions at the ELI, so I gave them due respect and made sure they were comfortable with the process of data collection. This was the reason why I had to reschedule some interviews several times as the participants' availability was an issue.

7. I assured the participants that nobody would have access to the data and no information about the interviews would be shared with anyone. Before analysing the data, their interview transcriptions were sent back to them to amend, remove or add anything they considered important.

Overall, the data collection was a smooth process and no ethical issues occurred. As I had been part of the organisation for eight years, my rapport and collegial relationship with the participants made it easy for me to approach them and collect the data. However, I took great care of their personal integrity as the research was about their personal and professional experiences at the ELI, so I made sure that questions would not harm the participants, the Institute or the community of teacher leaders.

4.11. Limitations of the study

Although I am confident about the richness of the qualitative data collected through the face-to-face interviews and open-ended questionnaires, I have a strong feeling about the practical constraints that can be considered limitations of this study.

A potential drawback could be that semi-structured interviews were used as the sole method complemented by an open-ended questionnaire, which may not suffice to yield rich qualitative data in self-reports. I was aware of the fact that case study research usually utilises more than one research method, i.e. observation, document analysis, focus group interviews and reflective journals. However, the culture of the Institute, where a typical hierarchical leadership is deep-rooted, denied me access to the official documents used by the teacher leaders. Similarly, focus group discussions with the same participants could have yielded a collective understanding of their experiences and thus have enriched the data; however, focus groups were not feasible as heads of the various units hardly collaborated and presumably preferred their own privacy. A second round of interviews could have been used; however, the participants' busy schedules and time constraints forced me to think of other options. Therefore, the open-ended questionnaire filled that void to collect rich data.

In addition, the scope of the current research is context-bounded and, while the findings may not be generalisable, the case study can provide rich and significant insights into events and behaviours and can contribute uniquely to our understanding of individual, organisational, social, and political phenomena (Yin, 2011). Stake (2000) maintains that "case studies are useful in the study of human affairs because they are down-to-earth and attention-holding" (p. 19). Thus, the findings of the current case study cannot be considered insignificant as they offer insights into the learning experiences of ELT professionals in teacher leadership roles.

Due to cultural sensitivity, it was impossible to approach women EFL teacher leaders at the ELI, which would have increased the number of participants and consequently enriched the data. I could have communicated with them over the phone but inherited cultural sensitivities even discouraged me from that choice.

4.12. Summary

This chapter has sought to provide an overview of the ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions that guided this research. I explained the interpretivist paradigm that informed the current research and tried to justify the research methodology, research methods, and data analysis procedures. At the end, I discussed the trustworthiness of the data, ethical consideration and the limitations of this study.

Chapter 5. Findings

This chapter presents the findings based on the qualitative data obtained through semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaires. The findings presented in this chapter will facilitate an understanding of how EFL teacher leaders perceive the construct of teacher leadership and which factors support their professional development at the ELI.

The findings are divided into two broad sections based on the two overarching areas that the study aims to explore. The first is 'Perceptions of teacher leadership and their leadership roles', which has two themes: a) 'The nature of teacher leadership at the ELI', and b) 'Teacher leader competence'. This intends to achieve the following aims by seeking an answer to the first research question and its sub-question:

- To understand the notion of teacher leadership from the perspective of teacher leaders at the ELI

- To identify the kinds of skills and knowledge teacher leaders need to have for the successful dispensation of their leadership responsibilities at the ELI.

The second major area is 'Factors that help in the professional development of teacher leaders', which has two themes: a) 'Learning from the context', and b) 'Lessons from the past', which address the second research question:

- To explore factors contributing to the professional learning and development of EFL teachers leaders at the ELI.

As this chapter provides detailed accounts of the EFL teacher leaders' views, extracts from the interviews and open-ended questionnaire have been used to show findings in participants' own words in order to explore the two research questions. The individuals' quotes presented under the themes are most evidently the description of the

characteristics of teacher leadership, leadership practices, the knowledge and skills required for their roles and factors that impact their professional development at the ELI.

5.1. Perceptions of teacher leadership and their leadership roles

The first research question explores teacher leaders' perceptions of teacher leadership and their roles, and its sub-question identifies the knowledge and skills teacher leaders may require for leadership roles at the ELI. The two themes that address these, presented in Table 5.1, outline the participants' views of teacher leadership at the ELI by describing leadership practices, sharing their understanding of teacher leader roles and responsibilities, and specifying the type of knowledge and skills that may facilitate their roles at the ELI.

The participants' accounts indicate that the dominant hierarchical leadership model impacts the nature of teacher leadership at the ELI. Overall, teacher leadership is a novel concept at the ELI, and operating in a bureaucratic system has challenges which require teacher leaders to possess certain types of leadership knowledge and skills in order to effectively perform their roles. Table 5.1 shows the two major themes, example extracts from interviews, and number of sources and references to the themes.

Themes	Example extracts	Codes	Sources	References
The nature of teacher leadership	*A teacher leader should be someone who is the best teacher, who can guide other people because doing something without knowing the practices and the challenges, you won't be able to do well.*	1.Ability to guide 2. Knowledge of TESOL	10	32
	At the ELI, I found it frustratingly technocratic. Despite all the desperate efforts to try and control things, it has created a chaos and so much bureaucracy.	Top-down leadership model	10	20
	We lack autonomy and thus cannot make our jobs more effective as the written script comes from the top.	Lack of Autonomy	8	18
	The hierarchical structure is important within any large organisation, such as the ELI which helps in having clear roles and responsibilities and a clear chain of command.	Influence of hierarchical structure	8	17

	Senior coordinators are responsible for assisting the academic coordinators, providing them with feedback on their performances, administrative responsibilities and conducting end of the year evaluations.	Leadership responsibilities	5	13
Teacher leader competence	People skills, time management and organisation skills are important, in a sense that you need to be sure of what you need to do when it comes to dealing with teachers, students and the top management.	Range of leadership skills	12	38
	As a teacher leader I benefited from my pedagogical skills, knowledge of curriculum design, effective communication and management skills.	1.knowledge of best practices 2.Range of leadership skills	9	27
	Knowledge of the organisational culture is a key attribute of teacher leadership at the ELI.	Contextual knowledge	8	20

5.1. Perceptions of teacher leadership and their leadership roles

5.1.1. The nature of teacher leadership

This first theme draws on the participants' perceptions of teacher leadership, explains leadership practices both at the top and middle levels and describes teacher leadership roles at the ELI.

As one of the aims of this study is to explore the concept of 'teacher leadership' at the ELI, it appears to be a novel idea as more than half of the participants were unaware of its definition and function. Ismael, with an MA in educational leadership, had no knowledge of the construct of teacher leadership and, although Harrison, Ibrahim and Khan, with post-graduate leadership qualifications, were aware of the term, they had never used it at the ELI. Likewise, Omar identified it; however, he found it inappropriate for bureaucratic organisations like the ELI. He said, *'I heard about teacher leadership, but my objection is that you can't have teacher leaders in this technocratic context, it's a kind of misnomer'.* (Omar, I)

In the light of his leadership background and experience, Khan perceived the construct of teacher leadership as a term that serves different purposes in educational settings depending on the leadership role and its requirements.

Teacher leader is a very broad term. In different contexts it means different things, but generally teacher leader means one of the senior teachers who participates in all kind of managerial roles. He's the middle manager who's responsible for the curriculum delivery, testing and the supervision of instruction. (Khan, I)

As the remaining eight participants had no knowledge of the term 'teacher leader' or 'teacher leadership', they were asked to read the definitions by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) and Danielson (2007) as explained in Section 4.7.5. Sachin, Hamza and Rahat noted that the definition by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) had similar features to the teacher leadership roles they performed at the ELI.

This definition is closer to our context as teacher leaders lead beyond the classroom and contribute to the community of EFL learners and teachers. (Hamza, I)

Interestingly, Moh, Natlus and Gray found both the definitions by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) and Danielson (2007) more or less similar to the responsibilities teacher leaders had at the ELI. However, Natlus pointed out that some of their roles bore more signs of '*a manager than a teacher leader'* due to their operational responsibilities. Nevertheless, as the roles fitted very well with the two definitions, Rahat preferred the term teacher leader over academic coordinator.

I think teacher leader also has got a similar sort of role because he leads and is the leader of the teachers. What I understand from the coordination and that's the general understanding of the term is to be a facilitator and help teachers in the classroom and beyond. So it's very much what we're doing here but a different term (teacher leader) is used, which is softer than the terms supervisor, manager and coordinator. It does sound a bit more politically correct. (Rahat, I)

Ibrahim considered teacher leadership the manifestation of one's strong academic background, varied professional experience and role-related skills. He did not perceive teacher leadership as an extension of bureaucratic structures; rather it is the individuals' knowledge and skills that earn them this position. He said:

Any teacher within a group could be a leader because he enjoys that position as a leader due to his knowledge, expertise, his intellectual level, his teaching abilities and research skills. So this is his personal ability as a professional in the field that influences his colleagues, his seniors or his students. I believe that teacher leader positions don't come from the hierarchy or legal authority. It's not the administrative leadership. It's based on your knowledge as a teacher, your ability as a teacher, and the respect that you enjoy as a teacher in your workplace. (Ibrahim, I)

When a question was asked about the specific roles teacher leaders performed in various units, the participants mentioned eleven instructional and eleven operational roles at the ELI (Table 5.2). Gray, Hamza, Harrison, Ibrahim, Khan, Peter and Sachin considered their roles instructional in nature which were based on their expertise in a particular area, whereas five other participants deemed their roles operational and managerial in nature. These roles were categorised in the light of the three teacher leadership waves by Silva et al. (2000); however, these operational and instructional aspects fitted well with the first and second waves of teacher leadership as discussed in Section 3.1. Table 5.2 summarises the operational and instructional roles and responsibilities of teacher leaders at the ELI.

Operational/Managerial roles	Instructional roles
Monitoring teachers' attendance	Professional development specialist
Facilitating teachers' classroom issues	Curriculum development specialist
Monitoring teachers' office hours	Mentoring teachers
Conducting annual evaluation for teachers	Teacher supervision
Preparing teaching schedules	Giving feedback to teachers
Managing exam materials & venues	Coaching junior team members
Working on quality assurance tasks	Giving PD workshops
Handling E-learning services	Material development specialist
Conducting accreditation process	Developing tests/exams
Counselling students	Supervising joint research projects
Organising PD workshops	Publishing research papers

5.2. Roles and responsibilities of teacher leaders at the ELI

The responses suggest that teacher leaders had a wide range of operational roles and responsibilities, such as monitoring teachers' office hours, preparing teaching schedules

and managing examination materials. On the other hand, teacher leaders with instructional roles were responsible for jobs such as curriculum development, teacher supervision and mentoring of teachers. However, their jobs somehow bore managerial features too, as Peter explained:

> *The way I envision my role in the PDU is that of a professional development specialist, therefore, I should do things to help and encourage teachers to develop. However, there are administrative responsibilities that make it a significant aspect of my job.* (Peter)

The data also suggest that five participants in operational positions went beyond their written roles to influence others and achieve assigned tasks. For example, Natlus had two key roles - as facilitator and evaluator - but he mentioned various other responsibilities as well:

> *My scripted role as a head of academic coordination unit is to give coordinators feedback on their tasks, offer them coaching, conduct end of the year evaluation of the instructors, communicate and explain the ELI and university's policies to the instructors, set common guidelines for the coordinators and monitor their performances as well as facilitate the administration in the implementation of ELI policies.* (Natlus, I)

Khan believed that teacher leadership at the ELI was a combination of top-down and bottom-up approaches in which teacher leaders aimed to facilitate fellow teachers and top management by adopting more flexible approaches:

> *We're all middle managers and we realise that when we're dealing with teachers, a lot of bottom-up information is important which we convey to administration. We try to minimise the top-down approach. On the other hand, when we deal with higher administration, it's totally top-down.* (Khan, I)

The above excerpt gives an important insight into the nature of leadership structures and practices at the ELI, which are further elaborated in the participants' views of the leadership model at the top. Similar to the hierarchical structure shown in the organisational chart (Figure 2.1), the participants identified a top-down management model at the ELI run by a group of individuals who commanded authority and controlled

the system. 10 out of 12 Interviewees called it a *"typical top-down", "hierarchical" and "bureaucratic system"*, that was deep-rooted in Saudi higher education institutions. The comments from Natlus and Moh exemplify this view:

> *It's a typical hierarchical and top-down management model.* (Natlus, I)

> *The structure of the institution that I work at is highly bureaucratic and centralised. On top of that, the decisions that are to be made within our unit both on an academic and administrative level can come from various higher ups.* (Moh, I)

While ten participants considered it inflexible, two of them did not find it a completely top-down management model. For example, Ibrahim stated:

> *It's not an absolutely top-down working environment as I feel a lot of concentration takes place that makes it more participatory and collaborative. I can see there's a culture of frequent professional meetings here as compared to Canada where I didn't experience many meetings.* (Ibrahim, I)

Ibrahim's description of the management structure contains elements of frequent collegial interactions and sharing of views between the teacher leaders and top management. Khan shared a similar opinion:

> *The only thing is that the higher administration is flexible. They listen to your suggestions if they make sense to them. However, somebody with TESOL background has to educate them about the sensitivity of the job.* (Khan, I)

Khan's opinion shows that, although the top leaders are prepared to compromise, they might fail to understand the complexities of a language institute due to their lack of TESOL background. Table 5.3 summarises role-related challenges that teacher leaders face at the ELI.

Difficulty	Sources	References
Lack of professional support	10	15
Control and accountability	9	13
Bureaucracy	9	12
Lack of autonomy	8	12
Lack of appreciation	10	10
Teacher resentment	9	10
The absence of collaboration among the units	6	6

Administrative workload	5	6
Box-ticking and paperwork	5	5
Earning teachers' trust	5	5
Influencing teachers	6	6

5.3. Role-related difficulties

Unlike Ibrahim and Khan, the remaining ten participants associated various issues with the hierarchical leadership system that made their roles difficult at the ELI, which are summarised in Table 5.3. They believed that, due to the top-down policies, the workplace context did not encourage collaborative practices, as it prevented the unit heads from collaborating on professional matters. Gray summarised it nicely:

> *There's a complete disconnect between the various units, purely due to the technocratic system. The heads of the various units should discuss and improve the system on their own. For example, the research people don't talk to the curriculum, no collaboration between the two. There's a sense of 'why put in so much hard work' when there's nothing from the leadership and there's no support from the management.* (Gray, I)

Moreover, the data revealed the lack of support and appreciation for the teacher leaders that caused stress, anxiety and frustration. Ten participants voiced such concerns.

> *The top management is the source of stress and they don't realise how stressful this job is. There's no support, whenever they see you in person they might appreciate you, but in policy they don't support you at all.* (Rahat, I)

The data also illustrate the fact that due to sheer bureaucracy, teacher leaders lacked autonomy which restricted their roles to operational duties. Sachin's view is representative of what seven other participants said.

> *We don't have power to make decisions as they're made by individuals at the top. We only follow their verdicts and implement the top-down polices.* (Sachin, I)

The stressful and demanding roles often affected the retention rate of the teacher leaders. While pointing out the element of stress, Khan said that teacher leaders usually failed to cope with pressure and left their positions fairly soon.

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A number of people who capitalised on these opportunities quit due to stress. So there's a barrier, stress and confusion, once you pass that then you remain steadfast, you start learning, but some people quit before that time comes. (Khan, I)

Notwithstanding the challenging professional environment for the teacher leaders owing to their lack of decision-making powers, as they described above half of them somehow managed to derive power from their positions in the hierarchy and exercised their authority to achieve organisational objectives. The comments from Ismael and Peter show how their hierarchical positions enabled them to influence fellow teachers and implement institutional policies.

I can influence people and provide directions to my group because of my administrative role in the organisation. It's a kind of vertical position that I have colleagues who are working with me in this unit, are bound to follow my directions because of my position in the hierarchy. (Ismael, I)

In this culture, the position itself adds weight which helps you with your role. (Peter, Q)

The hierarchical leadership positions might have enabled teacher leaders to influence teachers and implement institutional policies; however, nine of them believed that such authority did not help them with gaining teachers' trust and bridging the gap between teachers and higher management at the ELI. Khan stated:

In such positions, the biggest challenge is that when you speak on behalf of the administration, teachers see you as an enemy, as an alien and compliance becomes an issue. If you cannot make them comply, then in the eyes of the top management you are incompetent. So it's a difficult position really. For me TESOL practice or methodology wasn't a problem, winning teachers' confidence was a challenge. (Khan, I)

This lack of trust often affected teacher leaders' relationship with fellow teachers. As Table 5.3 shows, nine participants experienced resentment from the teachers. The extracts from Omar and Sachin's interviews denote this point:

It's very challenging. At times in the meetings heated debates and arguments will go on. Literally teachers would stand up and shout. (Omar, I)

There's a lot of resentment and resistance from teachers which isn't good for a healthy professional environment. (Sachin, I)

Expanding further on this notion, Natlus explained that teachers often perceived coordinators and observers as a threat to their jobs, which made teacher leadership roles difficult.

Teachers think that the coordinators' roles at the ELI is just like policing or spying on instructors, as their objective used to be finding out the weaknesses of the instructors and firing them. This is the general perception that affects our jobs. (Natlus, I)

In spite of teacher resentment, four participants strived to establish collegial relationship with teachers at the ELI. They considered it important for motivating, influencing and mobilising teachers in a bureaucratic workplace in order to realise organisational goals. Like Natlus, Khan and Hamza, Harrison too indicated that a collegial approach helped him to get things done.

I like to motivate my fellow teachers and colleagues by asking them to remember the true success and joy of teaching students and help them see what a good future looks like. Additionally, I like to share ideas and strategies. This way, everyone feels empowered and they can share positive ideas, which eventually look good, not only on me as a leader, but on everyone as a whole team. (Harrison, Q)

Since they lacked autonomy, they had to find other ways of influencing teachers that would possibly reduce the impact of top-down management. Natlus further explained this process in detail:

You have to have a special meeting with the instructors whenever you have to implement a new policy by the ELI as a manager. Although it's not a written policy but before its implementation you have to take teachers into confidence. One has to explain the nature, objectives and goals of the policy and give a rationale why such a step has to be taken. This will help to avoid negative

feelings of the general staff towards the administration and we can focus more on our tasks. (Natlus, I)

The above extracts show that teacher leaders made an effort to create a pressure-free environment for the teachers in order to meet the expectations of the top management.

Despite the difficulties summarised in Table 5.3, eight participants noticed a positive influence of the hierarchical leadership structure on their leadership roles. For example, this system helped Ibrahim to organise his professional work in a better way and assign tasks to teachers and group members in a systematic manner.

> *Basically, this top-down management system disciplines you more, this is what I've learnt from this system. It helps you when you're required to meet certain pre-determined objectives and delegate work.* (Ibrahim, I)

Similarly, Peter supported this view and said, "*Hierarchical leadership model helps me in that I know exactly who I have to contact for any academic issue*" (Peter, Q). It also facilitated Hamza to have *"clear roles and responsibilities and have a clear chain of command"* (Hamza, Q). Likewise, for Rahat and Ismael the top-down management model proved crucial in meeting organisational objectives as it offered them a structure and plan.

> *The organisational hierarchy provides me the capacity to a managerial role. It gives me the ability to influence the behaviour of people working with me to achieve certain organisational objectives.* (Rahat, Q)

> *The vertical structure of leadership helps organise and discipline the entire work at all positions. In view of completing my tasks and reporting to my supervisors and then to control and get things done on time, I've to seek report from my colleagues working under my supervision. I find this hierarchical management productive, efficient and results oriented.* (Ismael, Q)

However, four interviewees expressed their displeasure at the top-down management system. For instance, Omar called it a "*flop show*". For Sachin "*it's a double face thing, hypocrisy… an artificial setup*". These aspects of the management model at the ELI made the teacher leaders' job more of a robotic nature as explained by Harrison:

If you make anything bureaucratic as it is, broad levels of control and accountability, then the coordinators have a very clear job, they just proceduralise and do it. That responsibility just shows that they do what they are told to do. They don't look at the sense of right and wrong. They might - but if they considered it wrong why would they do it? (Harrison, I)

The above extracts also reflect the impact of a technocratic system that contains the element of control and accountability. Moh pointed out how that distances the management from the daily workings of the Institute: *"This is not a favorable situation as the higher-ups don't really have a pulse on what's happening in the unit on a day to day basis"* (Moh, I). Similarly, five participants pointed out excessive administrative tasks, unnecessary box-ticking and workload that emanated from their operational duties and made their roles difficult:

In Saudi Arabia. If you're in a leadership position, you have to meet deadlines and you have to come up with ideas on the fly otherwise you'll be stuck. You've to keep records of everything on daily basis. (Harrison, I)

It's quite hectic. There's so much to do and there's so much paperwork and documentation all done by the coordinators. (Rahat, I)

The above extracts show that hierarchical leadership model is a source of stress and bureaucracy; however, at the same time it helps teacher leaders with strategic planning at the ELI.

5.1.2. Teacher leader competence

The second theme describes the competence of teacher leaders in relation to the range of knowledge and skills they possess that facilitate their leadership roles at the ELI.

The data revealed various types of knowledge and skills that influenced teacher leadership roles at the ELI. Table 5.4 summarises the findings pertaining to knowledge that teacher leaders had at the ELI, categorized, in the light of literature (see Section 3.6), as *knowledge of pedagogy, people, place, system* and *self.*

Focal Point	Types of leadership knowledge	Sources	References
Pedagogy	Knowledge of TESOL/ELT	8	9
	Testing	1	1
	Knowledge of the tasks	5	7
	Knowledge of the best practices	7	7
	Knowledge of curriculum	1	3
	Teaching methodologies	8	10
	Research skills & knowledge	1	2
	Knowledge of current developments in ELT	3	4
People	Ability to mentor teachers	2	3
	Persuasive	5	5
	Building rapport	4	4
	Know people potential	4	4
Self	Multi-tasking	3	3
	Setting realistic goals	3	3
	Reflective	8	13
System	Managing curriculum	1	2
	Faculty evaluations	4	6
People & Place	Leading large & diverse teams	1	2
	Knowledge of socio-cultural values	4	5
	Understanding the organisational culture	8	10

5.4. Leadership knowledge possessed by EFL teacher leaders

The above table suggests that more than half of the participants had knowledge about their organisational culture, pedagogical practices and recent developments in the field of ELT. An emphasis was noted on leadership knowledge for teacher leadership roles at the ELI.

> *Academically, you have to have some kind of background and knowledge when it comes to instructions and management and all the different aspects which cover that, i.e. best practices, latest developments, new implementations, and how they will be done.* (Moh, I)

The data also indicate that heads of the different units, such as curriculum, testing and research, emphasised knowledge related to their roles and tasks. For example, Harrison states:

> *In my current role, I need to have experience and expertise in the field of research. Do I know about the paradigms, research methodologies? Do I know how to interpret certain articles and research materials? Can I deliver that to people?* (Harrison, I)

The data revealed that eight participants acknowledged leadership knowledge in the form of pedagogical skills as an important aspect of EFL teacher leadership. For example, Gray believed that all teacher leaders should "*assure that the curriculum delivery was perfect as spelled out in the curriculum guide of the ELI*". Similarly, Peter explained how his vast knowledge of classroom teaching assisted his instructional leadership role while observing and giving feedback to teachers.

> *Due to my ESL teaching experience in the US and other universities and also here, I had a fairly wide sense of what good teaching can look like, which helped me with teachers' professional development.* (Peter, I)

All the participants used the terms 'knowledge' and 'skills' interchangeably when referring to their pedagogical expertise. Ibrahim and Sachin considered teaching skills and knowledge of classroom pedagogies crucial for teacher leadership at the ELI.

> *To be an effective teacher leader you need to acquire pedagogical skills and knowledge and learn how to design a curriculum for your course, how to control the class setting and what kind of classroom environment you need to have for effective classroom learning and teaching.* (Sachin, I)

There was an agreement among the participants that, whether observer, supervisor, mentor or PD specialist, one needed to have cutting-edge knowledge of classroom teaching and good teaching skills. As Rahat said, *"Pedagogical knowledge and experience helps with the observations part because as a classroom observer you know what to look for".* On the other hand, he did not consider teaching skills important for operational roles and believed that a good teacher might not prove effective as a manager or leader.

> *There is a perception that if you got a 5 score as a classroom teacher, you can be a good coordinator or a manager, but it's not necessarily true. Someone might be a good manager, but not necessarily a good teacher and vice versa.* (Rahat, I)

When asked about the significance of pedagogical skills for instructional leadership roles, Natlus expressed the same viewpoint and disregarded teaching skills for coordinators and other managerial roles. He said, "*As my role is more of a manager now, it has nothing to*

do with teaching skills, though I teach those three mandatory hours" (Natlus, I). On the other hand, Harrison did not completely deny the importance of teaching skills for teacher leadership roles; however, he prioritised task achievement ability over teaching skills.

> *The good teachers might be able to do something better in the leadership positions. However, in my opinion, if you can do certain tasks, whatever it is, you should be in that position.* (Harrison, I)

Speaking in broad terms, Peter said that for effective leadership positions at the ELI, teacher leaders had to set and achieve very high standards of professionalism which could give them a credible status and identity as leaders. Implying the significance of knowledge and skills, he thought that his credibility as a teacher leader among his colleagues had a strong impact on the efficiency of his role.

> *I earned credibility through my academic and professional profile and the current hierarchical position. I'm respected more and enjoy credibility among my colleagues because of my knowledge, expertise, experience, cultural background, trusting relationship that I've with my colleagues and students. These things led to my success in this position.* (Peter, I)

Apart from the various types of leadership knowledge, another aspect of teacher leaders' competence was seen in the repertoire of skills they possessed, which facilitated their current roles. For example, Khan knew how to be cooperative while calling for compliance and at the same time avoiding resentment. He explained:

> *You can never expect cooperation from people unless you extend cooperation first. You have to motivate your teachers. When they're motivated, as a by-product, you win their cooperation and they comply. When you start demanding and exercising your power, then there's a lot of resistance, which is not good for healthy professional environment.* (Khan, I)

Khan's quote also exemplifies his knowledge of people and place that supported his teacher leadership role at the ELI. Various other leadership skills which were considered important in their current roles were also mentioned by the teacher leaders. The range of skills suggest that leadership roles at the ELI required them to have a combination of

knowledge and skills. The skills of the EFL teacher leaders summarised in Table 5.5 are very much in line with the literature in Section 3.5.

Skills	Sources	References
Cultural consciousness skills	12	16
Communication skills	12	14
Time management skills	12	12
Interpersonal skills	12	12
People skills	12	12
Conflict resolution skills	9	10
Influencing colleagues	8	9
Making decisions	7	7
Technical skills	5	7
Knowing the task	5	6
Providing & interpreting vision	5	6
Delegating tasks	5	6
Strategic planning skills	6	6
Leading from the front	5	5
Identifying people's potential	4	4
Intrapersonal skills	4	4
Absorbing pressure & stress	2	2

5.5. Leadership skills possessed by EFL teacher leaders

The data show that the teacher leaders valued certain skills that simplified their leadership responsibilities at the ELI. As Table 5.5 illustrates, more than half of the participants considered conflict resolution, decision making, and influencing colleagues as vital skills for their teacher leadership roles at the ELI. The following extract corroborates these claims:

> *Apart from academic know-how of TESOL, the most important skill that I needed was cultural understanding because we work in an environment where teachers come from several different counties and they have their own perceptions and assumptions of educational practices. In addition, I found other skills crucial for my role, such as communication skills, intrapersonal skills, people skills, conflict resolution skills, strategic planning and execution skills.* (Khan, Q)

Moreover, all the participants underscored the significance of *"time management skills"*, *"cultural consciousness skills" and "interpersonal skills",* which they described as the backbone of their leadership roles at the ELI. As Natlus explained:

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With effective interpersonal and communication skills, coordinators play the role of a bridge between teachers and the top management. A senior coordinator who has people skills and a good rapport with his team is more successful as compared to the one who merely possesses management skills in general. (Natlus, I)

In addition, technical skills, ability to **l**ead from the front, identifying people's potential and delegating tasks, were also mentioned as assisting participants in their leadership positions. Most of these leadership skills were somehow similar to transformational leadership where leaders have to have the ability to provide vision, disseminate work, facilitate, persuade and influence colleagues, inspire team members and lead from the front. For instance, Omar and Sachin learned how to influence others by setting an example. Sachin would never just say *'take my words for it'*, rather he would sell it *'by showing and walking the walk and talking the talk'.* Similarly, Harrison often questioned his skills to further understand his role:

Can I delegate work? Can I designate the work of research to certain people under me to carry on them with regards to the master's degree programme? Do I have the vision? These are the key things for such roles. (Harrison, I)

To be effective in their roles, the participants pointed out various personality traits which they deemed useful for teacher leadership roles. These traits, shown in Table 5.6 are similar to those in the reviewed literature in Section 3.5.

Personal Attributes	Sources	References
Fair	10	14
Empathetic	12	12
Reliable	10	12
Sympathetic	12	12
Honest	10	12
Confident	8	8
Friendly	7	7
Diplomatic	6	7
Trustworthy	5	7
Hardworking	5	5
Professional	4	4

5.6. Personal attributes of EFL teacher leaders

Table 5.6 shows that 10 out of 12 participants found being *reliable, fair-seeming, honest and sympathetic* to the colleagues are important personality attributes for teacher leaders at the ELI. Emphasising the role of *'confidence'*, Omar pointed out that EFL teachers were generally very capable but they would avoid taking up leadership roles.

> *You have to be confident for such positions. Most of our colleagues lack self-belief, they are very competent and talented, they can do many things, but they lack confidence. They can teach students but when it comes to dealing with teachers they tend to shy away.* (Omar, I)

Being empathetic with teachers was an important personality attribute that helped the teacher leaders to understand and resolve teachers' issues and motivate them for effective functioning at the ELI. All of them believed that '*having empathy for colleagues'* and being on good terms with teachers were fundamental to their success as teacher leaders.

> *One word: Empathy. As long as I've empathy for teachers and treat them the way I think I should be treated, I keep getting a very good response from teachers.* (Hamza, I)

> *My personal attitude, my relationship with instructors and the way I convey my message through coordinators to my team in a friendly way are very important to effectively perform and produce good results.* (Natlus, I)

The above extracts show that leadership skills and knowledge alone might not facilitate teacher leadership roles and that certain personality traits are important for an effective teacher leader at the ELI.

5.2. Factors that help in the professional development of teacher leaders

The descriptions of leadership practices, various teacher leaders' roles and their related challenges and knowledge and skills required for such roles determine the nature of teacher leadership at the ELI. The third and fourth themes suggest that, despite various operational difficulties, the teacher leaders were able to convert these into learning opportunities that consequently contributed to their professional development at the ELI.

These themes (Table 5.7) provide an answer to research question 2 and show factors that support teacher leadership and contribute to the learning and development of teacher leaders at the ELI. The themes reveal that, despite insufficient professional support, teacher leaders were able to learn and develop their leadership skills mainly through their personal efforts and motivation, such as creating and availing themselves of learning opportunities, utilising their experiential learning and adopting reflective and collaborative practices. Table 5.7 shows the two major themes, example extracts from interviews, and number of sources and references to the themes.

Themes	Example extracts	Codes	Sources	References
Learning from the context	Exposure to leadership roles, reflective practices, teamwork, collaboration and interactive sessions helped us a lot to develop certain leadership techniques.	Informal learning	12	22
	You have to have motivation, you have to find the opportunities and look for them. If you don't have that intrinsic motivation, you won't learn much.	Urge for learning	10	14
	The current context isn't offering many formal leadership learning opportunities. It's not really supportive.	Lack of support	9	13
	It's very unfortunate that not many courses are offered here and the coordinators are left for themselves. Probably because not everyone in top management understands the value and role of coordinators.	Learning opportunities at ELI	9	9
Lessons from the past	Certain leadership skills are not there in any management training courses and can be achieved through personal experience, reflection on previous experience and effort to bring change in attitude.	1.Experiential learning 2.Training outside EFL	8	10
	My teaching experience and learning in other contexts are my assets. I know the culture, the students and the people.	1.Learning from other contexts 2.Contextual knowledge	8	10
	Understanding of others is one thing that I had brought with me here because I had these experiences of working with people from other cultures.	1.Empathetic 2.Collaborative learning	7	7

5.7. Factors that help in the development of teacher leadership

5.2.1. Learning from the context

All the participants pointed out the significance of professional development activities for their leadership roles. They mentioned the following activities that were available to them at the ELI.

Activity	Sources	References
Seminars	5	5
Workshops	12	16
One-day courses by Cambridge/Oxford	8	8
Conferences	2	2
Symposiums	4	4
Presentations	11	12

5.8. Formal PD opportunities at the ELI

The table shows that the participants were exposed to a range of formal PD activities at the ELI as explained by Sachin: "*We experience professional development opportunities in the form of workshops, symposiums, seminars, presentations and Cambridge courses*".

When a question was asked about the number of PD opportunities available to the teacher leaders that supported their leadership roles, a common view among the interviewees was that *"there are prospects for individuals to become teacher leaders, but if they want to learn and develop, there aren't many options available"* (Khan, I), due to which *"they struggle at the beginning to have the overall view of the tasks*" (Harrison, I). Peter, as the head of the PDU, explained how PD opportunities may be available to teachers but not to teacher leaders:

> *Most of the people think there is no such things here in KSA. I would thoroughly agree with the fact that the context doesn't offer many opportunities to learn about leadership skills and I'd say that anything or any of us want in that regard it would be very much up to us to go, find it, chase it and pay for it. Even if you think of immediate external context of Jeddah, it is far more likely that British Council and KSAALT are going to do some courses about some aspects of teaching than some aspects of managing. So finding the leadership courses requires more work and effort than finding a course that can help with classroom teaching.* (Peter, I)

On the other hand, Ibrahim believed that the opportunities were always there and one had to look for them.

When you come into an organisation, you have formal opportunities, such as workshops, conference, seminars, research grants and you grab those opportunities that help you develop leadership skills. However, it differs from person to person and depends how ambitious you are, how interested you are in a particular aspect of life and work and what opportunities come to you and when. In my case, I was lucky to have them here. (Ibrahim, I)

Despite opposing views about the number of available PD programmes, all the participants considered the existing support inadequate and noted the lack of sustained PD prospects for the teacher leaders in the form of workshops, seminars or short courses which were largely outdated, scant and ineffective. Nine participants described these courses as "*generic", "a kind of revision*", "*irrelevant", "useless"* and *"repetition"* of what they did in their previous employments. Hamza thought, "*They were the same as what management generally means and how it should work"*. Natlus had a similar opinion: "*These training courses were very basic, mainly telling us what management is and how it works in an ideal situation"* (Natlus, I). Table 5.9 summarises EFL teacher leaders' perceptions of PD courses offered at the ELI.

Characteristic of courses	Sources	References
Context-specific	2	2
Effective	2	2
Non context-specific	5	6
Repetitive & revision	6	10
Bookish	2	2
Irrelevant	4	4
Ineffective	4	4
Fewer & infrequent	12	12
Basic & generic	3	3

5.9. The nature of PD courses at the ELI

When the suitability of these courses was further probed to understand why they were considered ineffective, mixed opinions were noted. Khan's comment showed that these courses were "*specifically tailored to address the teacher leaders' needs at the ELI";* however, Natlus did not consider them '*context-specific'* as he thought the trainers themselves were unaware of the immediate context and ground realities at the ELI. According to Natlus, "*the training sessions targeted an idealised setting which could not*

suit our context as the requirement of the ELI was totally different from what was told by the trainers". Similarly, Sachin observed that the trainers' lack of systematic knowledge of the Saudi context often ruined the purpose of the courses.

> *I believe there are certain things that can be done in a much better way if the trainers are explained the context and nature of our work, the basic requirements, and the areas of development. Basically what happens is that when the trainers arrive, they ask us about the context, we explain the context, they accept and admit it immediately that they aren't aware of the contextual demands, so they are going to give us a general training in the field, but it won't be ELI specific.* (Sachin, I)

The data reveal that the available PD activities mainly overlooked context-specific components and thus by and large failed to meet the professional needs and expectations of the teacher leaders. Natlus said: "*Whatever type of training is provided to us, is the same stereotype thing".* Notwithstanding the shortcomings of the courses offered at the ELI, they somehow aided teacher leaders in their newly assumed positions, as noticed by Sachin.

> *I can see that coordinators who have never done any management roles or courses before, they must have benefited a lot. For me it was a revision, but for beginners it was useful.* (Sachin, I)

Natlus also considered these courses very basic, but they somehow influenced his attitude towards assessing his areas of strengths and weaknesses as a novice teacher leader.

> *That was a bookish knowledge but helped me understand the key things, such as with a positive attitude, a coordinator may play a role of a facilitator and mentor, who identifies the areas of development and helps the novice teacher leaders to develop their leadership skills. (*Natlus, I)

Although the inefficiencies of the courses were repeatedly mentioned, all the participants wished to have more courses as part of their continuous professional development. As Moh postulated:

The university should really be offering some teacher leader development or academic and administrative level programmes to continually support teacher leaders. More professional training is required in areas which are explored in daily practices. (Moh, I)

The teacher leaders' desire to have more PD courses was not fulfilled since the higher management frequently failed to arrange such courses. Interviewees expressed their dissatisfaction with the number of courses offered to them, as there had been only one course per year. Natlus called it inadequate professional support to the teacher leaders as he said:

The training is supposed to be twice a year, but this year there has been no training at all. So, the support offered by the administration is insufficient in my opinion. (Natlus, I)

Similarly, Hamza and Ismael believed that top leadership might have its own assumption about the individuals' abilities in the management positions, which could be a reason why not many courses were offered at the ELI. Hamza posited: "*The top management might assume that the coordinators are more capable and don't need any training*" (Hamza, I).

The data indicate that the ELI context offered insufficient professional support to the teacher leaders with their professional development that impacted their leadership roles. Therefore, they relied on informal PD activities which were situated in practice and embedded in context-specific roles, addressing their professional learning needs. The participants mentioned the following informal learning opportunities (Table 5.10) which were readily available to them at the ELI.

Activities	Sources	References
Collegiality	12	19
Learning from the roles	12	16
Reflective practices	12	16
On-the-Job learning	10	12
Shared leadership practices	5	5
Group discussions	4	4
Mentoring	1	3

5.10. Informal PD opportunities at the ELI

The above table shows the range of informal PD opportunities that exposed teacher leaders to role-based and context-specific leadership learning at the ELI. It is evident from the data that the leadership roles themselves offered learning opportunities for all the participants as these roles raised their awareness of leadership notions and developed their contextual knowledge. There was a unanimous view among the participants that the experience of being in a leadership role at the ELI gave them leadership skills. Harrison explains further:

> *I have definitely learned the EFL leadership skills from being in the role, in particular how to organise my time so I can meet deadlines. Other things that I acquired in this context is, dealing with people from different backgrounds and understanding organisational culture.* (Harrison, I)

In the same way, Moh with no prior leadership experience whatsoever was able to learn and develop his role-related leadership skills on the current job indicating the impact of the context on learning leadership skills.

> *I haven't had any management experience prior to this position. However, my experience in this position has taught me the importance of people skills, conflict resolution, employee motivation which are directly linked to performance and being a good listener combined with being a good decision maker. I've also become aware of the importance of identifying skills within a person and therefore being able to delegate successfully as required. This is something that I've only learnt over time and through experience at the ELI.* (Moh, I)

The participants' responses revealed that 'on the job' learning occurred by performing the roles, experiencing new situations and achieving leadership tasks. Referring to 'on the job' learning, Khan said, "*I feel that cultural diversity at the ELI has broadened my vision and enhanced my management and leadership skills*".

The data revealed how teacher leaders learned to lead by operating in leadership roles. For instance, Harrison seemed aware of his responsibilities as the head of the research

unit. He would always try to focus on his role as a leader and that made him think in a focused way towards the targets he needed to accomplish. He also said:

> *Being head of the unit has helped me with my people skills and improved my negotiation and communication approaches to various types of academics and people. This is not to mention difficult situations which require proper judgments and clear and positive outcomes.* (Harrison, Q)

The interview extracts of five participants who had less than five years of leadership experience at the ELI indicated that their leadership learning occurred mainly in an unstructured and informal fashion. Although they lacked leadership experience and qualification, exposure to their self-created informal PD activities enabled them to acquire and improve their leadership skills.

A major form of informal learning was the collegiality among the teacher leaders which accelerated their learning and development at the ELI. Despite the lack of professional support from higher management, collegial support was always available. Hamza and Ibrahim explained how collegiality helped them with their professional learning.

> *The only support is your colleagues or other coordinators around you. Whenever I had a problem, I would go to my colleagues. It's more of an informal interaction. Individuals can learn from informal discussions more because they feel comfortable.* (Hamza, Q)

> *My professional circle helped me learn about my current role. Every contact, every meeting, every session gave me new ideas, confidence, feeling of development and learning. When you rub shoulders with seniors, sit with them and talk to them, you get an opportunity to share, learn and improve.* (Ibrahim, Q)

Such interactions were common among the teacher leaders in their own units at the ELI, which show resemblance to professional learning in PLCs. Findings suggest that the participants were open to learning new things and not hesitant to approach their colleagues when necessary.

I wouldn't approach my colleagues in a formal way because I feel it builds a mountain of ice, a firewall. I like to approach them in a friendly manner. They've all offered help which is really good, especially in this bureaucratic place. (Harrison, I)

Natlus considered the whole process of collegial interaction a constant source of professional learning and development. In his case, being protégé of his senior colleagues played a vital role in the first year of his leadership position. Moreover, open discussions on various professional matters provided him with an opportunity to exchange views and find solutions to problems which he deemed difficult to resolve due to his lack of knowledge or ability.

The discussion often gives a senior colleague an insight into the weaknesses of other coordinators who need to develop certain skills. For example, personally I'm not good at IT, so when we discuss something related to it, it gives me a chance to learn about it from my mentors and those who have expertise in this. (Natlus, I)

The above quotes suggest the role of mentoring in Natlus' professional learning. However, no other participants had explicitly stated the influence of mentoring or coaching on their professional development.

Similarly, teamwork and collaboration had a profound impact on other participants' learning. Khan and Peter, who had substantial teaching experience and qualifications, benefited from collegial interaction and group discussions. Khan indicated how dynamic individuals in the group contributed to his leadership learning.

We had a team of 16 members. I felt that some of them were good at administration but they had no TESOL background, others had TESOL background but no management experience. So I really benefited from the seniors in terms of management, I saw they were really capable, some had a corporate background. Therefore, I learnt a lot from them. (Khan, I)

There are times when I learn things from other PDU members. We do discuss major issues with each other and come up with solutions together, whether it's an issue with the rubric, issues with observation and problems with teacher

discussion groups. Whatever it is, we talk together and we brainstorm together about what might be good solutions. (Peter, I)

Besides teamwork and group discussions, teacher leaders in their respective units were eager to arrange professional workshops and presentations that would directly address their learning needs. The data suggest that these efforts often aimed to assist junior or novice teacher leaders with their new leadership roles. They called it a reciprocal learning process. Natlus precisely described this activity:

> *A senior coordinator is given a group of new coordinators who work in his mentorship, so he learns from his team members as well as his mentor who all work together for a couple of weeks. The mentee's email communication, his interaction with fellow teachers, the language used with the team members, are monitored and feedback is given by the senior coordinator for learning and improvement purposes.* (Natlus, I)

Collegiality and professional collaboration are closely linked to the notion of professional learning community (PLC); however, a formal PLC is non-existent in this context as pointed out by the participants. When asked whether the concept of PLC was relevant to the ELI context, Gray considered it a far-fetched idea: "*I've never been to any PLC here, I never heard of any formal or informal PLC, however, potentially, these activities can be very effective*" (Gray, I).

Collaboration among the teacher leaders is indicative of their distributed leadership style, which is quite contrary to the hierarchical leadership model at the top level at the ELI. The data showed that shared leadership style helped the participants with their leadership roles in terms of task achievement. Moh and Peter explained the impact of this approach on their roles:

> *The biggest benefit that I had that everybody brings something with them. If you look at our unit, there're people who have been working and involved in management and supervisory positions previously. So obviously, they understand and have their own ideas and ways of doing things, which always help to understand how they would do things and how they should be done.*

Their input is always crucial. I prefer taking others' opinions who have similar experiences. (Moh, I)

It's a kind of participatory leadership. I don't like to sit in the corner and make decisions especially if it's like dealing with a problem. I believe authoritative leadership works better in military and doesn't work in education. (Peter, I)

The shared leadership practices among the teacher leaders in their respective units is a unique property of this context which is further discussed in Chapter 6. The hierarchical leadership model exists at the top level according to the participants; however, irrespective of their designations in the middle of the hierarchy, they adopted a collaborative and participatory leadership approach within their units.

Besides collegiality, reflection on their professional practices emerged as a common learning tool for all the participants. Reflectivity is a common characteristic of experiential learning which helped the motivated teacher leaders at the ELI to make their on-the-job learning meaningful. It helped them rectify their mistakes and improve their practices, as explained by Ibrahim:

I think reflecting on what you do during the day plays a pivotal role in learning about your job, revising your strategy, rethinking of your tools of work and designing your future actions. Definitely reflecting on your past actions, policies and themes help a lot in revising and improving your strategies. (Ibrahim, I)

Using himself as an example of an experiential learner, Harrison commented on how reflection had contributed to his professional development as head of the research unit at the ELI. He referred to the literature while explaining his point:

The strategy I like to adopt is similar to Kolb's Cycle of Experiential Learning, which has 'reflection' as its main element. I like to see the effects of different leadership and management strategies implemented and how successful those strategies are. This way, I'm able to reflect on the most successful ones and use them in my role. (Harrison, I)

For Hamza, it is a process that has helped him learn throughout his academic and professional life:

When it comes to reflection, I grew up with this thing. I've been doing it since I was very young. Every time I do something, I reflect on it. It's not like I sit down and write on it, I'd be walking home, driving home, reflecting why I did that way. (Hamza, I)

Reflection at the individual level certainly influenced the participants' professional development; however, Peter referred to the impact of collective reflection as a team, a strategy which was not mentioned by other participants.

We've done a lot of reflection, trying to figure out how to make a minimum standard of quality in the week of workshops, and make the PD activities more consistently useful for the faculty. I think we've made some really good progress in all the areas we reflected on and tried to fix. (Peter, I)

Another important factor that played a crucial role in the professional development of the teacher leaders was their intrinsic motivation, which triggered their interest in their leadership roles, collegial collaboration and reflective practices. Natlus explained how his internal urge and drive helped create a learning milieu for himself and others since no such policy existed at the ELI:

The collaboration among the coordinators is a kind of intrinsic motivation and it has nothing to do with the top-management, in fact they don't even know about it. (Natlus, I)

Khan also shared a similar opinion, *"at the ELI, the learning environment is created by the individuals rather than the administrators".* (Khan, I)

There was consensus among the participants that individuals can develop leadership skills in their workplace settings, as Khan stated: "*Leadership has to be learnt whether it is a political context or educational context. The concept of 'people are born leaders' is a nonsense".* Since the interviewees recognized the significance of professional development, their desire to excel professionally was phenomenal. They liked to read, explore and experiment in their professional fields as shown in the excerpts from Khan and Peter's interviews:

I look into research and academic resources. I try that while giving feedback. I read some books and explore some websites while writing evaluation reports and defending my arguments. These're helpful learning tools. (Peter, I)

Leadership development is an ongoing process. I have spent years and years admitting that I need to learn, in fact, my last 10 years learning is that I am open to learn, and now I need to learn every day. (Khan, I)

Intrinsic motivation allowed them to utilise learning opportunities and keep themselves abreast of new developments and research in the field. Khan's comments also suggests his life-long learning and its role in his career growth.

5.2.2. Lessons from the past

Besides the formal and informal learning at the ELI that contributed to the teacher leaders' professional development, they also profited from their previous academic and professional experiences. This is evident from the present data which show that previous qualifications, training and PD courses the teacher leaders had taken in other contexts before assuming leadership roles at the ELI facilitated their current roles. For eleven participants, it was learning in their previous educational and non-educational organisations which they carried to the current roles and influenced their development as teacher leaders at the ELI. Their lessons from the past worked for them as a survival tool in the bureaucratic system at the ELI. The excerpt from Gray's interview is a sound example of that:

My technocratic learning of engineering actually helps to judge what's going on in the environment. People often come into the environment and take it for granted, such as technocratic approach is the only legitimate way to influence because if something works in business why not the same way it should work in education. So, it helped me recognise what a technocratic system looks like and critique it with a sense of objectivity; rather than just accepting it as it's often the case here that people just accept it and don't see any other way of potentially managing education system. In that respect, it certainly helped me as things have to be managed, it can be a chaos otherwise. (Gray, I)

As Ibrahim, Ismael and Khan had enormous experience in the field of education, their exposure to various educational settings offered them an insight into management learning and practices, as can be seen in Khan's description of a specific erstwhile role:

> *In my previous job, there was a unit called Self-Direct Learning Unit, and in charge of that unit was an American teacher who used to run self-development projects which were called SDL projects. When he was away for three months, I was assigned that project. Then for the next 5 years, I supervised that unit. It was a great learning experience which has supported me here.* (Khan, I)

In the case of Omar, the challenging experiences of his previous job in Pakistan prepared him for the role he had to perform at the ELI:

> *It was a very hostile environment where my collegial relationships were not very good. But I still kept on working really hard. My responsibility was huge because in the morning I was teaching master's classes and in the evening I would manage the evening session until 9 pm. It was a tough but rigorous kind of training for me. But the way I kept myself cool prepared me for future assignments.* (Omar, I)

His experience as a supervisor in a Saudi college further added to his current role. He said, "*In 2002 when I was in Taif, I became a supervisor of a small English unit which enhanced my capacity as a manager. That experience assisted me here at the ELI*" (Omar, I). In the same way, Gray came from "*a very competitive environment*" and Sachin too had "*a lot of service experience*" in non-educational environments, which aided them with their present roles.

In a response to the open-ended questionnaire, Ismael summarised what he had learned from his previous employment, which was in a Saudi context as well:

> *My previous management experiences have taught me to tread cautiously and softly, be sensitive to cultural and geographical differences, and listen attentively to everyone and everything. Without any disrespect to ambition and idealism, it's the realities on the ground that matter and one must make every possible effort to make a difference within the space and span, however tiny it may have been!* (Ismael, Q)

The participants made sense of their difficult experiences, which facilitated their current roles in the ELI context. Peter, as the head of the PDU, who was also responsible for teacher supervision, valued his experience of being an IELTS examiner in the British Council. That experience played a crucial role in his bid to observe and give feedback on teachers' lessons:

> *Another major thing that I brought into this position was my four years of experience with IELTS. I've been through a very rigorous IELTS training and how to really use the rubric in a very standardised fashion. So that background with rubrics and standardisation helped me on the observation side of the things here.* (Peter, I)

Similarly, the data revealed how Harrison's previous employment contributed to his current role as the head of the research unit. His ability to transfer the skills he learned in his previous job to the current one enhanced his confidence:

> *Being a team leader in my previous employment has helped me immensely in my current job since both are identical EFL contexts in one country (Saudi Arabia) and at a tertiary institution. Thus, I was able to transfer my skills from my last job to the new one, and build further on them and improve the quality of implementation of these skills. Knowing different elements and responsibilities as a leader in my previous job has helped me recognise challenges and possible tricky issues in the current one.* (Harrison, I)

Ibrahim was of the same opinion:

> *Human nature is the same everywhere. While there may be differences at a societal, economic, political or religious levels, the general ways in which people react to particular situations is largely the same. Therefore, my previous experience in dealing with people was directly transferrable in the current context.* (Ibrahim, I)

It is obvious from the above extracts that any kind of prior management experience in or outside the domain of education could be desirable for the teacher leadership roles in the Saudi EFL context. Peter advised: "*Before going into the technicalities of EFL management, you have to have that experience of management and teaching".* Seven other participants

also considered prior management experience crucial for the teacher leadership roles at the ELI.

> *It would be helpful, if you already have some administrative experience before. If you're coming to a job and don't have any administrative experience, I'd really advise him against taking that job because that'll be a very difficult learning curve for him.* (Moh, I)

As shown in Appendix 2, four participants had post-graduate level leadership qualifications and formal management training; however, they had zero EFL leadership experience. The remaining eight teacher leaders mainly relied on their 'on the job' learning and experience of their current and previous roles. For example, Omar stated, *"I never had any formal training"*, and thus he depended on his more than five years of previous EFL management experience.

In addition to the previous leadership experience, the teacher leaders gained leadership knowledge through PD courses which they had completed during their previous employments. These courses helped them develop their understanding of leadership theories and practices and contributed to the effectiveness of their current roles at the ELI. Khan's excerpt is a good illustration of that:

> *In my previous job, I had an opportunity to sign up for online courses we chose for ourselves. So in 7 years I completed 134 short courses. Some of them were very small, like 2 hours courses, just complete an assignment and submit a write-up and that's it. Some courses were weeklong which were all online. To be honest, they provided useful background information about the educational leadership which I can utilise at the ELI.* (Khan, I)

When a question was posed to probe the importance of *prior experience and leadership qualifications* and their influence on teacher leader roles and performances, mixed opinions were noted. Although, eight participants agreed on the significance of leadership experience and considered qualifications less important, four of them thought that the combination of both could be more beneficial in EFL contexts. Hamza, Rahat, Moh and Omar, who had no leadership qualifications, believed that *'experience'* had no match:

*I think experience is the key and more important than qualifications. I know a lot of people who don't have proper qualifications, but they have 10 years of experience and thus they are capable managers or leaders. (*Hamza, I)

Ismael, Harrison, Khan, and Ibrahim, who all had post-graduate level leadership qualifications, highlighted the significance of both experience and qualifications. They assumed that experience alone might not guide teacher leaders in a right direction and thus theoretical knowledge could rationalise the actions and steps they take in their leadership domains. Khan's comments show the significance of both experience and qualifications:

I believe experience alone, without specific knowledge sometimes can prove a barrier. So both knowledge and experience are very useful in my opinion. For example, if somebody has 20 years of teaching experience and he doesn't know anything about TESOL, that experience can be an obstacle at times in teaching and learning. Similarly, in management if I've ten years of experience in coordination, but I don't know the standard practices, perhaps, I'll be making the same mistakes again and again. Instead, I'd say that a course followed by just 2 years of experience would be more useful. (Khan, I)

The participants' accounts suggest that the combination of management experience and qualification can assist teacher leaders with their leadership roles at the ELI. However, relevant experience of EFL/ESL contexts can equip teacher leaders with skills and knowledge that are more appropriate for their roles in a language institute.

5.3. Conclusion

This chapter has presented the qualitative findings of the case study to address the two research questions. The participants' accounts suggest that EFL teacher leaders are competent language teachers, capable managers, inspiring leaders equipped with essential knowledge and skills for a variety of operational and instructional leadership roles in hierarchical structures, who effectively operate and connect the top management to the teaching staff. They are reflective practitioners and motivated learners who work

collaboratively with colleagues to improve their practices and convert contextual challenges into learning opportunities in their institutes.

Although confined by bureaucratic structures, EFL teacher leadership can be fostered through the individuals' personal urge for learning from their context-specific roles by reflecting on and making sense of their varied experiences, applying previously learned knowledge into practice, adopting collaborative leadership styles and creating learning opportunities for themselves and others. The following chapter discusses these findings with reference to the literature.

Chapter 6. Discussion of findings

The main foci of this case study are to understand EFL teacher leadership from the perspective of teacher leaders at the ELI and explore factors that impact their professional development. This chapter interprets the findings to answer the two research questions and explains how they fit in with the previously published literature on the concept of teacher leadership and teacher leader development in other contexts. The discussion of the findings in the first two sections address the first research question and its sub-question:

RQ1: How do EFL teacher leaders perceive 'teacher leadership' and their leadership roles at the ELI?

   a) What kind of knowledge and skills do they consider important for teacher leadership roles at the ELI?

Section 6.2 discusses findings in relation to the second research question, which explores various factors that help teacher leaders with their professional learning and development at the ELI:

RQ2: What factors contributed to the EFL teacher leaders' professional development at the ELI?

6.1. Teacher leadership from the perspectives of EFL teachers

As the first research question seeks to understand teacher leaders' perceptions about the notion of teacher leadership at the ELI, the interpretation of their roles enables us to see what they mean by the term 'teacher leadership' and how that can be related to the published literature. Moreover, this section discusses the findings in relation to the sub-

question to identify the types of knowledge and skills needed for teacher leader roles at the ELI.

6.1.1. The range of teacher leadership roles at the ELI

Teacher leadership, a commonly used concept in international literature, is new to the majority of the EFL teacher leaders in this study. Although the concept is new in the EFL context, the roles teacher leaders identify in Table 5.2 have similarities characterising the second wave of teacher leadership (Silva et al., 2000) as they are based on the individuals' professional and pedagogical expertise. The three waves of teacher leadership by Silva et al. (2000) is a useful lens to see how teacher leadership appears in the EFL context of this study.

The teacher leadership roles presented in Section 5.1.1 are formal in nature, involving teacher leaders going beyond classroom instructions and contributing to the Institute on a wider scale, that is, developing curriculum, preparing tests and teaching materials, and supervising teachers. Similarly, teacher leaders perform operational duties such as head of the ACU, head of the student affairs and head of the quality assurance units, in which they are mainly responsible for policy implementation. These roles are similar to the first wave of teacher leadership (Silva et al., 2000) which focuses on the administrative and managerial aspects of teacher leadership.

The teacher leadership roles at the ELI share similarities with roles identified in research in US school contexts. For example, middle managers, mentors, curriculum developers and staff developers, which are reported by the teacher leaders at the ELI, are also found in US school contexts (York-Barr & Duke, 2004; Thompson & Wolstencroft, 2015). However, the participants have organisational specific roles too, as head of the research unit, head of the E-learning unit and head of the student affairs unit, which are not found in the international literature on teacher leadership roles. In addition, all these roles are formal and there is no concept of informal leadership roles at the ELI, which makes this

context different from the US and UK schools where teachers often have informal leadership roles (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009)

The list of teacher leadership roles (Table 5.2) at the ELI shows that EFL teacher leaders perform a variety of instructional and operational roles. This diversity of roles is also evident in their day-to-day activities (Appendix 1). For example, the head of the PDU or E-learning unit has instructional leadership responsibilities, whereas the head of the ACU performs a more operational role. Hence, the findings of this study contradict the existing literature, as Inman (2007) found that the roles of the academic leaders were similar across organisations. This diversity in the roles can be linked to the difference in objectives and functions of the units that co-exist and play a different but vital role in the integration of the ELI. In contrast, the research by Inman (2007) focused on academic leaders, mainly heads of departments in UK universities with the same designations and job descriptions, whereas the current study has considered only unit heads in a language institute who have a range of roles based on their expertise in a particular area.

The teacher leaders' perceptions of their roles determine the nature of teacher leadership in this Saudi EFL context and are similar to the existing literature on this topic. Danielson (2007) and Katzenmeyer and Moller (2009) assert that teacher leaders lead within and beyond the classroom, identify with and contribute to a community of teacher learners and leaders, and influence others towards improved educational practices. In the same way, the participants teach EFL classes and simultaneously perform their leadership roles in the hierarchy of the institute to achieve organisational objectives. The definition by York-Barr and Duke (2004) also shows similar characteristics but, according to them, the whole exercise is to enhance student outcomes, whereas the current study does not indicate whether the teacher leaders' aim was to improve learner performance. Thus, more research in this direction may help to demonstrate the impact of teacher leadership practices on EFL learning and teaching practices.

It can be concluded that, despite it being a novel concept in the Saudi EFL context, 'teacher leadership' exists at the ELI, as evident in the formal roles performed by the EFL teacher leaders. It is interesting to note that a number of roles commonly found in the UK and US school contexts share similarities with the EFL teacher leaders' roles at the ELI.

6.1.2. The repertoire of teacher leadership knowledge and skills

The findings of this study show the kinds of knowledge and skills that teacher leaders deem important for their roles. Table 5.4 summarised the types of leadership knowledge and Table 5.5 the key leadership skills that facilitate EFL teacher leaders at the ELI.

The findings in Section 5.1.2 resonate with literature on the five focal points of knowledge suggested by Lovett et al. (2015). The types of leadership knowledge summarised in Table 5.4 support the first focal point: *pedagogy – leaders learning about teaching and learning.* This is evident in their professional status as classroom teachers and their possession of knowledge of TESOL practices. Although not all the participants advocate the importance of pedagogical skills for teacher leadership, they all have refined classroom teaching skills that facilitate the instructional aspects of their leadership roles. Despite the operational nature of some of the teacher leaders' duties, such as academic coordination, the knowledge of teaching and learning has given them confidence and a sense of agency. Their experience, knowledge and skills have earned them credibility among their colleagues to influence institutional culture, norms, beliefs, and disbeliefs, but only at the level of their groups or units. As the significance of pedagogical skills or knowledge of teaching practices for teacher leadership roles is well established in the literature (e.g. Snell & Swanson, 2000; Odell, 1997; York-Barr & Duke, 2004; Stephenson et al., 2012), this concurs with the participants' responses in Section 5.1.2 which show that pedagogical skills play a key role in gaining recognition and credibility as teacher leaders at the ELI. These findings are also consistent with Chapman's (2008) conclusion that colleagues willingly follow competent teacher leaders. However, outside their units or groups, the

participants experience difficult situations and find it hard to earn teachers' trust, mainly due to the top-down policies at the ELI. Thus, pedagogical knowledge alone may not assist teacher leaders with developing collegial relationships with teachers and they may need to develop people skills.

As the second focal point of the heuristic tool, '*knowledge about the people'* (Lovett et al., 2015) was also highlighted by the teacher leaders in this study. Skills such as identifying talent, delegating work, supporting team members, mobilising colleagues and developing working relationships within and beyond the group are key leadership abilities that facilitate teacher leadership roles at the ELI. Similar findings were reported by Levenson (2014), Inman (2007) and Knight and Trowler (2001), who rated knowledge about people a key skill in individuals' leadership development. In the context of this study, knowing about people becomes crucial when teacher leaders interact with teachers from 27 different countries and cultures.

The data have poignantly pointed out the significance of '*contextual knowledge'*, the third focal point of the heuristic tool. Lovett et al. (2015), Backor and Gordon (2015), Siegmyer (2012) and Inman (2007) consider this kind of knowledge important for effective leadership. As the participants have substantial experience of the current context, they appear to be well informed about the internal policies of the Institute. Moreover, their past experiences and collaborative learning at the ELI have given them awareness of the cultural diversity and institutional norms which have facilitated their leadership roles. As context-specific PD courses are largely scant or ineffective, EFL teacher leaders acquire contextual knowledge in informal ways such as collegiality and collaboration. However, no formal PLCs exist at the ELI and collaboration is mainly unstructured. One common way of learning and acquiring contextual knowledge is of course seeking senior colleagues' guidance at different points, as suggested by Knight and Trowler (2001), which is found among the participants in this research. Lovett et al. (2015) discusses various

other components of contextual knowledge, such as knowledge of international issues and their possible impact on practice, and how to undertake a cultural audit. However, in the Saudi EFL context, knowledge of these issues is not valued by the teacher leaders for their roles.

The fourth focal point of the heuristic tool is '*knowledge about educational systems, theories and practices*', which has helped the EFL teacher leaders with their roles. They seem to have knowledge about curriculum implementation, educational research, mandated policy and programme procedures that are important aspects of teacher leadership. Studies have indicated the significance of knowledge about the educational system (e.g. Le Fevre & Robinson, 2014; Lovett et al., 2015; Inman, 2007). In the same way, the findings show a relevant importance of the teacher leaders' understanding of educational environment, practices and system at the ELI. The understanding of TESOL practices and educational system has enabled teacher leaders to deal with various matters such as teachers' professional development, curriculum development and teacher evaluation.

The teacher leaders display an awareness of their own developmental needs for their leadership roles. The fifth focal point by Lovett et al. (2015) talks about '*self-learning about "me" the leader*' as a key to effective leadership development. Similar to what they suggested, the teacher leaders in this study adopt reflective and collaborative strategies which help them develop their understanding of their professional roles and positions at the ELI. Moreover, self-awareness allows them to be empathetic towards teachers and they aim to reduce the impact of the top-down management system by giving respect to fellow teachers before demanding their compliance. It can be tentatively concluded that 'self-learning about "me" the leader' is important for the development of the EFL teacher leaders especially when they lack prior leadership knowledge, experience or qualification.

The findings also reveal some differences to what Robinson et al. (2008) and Inman's (2007) studies found. Contrary to their findings, the majority of the participants do not consider conceptual knowledge (knowledge of leadership and management concepts and research) important for their teacher leadership roles at the ELI. As four teacher leaders have post-graduate level leadership qualifications, it could be assumed that they have awareness of conceptual knowledge; however, for most of them the five focal points by Lovett et al. (2015) are more important than the conceptual knowledge. Similarly, the findings show the relative importance of process knowledge for EFL teacher leadership. However, due to the generic, non-context specific and inadequate courses offered at the ELI, the teacher leaders often lack such knowledge in the EFL context. As a result, they rely on their tacit and situational knowledge that is gained on the job through experiential learning.

For EFL teacher leadership, certain leadership skills discussed in Section 5.1.2 are considered as important as the leadership knowledge, for example, communication skills, interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, and cultural consciousness skills. Authors such as Backor and Gordon (2015), Stephenson et al. (2012) and Al-Swailem and Elliott (2013) also emphasise the importance of these skills for academic leaders in their roles, which shows the relevance of these skills for academic leaders in mainstream education as well as teacher leaders in the EFL contexts.

The wide array of skills listed in Table 5.5 suggest that EFL teacher leaders can have general as well as role-specific leadership skills. For instance, the head of the research unit should have credibility as a teacher as well as a researcher and he should have improved research skills besides general leadership skills. This shows that the ELI based teacher leadership requires teacher leaders to have a combination of skills in order to work effectively in their respective domains. Apart from the leadership skills, Table 5.6 suggests that while functioning in the middle-level leadership roles EFL teacher leaders

should exhibit various personality attributes. The personality traits emphasised by the participants are similar to what Angelle and Beaumont (2008) deem important for leadership roles. For instance, they are enthusiastic, self-confident, creative, efficient, empathetic and supportive. Moreover, they share their expertise and knowledge with others, actively listen to colleagues and value their opinions, work collaboratively to develop a vision and plan to realise that vision, give and gain trust and respect, and have clear educational values and philosophies.

6.2. The influence of dichotomous leadership models on teacher leadership

The findings discussed in this section are directly related to the first research question that explains how teacher leadership appears at the ELI. As teacher leadership is a novel concept in the Saudi EFL context, this section helps us understand how dominant hierarchical structures at the top and participatory practices in the middle influence teacher leadership practices at the ELI. The participants' perceptions of leadership practices further reveal how they perform their teacher leadership roles and influence others towards improved educational practices, what obstacles they encounter and how they cope with them at the ELI.

6.2.1. A hierarchical leadership model at the ELI

One of the key aims of this study is to understand the notion of '*teacher leadership'* from the participants' perspectives in the EFL context. Their perceptions of leadership practices at the top and middle levels enable us to see how teacher leadership works at the ELI. The findings in Section 5.1.1 show that a typical top-down management model is in place that shapes the leadership practices at the ELI. The organisational structure of the Institute is highly bureaucratic and centralised with top-down policies that often hinder the functioning of teacher leadership. As the notion of teacher leadership is close to distributed leadership models that empower teachers to be part of a decision-making

team and offer leadership opportunities to teachers, it may not occur in less flexible organisations due to bureaucratic structures.

Lack of autonomy, teacher resentment and lack of support for teacher leaders are overarching characteristics of the hierarchical organisation of the ELI that apparently reduce the effectiveness of EFL teacher leadership. Since teacher leaders lack decision-making powers and professional support from the top management, they cannot go beyond their scripted roles; rather, they have to follow a certain set of procedures. This is similarly highlighted by Levenson (2014), who states that teacher leaders are rarely supported in their leadership roles by the top management in places where hierarchical leadership practices dominate. More specific to this context, the findings in Section 5.1.1 are consistent with those of Shah (2014), Alsalahi (2014) and Alkarni (2014), who found teachers' lack of support and autonomy the result of sheer bureaucracy and the highly centralised education system in Saudi educational institutions. Owing to the negative influence of top-down management systems, it can be said that a more flexible leadership model at the top may expand its benefits to EFL teachers and students. Facilitating teachers and teacher leaders to become autonomous practitioners would benefit the institutions and individuals to cope with external and internal challenges and focus on organisational effectiveness.

As accountability and task achievement become the key goals of a centralised system, individuals in leading positions exercise their authority to influence their subordinates and achieve organisational objectives. In the context of this study, accountability measures lead to teachers' anxiety and their apprehension regarding possible repercussions in case of failure to meet the expectations of their superiors. As a result, the teacher leaders find it hard to bridge the gap between the top management and fellow teachers. These findings are in line with Sanocki (2013), Alsalahi (2014) and Tschannen-Moran (2009), who established the negative influence of bureaucratic structures on teacher leadership roles.

Similar to the findings of Harris and Muijs (2003), the findings in Section 5.1.1 suggest that, in order to achieve organisational objectives by influencing others, teacher leaders may report any unprofessional behaviour of the teachers to the top management, which teachers may perceive as a threat to their jobs. This can lead to tenuous relations, resentment from the teachers and difficulty in winning their trust, as many teachers do not like to be instructed or directed (Alsalahi, 2014). Furthermore, the culture of mistrust and bureaucracy hinders collaboration among the units at the ELI, as heads of the units are not answerable to each other, but report to the vice deans.

The findings have revealed various administrative challenges that participants associate with teacher leadership roles at the ELI, as presented in Table 5.3. Administrative workload seems to be a common issue for the teacher leaders, where most of their time is consumed by paperwork, maintaining records and ensuring policy implementation. The range of administrative tasks at the ELI is indicative of increased accountability in Higher Education as excessive administrative responsibilities focus on standardisation, and leave little scope for exercising leadership within the roles (Tschannen-Moran, 2009). Besides lack of autonomy, heavy organisational responsibilities and the factor of increased accountability may discourage EFL teacher leaders from exercising leadership to the best of their abilities, instead sticking to procedures and guidelines.

The hierarchical positions of the teacher leaders in a bureaucratic system also suggest that their powers do not go beyond the implementation of policies and holding of fellow teachers accountable for their failure to accomplish assigned tasks. They are able to influence fellow teachers by deriving authority from their positions in the hierarchy; however, they have barely a semblance of authority (Gabriel, 2005) as their job is to follow the directions of the top management and implement the top-down institutional policies. The hierarchical leadership model and centralised system at the ELI reflect the patriarchal social and power structures of Saudi Arabia as the top leadership positions are

held by Saudi nationals. Since all the participants were non-Saudis and primarily language instructors, it can be said that their job titles and nationalities naturally isolated them from the decision-making stream.

The impact of strong bureaucratic structures at the ELI can be seen in resentment from the teachers that affects teacher leaders' collegial relationships with fellow teachers and makes their leadership jobs more challenging. Similar to Inman's (2007) findings, the teacher leaders' degree of responsibility gave them adequate power to devise their own strategies, influence others and reach organisational objectives; however, they were not empowered to make policy decisions. The findings are similar to those established by Thompson and Wolstencroft (2015) as the teacher leaders, along with instructional duties, have operational roles, responsibility for implementing strategic decisions, and influencing teachers to conform.

Apparently, there is insufficient evidence in the literature that supports the positive influence of hierarchical leadership practices on teacher leadership roles. Nevertheless, it is indeed a rare feature of the ELI that, despite lack of autonomy and support, teacher leaders manage to operate effectively in a technocratic system. On a positive note, the existing power structure has guided the participants by offering them a clear structure, a plan and a strategy that facilitates their leadership roles. Moreover, it has channeled their roles and given them a clear line of action and raised their awareness of cultural and professional complexities at the ELI. This positive influence may appear surprising, but we can say that stern bureaucratic structures sometimes result in guiding employees and achieving organisational objectives. Nevertheless, the professional obligations of the teacher leaders might have influenced their beliefs and prompted them to remain cautious and conscious of any possible consequences of criticising the top management.

6.2.2. Shared leadership practices at the ELI

Despite the top-down leadership model, a number of characteristics of teacher leadership can be found in the ELI context, which coincide with the three waves of teacher leadership by Silva et al. (2000). The most striking aspect of the findings is the distributed leadership approach among teacher leaders in their respective groups, which is the dominant feature of the third wave of teacher leadership.

Although their positions in the hierarchy offer them power to influence others, the teacher leaders prefer collegial relationship with group members and subordinates to achieve organisational objectives. This collaborative approach by the teacher leaders also reflects their professional cognisance of the shared responsibilities that have facilitated their performance. It was mentioned above that bureaucratic structures affect collaboration between the heads of the units, but teacher leaders aim to build trusting relationship with colleagues in their groups to maintain an amicable working environment. This is identical to Inman's (2007) finding that academic leaders do not support the idea of using positional power, but rather emphasise a participatory approach to successful leadership. The plurality of the responses are similar to those in the literature (e.g. Inman, 2007; Knight & Trowler, 2001; Muijs et al., 2013) indicating that EFL teacher leaders are eager to win the confidence of fellow teachers through collaboration and collegiality, and reconstruct a new professional identity. The impact of collaborative practices on EFL teacher leaders' professional learning and development, is further discussed in Section 6.3.1.

In the context of this research, professionally sound teacher leaders have exhibited their ability to neutralise the negative influence of hierarchical leadership on their practices by adopting shared leadership models within their groups. Reliance on one another indicates that, irrespective of social, political, educational and professional backgrounds, a group of individuals can have a shared purpose while working on a project. For instance, the team of academic coordinators have identical job descriptions, hence their mutual

collaboration helps them complete projects in a swift manner. Since all the participants are non-Saudis and 11 out of 12 are non-Arabs, educated in more democratic institutions around the world, one interpretation of this is that they possess a refined sense of professionalism and work ethics, which lead to their distributed leadership practices within the units.

A careful conclusion of the point can be that a top-down management system might have its negative influences on educational institutions, but it can be considered an effective way of management in large institutes such as the ELI where more than 250 EFL teachers work and follow a chain of command that helps different stakeholders to know and execute their assigned roles in a linear way. In addition, participatory leadership practices in the middle-level are feasible in a typical top-down management model which can aid teacher leaders to minimise the negative influence of the top-down polices on their own practices. Although a hierarchical leadership model dominates at the top, it can contribute to EFL teacher leaders' effectiveness in their leadership roles and, to an extent, assist them with successful dispensation of their leadership roles. The roles performed in more flexible organisational structures may offer teacher leaders more autonomy, but the individuals' collaborative efforts in less autonomous workplaces can neutralise the impact of bureaucratic power structures.

6.3. The dynamics of EFL teacher leadership development

As the second research question aims to explore factors that impact EFL teacher leader professional development, the findings indicate six constituents that influence teacher leader development and support teacher leadership at the ELI: a) learning from collegiality, b) the impact of reflectivity and experiential learning, c) learning from leadership roles and context, d) the influence of PD courses, e) the significance of leadership experience and qualification, and f) the role of motivation.

6.3.1. Learning from collegiality

Collegial relationships and collaborative practices are the key features of teacher leadership at the ELI. Although the teacher leaders find it difficult to build collegial relationships with the teaching staff, within their own groups or units they adopt shared and collaborative practices. They are synergistic individuals who value differences, build on strengths and compensate for weaknesses. Their interdependence with subordinates helps them gain their trust and gives them a chance to learn from each other. Studies summarised in Table 3.6 support this idea. For instance, Fairman and Mackenzie (2015) consider collegial relationships, informal collaboration, trust and collegiality as important aspects of teacher leadership development. York-Barr and Duke (2004) point out the effects of collaboration on teacher leaders' professional growth. Similarly, EFL teacher leaders in this study appreciate the practice of collaboration and consider it a reciprocal process, benefiting everyone in their groups. The findings also concur with Collinson's (2012) observation and show that humility and empathy are characteristics of the EFL teacher leaders that allow them to work together and improve themselves irrespective of contextual barriers. In the wake of bureaucratic structures, heavy administrative workload, teacher resentment and accountability measures at the ELI (see Table 5.3), the teacher leaders' reliance on their colleagues becomes a survival tool for them, which leads to building their knowledge of the organisational issues and creating supportive learning conditions within their units. Moreover, the findings in Section 5.2.2 suggest that collegiality as an informal way of learning is the key to the success of EFL teacher leaders at the ELI. As established by Alexandrou et al. (2014), Hunzicker (2013) and Stephenson et al. (2012), teacher leaders at the ELI participate in collaborative and interactive activities within the groups, creating professional learning opportunities for each other.

The impact of collegiality on teacher leaders' professional learning corroborates the findings by Day et al. (2012) who claim that scaffolding and collaboration shape individuals' ZPD and contribute to their learning. The benefit of this process can be

generalised to the current context. As the participants have expertise in specific areas (for instance, some had a TESOL background whereas others had management experience), collaboration might help them learn from one another and compensate for those skills which are not in an individual's range. In the context of this research, EFL teacher leaders with no prior experience manage to learn new leadership skills from more experienced individuals in their groups, consequently building their capacity as leaders.

Collaboration and teamwork as a form of an institutional policy can lead to organisational learning and the emergence of professional learning communities (PLCs), which help individuals to cope with various professional challenges. However, apart from informal collaboration within each unit, the participants do not indicate any form of PLC at the ELI. A plethora of literature supports the idea of PLCs in different school contexts that offer teacher leaders the chance to work together, share expertise, discuss complex professional matters, enhance their organisational learning and improve the standards of instruction (e.g. Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009; McCauley-Smith et al., 2015; Lieberman & Friedrich, 2007). In the case of the current research, EFL teacher leaders work together informally to ensure that professional issues are resolved and organisational objectives are achieved. These findings resonate with Inman's (2007) understanding of academic leaders who are conscious of leading in a collegial manner, as exploiting positional and personal power can hinder their progress.

The absence of PLCs at the ELI can be further investigated to highlight the inherent causes and their impacts on the professionalism of the EFL teachers and teacher leaders. Future research in this direction will also highlight the professional significance of PLCs in EFL contexts and what role they may play in the overall progress of the Institute.

As a collaborative practice, mentoring or coaching is another aspect of professional development that has not been experienced by all the participants in this study. In learning organisations, such activities are useful in helping professionals achieve their

learning goals. However, the findings of this study reveal the disinterested attitude of the top leadership towards the professional needs of the teacher leaders. For example, there is no formal mentoring programme for the teacher leaders at the ELI except for the ACU novices. Only one participant, Natlus (5.2.1), shared his experience of learning as a protégé of his senior colleagues which helped him with his current role as head of the ACU. As studies show the strong impact of mentoring on teacher leader professional learning and development (e.g. Rhodes & Brundrett, 2009; Levenson, 2014; Higgins, 2013; Blackman, 2010; Newsom, 2010), more research in this direction can have significant implications for EFL teacher leader development.

6.3.2. The impact of reflectivity and experiential learning

Collaboration and informal interaction leading to professional development is indicative of experiential learning in which teacher leaders acquire context-specific knowledge, enhance their repertoire of skills and transform their practices. Guthrie and Jones (2012) consider experiential learning and reflection to be critical aspects of leadership development, and the findings of the current research support these claims. The findings of this study reveal that the EFL teacher leaders are experiential learners and reflective practitioners. Their main learning emanates from reflecting on and making sense of their experiences at the ELI, which lead to their self-improvement and professional growth. For Dewey (1933), experience alone may not always be educative and reflection can help in understanding the workplace context and practices as individuals make sense of their experiences, leading to the building of leadership capacity. These experiences can be both positive and negative, but making sense of them is a key to learning. Similarly, findings reported in Section 5.2.2 suggest that Omar and Gray reflect on and make sense of their difficult experiences in other contexts, a practice which has played a crucial role in their development as teacher leaders. This indicates that reflection on previous experiences can lead to action as required and what Norton and Campbell (2007) observe that "reflection in itself does not necessarily lead to action" (p. 142), may not be true about

EFL teacher leaders in the context of this study. Nevertheless, it is not clear what particular actions Omar and Gray referred to and how they might have contributed to their professional learning at the ELI. Future research can further investigate the impact of reflection, how it leads to action and results in teacher leader development.

According to Kolb (1984), learning from experience occurs in a cycle of four phases: a) concrete experience, b) abstract conceptualisation, c) reflective observation, and d) active experimentation. It can be inferred from the accounts of the EFL teacher leaders that they have learned from their experiences and developed their leadership skills in a process similar to Kolb's cycle (Figure 3.1). The findings suggest that concrete experience of past roles in previous employments, reflective observation of their current practices, and application of newly learned skills are the features of EFL teacher leaders' practices. Their ability to apply previously acquired knowledge or skills to the EFL context further improves their leadership skills. However, abstract conceptualising is not explicit in the data; this could be due to the nature of the participants' experiences or a lack of ability and training to conceptualise and give meaning to abstract actions. Future research could explore these factors in more depth.

As found by Alexandrou et al. (2014), it is clear from the participants' responses in Section 5.2.2 that experience of their previous jobs has played an immense role in their professional development. Varied experiences in educational and non-educational contexts give them exposure to the field of management, and reflection on their learning prepares them for their current roles. This appears to be a prime example of experiential learning, which is the key feature of the data. Similar to what Burgoyne and Stuart (1991) found, the findings reported in Section 5.2.2 suggest that the EFL teacher leaders' professional learning is mainly unstructured, unplanned and informal, based on their personal motivation to work in groups, experience new situations, share their expertise and improve their skills. In addition, they have the ability to apply their past learning experiences to the ELI context, assess cultural sensitivities and make meaningful and

careful choices. For example, his previous experience of working in a bureaucratic organisation enabled Gray to anticipate the functioning of the ELI, which helps him with his current leadership role. In a nutshell, experiential learning is one of the major factors that helps teacher leaders in acquiring role-specific skills and building their leadership knowledge at the ELI.

Experiencing a situation and making sense of it involves reflection which leads to improved professional practices. Reflection as a way of learning is a widespread idea that helps teachers and teacher leaders learn and improve their professional practice. The participants' responses in Section 5.2.2 unequivocally suggest that individual and collective reflection aids teacher leaders in their bid to overcome weaknesses, rectify mistakes and develop leadership skills. These findings are very much in line with those of Stephenson et al. (2012) and Inman (2007) who firmly believe that learning to lead is a gradual process that involves reflection as a valuable means to acquiring leadership skills, increasing contextual knowledge and self-awareness of the context-specific challenges, and developing the ability to deal with them. This life-long learning process enables teacher leaders to upgrade their leadership skills and prepare them for the assigned jobs. Findings in Section 5.2.2 also acknowledge the pivotal role of social, cultural and organisational factors that teacher leaders reflect on while carrying out their leadership responsibilities. This tendency of the EFL teacher leaders counter the arguments by Hager and Hodkinson (2011) that reflection-in-action often fails to consider the impact of social, cultural and organisational factors.

Apart from individual reflective practice, collective reflection and discussion sessions contribute to the professional development of PDU and ACU members. Findings presented in Section 5.2.2 show the value of "interpersonal theories of action" and dialogue in reflective practices at a workplace (Schön, 1983, p. 210). The group reflection encourages collaborative thinking to solve professional issues, thus it allows teacher

leaders to listen to their colleagues, understand their perspectives and learn from their experiences. As the aims of collective reflection is to resolve professional matters and come up with solutions which are often achieved, this practice at the ELI negates the claims made by Collin et al. (2013) and Korthagen (2001) who find it difficult to measure and determine the outcomes of reflective practices. Hence, it can be said that reflection as a group is a useful activity for teacher leaders in their effort to have insight into the leadership skills and knowledge that might not be gained through individual reflection.

The participants' accounts suggest they are open-minded, wholehearted and responsible practitioners owing to their reflective practices, as explained by Dewey (1933). They are Schön's (1983) reflective practitioners who reflect on the spot as well as in a structured way individually or in groups to develop their tacit knowledge and improve their repertoire of skills. Moreover, their reflective practices align well with Wallace's (1991) reflective model as they are able to connect their previously learned knowledge and past experiences to the current roles and reflect on their appropriateness in practice. As the EFL teacher leaders find reflection a major source of learning, it contributes to their professional competence. Therefore, it can be concluded that Dewey's (1933) reflective practices, Schön's (1983) reflective practitioner and Wallace's (1991) reflective model are applicable in EFL contexts and can benefit EFL teacher leaders in their professional learning.

6.3.3. Learning from leadership roles and context

The above sections discuss how EFL teacher leaders as experiential learners develop their leadership skills through collegiality and reflectivity in the ELI context. It shows that the ELI context and teacher leadership roles are rich sources of learning for the teacher leaders, which provide them with leadership opportunities and offer them a chance to experience new roles and develop their leadership abilities. The findings suggest that even less experienced teacher leaders or those with no leadership qualifications find their

leadership roles a means to their professional learning and development. They call it on-the-job learning or learning-by-doing that helps them acquire role-related skills and develop knowledge of the immediate context. This concurs with Hunzicker's (2012), Higgins' (2013) and Inman's (2007) findings that leaders develop certain types of knowledge by being in leadership roles. It seems to be true for middle-level leaders in mainstream education as well as teacher leaders in the EFL context that on-the-job learning gives them a hands-on experience of their roles.

Previous studies point out that, while performing roles as lead teachers, peer coaches, mentors, academic coordinators, curriculum coordinators, PD specialists, trainers or school-based educators, teachers make an effort to learn and experiment and thus establish themselves as effective teacher leaders (e.g. Hunzicker, 2012; Leithwood, 2003; Reeves, 2008). The findings presented in Section 5.1.2 also indicate that teacher leaders in the EFL setting perform a wide range of roles in a socially and culturally diverse environment that provides a new experience and a source of leadership learning for them. It is worth mentioning that, despite lacking autonomy and having no say in the decision-making process, EFL teacher leaders by and large, manage to demonstrate the effectiveness of their roles while operating in bureaucratic structures.

The teacher leaders' effective functioning in a bureaucratic system can be linked to their contextual learning which happens when they draw meanings from situations in their context (Krisko, 2001). Knowledge of the context helps them overcome contextual obstacles. The participants' accounts suggest that contextual knowledge is developed while experiencing new situations in the form of leadership tasks or assignments that often require new strategies, planning and skills. The findings are consistent with Rhodes and Brundrett's (2009), Camburn's (2010) and Collinson's (2012) views that teachers in leadership roles improve their leadership and contextual knowledge and that this contributes to their professional development. As most of the participants lack leadership experience in the EFL context, their roles offer them a chance to acquire knowledge of

the immediate context.   The significance of the context highlighted in this study can be linked to Katzenmeyer and Moller's (2009) assertion that context becomes a source of learning and development for teacher leaders in which they learn from PD activities, such as professional workshops or formal courses and informal interactions with their colleagues. Moreover, the support from the top leadership can further aid teacher leaders to enhance their understanding of teacher leadership roles and improve contextual knowledge. However, the findings signify an inadequate level of support for teacher leaders at the ELI, which puts an extra burden on them in attempting to perform their duties. The participants believe that an organisational culture that supported teacher leadership and offered leadership learning opportunities could contribute to the professional excellence of the EFL teacher leaders. In line with these findings, a number of researchers have pointed out the significance of contextual support for leadership development (e.g. Day et al., 2012; Demir, 2015; Levenson, 2014; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009; Anderson, 2008).

6.3.4. The influence of Professional Development courses

In learning organisations, continuous professional development is seen as essential as individuals often need to cope with complex organisational challenges. For teacher leaders, professional development becomes indispensable as they deal with academic and administrative issues within and beyond the classroom premises. As discussed in the above sections, the current context is rich in informal learning opportunities; however, they need to be supported and complemented by formal PD activities to ensure sustainable professional growth of teacher leaders in a more structured and organised manner.

For EFL teacher leadership, pedagogical knowledge of TESOL classrooms has its importance; however, leadership knowledge that can be substantiated through formal (PD courses) and informal (collegiality) professional initiatives is also seen as essential by

the participants. As a key to successful leadership practices, EFL teacher leaders seem to have benefited from the leadership knowledge they acquired through formal training and courses in other contexts and informal learning at the ELI. The combination of their previous training and current experiential learning leads to their development as EFL teacher leaders.

Leadership courses or formal PD activities are significant factors in developing leadership knowledge, especially if they are context-specific and address the professional learning needs of teacher leaders. Mertkan (2011) suggests that teacher leaders should have a chance to experience context-specific professional development activities, so they can learn more about their workplace and its related challenges. However, the participants criticised the existing PD courses as being ineffective, too generic, irrelevant and not context-specific which only help them learn the basics of management and do not teach them teacher leadership skills. The findings reported in Section 5.2.1 are consistent with those of Mertkan (2011) who reveals a widespread dissatisfaction among the head teachers with existing provision of professional development and preparation programmes in the context of North Cyprus. This appears to be true about the EFL teacher leaders too, as they believe that more context relevant courses can raise their cultural awareness and contribute to their leadership learning at the ELI. Ideally, such courses should be given by trainers who possess knowledge of the place and people; however, at the ELI trainers and ideas are often imported from the UK or US, which raises questions about their appropriateness. This is exactly what Inman (2007) found, that formal methods of development are seen as patronising and incompatible with the interests and values of leaders. The ineffectiveness and inappropriateness of PD courses might be due to the lack of TESOL background among the top leadership, which often ignores the professional needs of the teacher leaders. As a result, the prevailing sense of dissatisfaction with the existing PD opportunities leads to the demotivation of teacher leaders. Therefore, top leadership should give more thoughtful consideration to the

courses offered at the ELI to provide effective PD support to the teacher leaders. Moreover, teacher leaders should have voice in decisions about the available PD opportunities at the ELI, so the training workshops and courses can be designed accordingly.

The available courses are inadequate and ineffective; thus there is a demand for more relevant courses on a regular basis to guarantee the teacher leaders' sustainable professional development at the ELI. Since the PD courses the EFL teacher leaders had attended in other contexts had influenced their professional learning, attitudes and beliefs, they believed that they should also have such courses or programmes at the ELI.

The demand for more courses reflects the participants' positive attitude towards their roles and commitment to their professional learning (Rhodes & Brundrett, 2009). As most of the participants are non-Arabs and consider the knowledge of the context important, their preference is to attend courses which can directly meet their PD needs. Although, 'learning by doing' or experiential learning in an informal manner is their preferred way of developing their leadership, context-specific courses can further enrich their 'repertoire' of leadership skills and knowledge.

The importance of PD activities for teacher leaders to learn skills that are needed for their leadership roles has been pointed out by a number of researchers (e.g. Yendol-Hoppey & Dana, 2010; Muijs et al., 2013; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). It is ironic that top management in the ELI has strict accountability measures in place, but no consistent PD programmes for the teacher leaders to prepare them for their jobs. Bearing in mind the significance of PD programmes, context-specific courses, seminars, workshops and programmes can improve teacher leadership skills and enhance institutional outcomes. Thus, it is important to investigate why adequate PD activities are not ensured at the ELI. Moreover, it is essential to specifically explore the relevance and effectiveness of the few PD courses

offered at the ELI to understand how they impact teacher leaders' attitude, behaviour and knowledge.

6.3.5. The significance of leadership experience and qualification

In terms of making sense of their past experience, the findings reveal the importance of any kind of management experience or knowledge for effective teacher leadership roles. Since the core leadership skills remain similar, such as people skills, communication skills, interpersonal skills and organisational skills, EFL teacher leaders can utilise them in any kind of role. Nevertheless, educational management experience can be an advantage, as educational organisations have very similar structures and systems. It is, however, interesting to note that participants' management experience from professions such as engineering, IT and hotel management has relevance to their EFL leadership roles and teacher leaders have benefited from them. This implies that the basics of management can be generalised and applied to other social, political and educational contexts. In Section 5.2.2, participants express their utmost desire to have some kind of management experience in order to perform teacher leadership roles. However, there is a serious dearth of research that shows the significance of management experience or qualification for teacher leadership roles.

While previous experience is deemed crucial, leadership courses are also reported to have a lasting impact on the effectiveness of EFL teacher leaders, as those with prior leadership qualifications feel more prepared for their current roles. The findings in Section 5.1.2 reveal that knowledge of leadership theories and practices equip teacher leaders with necessary leadership skills and give them assurance about their functioning at the ELI. Hence, we can say that the combination of both prior experience and qualification can be an added benefit in the EFL context. However, the data show a convergence of ideas as participants with no leadership qualifications consider experience more important than qualifications and vice versa. The leadership experience and exposure of teacher leaders

might influence their understanding of leadership practices, but experience alone may not add to their effectiveness in their roles.

Similar to the findings by Muijs et al. (2013), some of the participants in this study have had no prior management experience or leadership qualification and thus feel less prepared for the leadership roles at the ELI. For example, Natlus and Moh had no leadership training or experience before assuming their leadership positions at the ELI, due to which they faced challenges at the beginning. This concurs with views (e.g. Muijs et al., 2013; Collinson, 2012; Anderson, 2008; Grimsæth et al., 2008) that novice teachers often lack knowledge of the school system and organisational structures and thus require training to enhance their leadership skills. Therefore, it is suggested that teacher leaders either avail themselves of formal PD courses or benefit from collaborative practices in their school contexts.

6.3.6. The role of motivation

Motivation is considered a key to the success of professionals in any field. The participants in this study show their urge for learning about their roles, acquiring leadership knowledge, and improving their skills in order to be effective as EFL teacher leaders. This resonates with Hunzicker's (2011a) claims that ongoing pursuit of professional growth is a key prerequisite of leadership success. As Rhodes and Brundrett (2009), Rogers (2005) and Bowman (2004) have found, teachers in leadership roles should avail themselves of every opportunity to develop professionally through their experiences in professional contexts. Similarly, teacher leaders at the ELI are conscious of their professional learning needs and have intrinsic motivation for creating learning opportunities and raising their cognisance of teacher leadership roles.

The participants express their interest in reading and learning about leadership theories and practices to improve their professional knowledge and skills. This also negates the idea of 'born leaders' which may be true in a political context but, in educational

organisations, knowledge of the context and system are important components of leadership that need to be developed over time. Therefore, similar to Inman's (2007) participants, the teacher leaders have shown their deep interest and motivation to produce the best results of which they are capable.

As the participants are open to learning and keen on trying new things in order to enhance their roles, their commitment to professional development and constant pursuit of professional growth are in complete accordance with the literature (e.g. Danielson, 2007; Rhodes & Brundrett, 2009; Hunzicker, 2013). The similarity is interesting despite the difference of context, teacher leadership roles, organisational structure and leadership model at the top. However, the pressure of performance management and accountability cannot be ruled out which might have pushed the participants to develop such qualities and meet the requirements of the roles. Similarly, Margolis and Deuel (2009) have found teacher leaders motivated both intrinsically and extrinsically due to their moral imperatives, monetary rewards and professional and personal concerns. However, the findings suggest that participants have no extra monetary compensation at the ELI; rather they are motivated by their professional obligations.

6.4. Summary

This chapter has discussed the key findings of this case study in relation to the existing literature. Undoubtedly, the context seems to pose certain challenges to EFL teacher leadership through its bureaucratic structures, but it also has positively influenced the teacher leaders' roles. Despite the lack of adequate professional support at the ELI, teacher leaders seem to have developed key leadership skills that facilitate them in their current roles. They seem aware of their hierarchical position and its influence on their agency; however, it did not help them to establish themselves as EFL teacher leaders at the ELI. Conversely, it is their astute awareness of their role, its related challenges, intrinsic motivation, collaborative efforts, and knowledge of the context that have

transformed them into effective teacher leaders in the EFL context. Moreover, professional collaboration and strong collegial relationships among their team members show their realisation that leadership should be distributed and not controlled by certain individuals. Collegiality as a hallmark of teacher leadership at the ELI allows teacher leaders to learn from each other in an informal manner, which is also indicative of experiential learning. Despite the fact that the findings do not explicitly bring up the role of experiential learning, the teacher leaders' teamwork, reflective practices, on-the-job learning and making sense of difficult experiences are factors that have enriched their experience of leadership learning and development. In summary, this study shows that the construction of 'one's knowledge' is a combination of experience, practice, coaching, reflection and conversation (Inman, 2007). These various factors have enabled teacher leaders to build on their existing leadership knowledge, learn from their past experiences through reflection and enhance their professional competence in the EFL context.

The concept of teacher leadership has not been used by the teacher leaders in the context of this study, but various features of teacher leadership are conspicuous in teacher leadership roles at the ELI. For example, EFL teachers teach and lead simultaneously, influence their colleagues to achieve organisational objectives and help each other to learn and improve their leadership skills (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). In addition, the three waves of teacher leadership described by Silva et al. (2000) and discussed in Section 3.1 help us to see the different facets of teacher leadership at the ELI. Interestingly, all three waves are evident in the teacher leaders' roles in the ELI. The top-down management policies limit teacher leaders' roles to the first wave of teacher leadership with inadequate power and more managerial and operational responsibilities, and policy implementation. The wide range of roles, based on the teacher leaders' professional expertise and pedagogical skills, reflects the second wave of teacher leadership at the ELI. Finally, collaborative efforts and teamwork among the group members to achieve organisational objectives are the features of the third wave of

teacher leadership. The combination of three teacher leadership waves plays a key role in organisational cohesiveness which makes this context a unique case in the field of TESOL.

Chapter 7. Conclusion

This chapter summarises the major findings of the case study and explains their implications for teacher leaders, trainers and top leadership at the ELI. It also identifies the contribution of this study to the body of knowledge. The last section describes the limitations of the study and suggests further research on the topic.

7.1. Summary of the key findings

This case study was conducted in the English Language Institute of a Saudi Arabian university. The main objectives of the study were to understand how EFL teacher leaders perceived teacher leadership in the Saudi EFL context, what kinds of knowledge and skills they deemed important for teacher leader roles and which factors impacted EFL teacher leaders' learning and development at the ELI. Based on the objectives and theoretical framework of the study, a qualitative approach was adopted to elicit the participants' responses through semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaires. The analysis of the qualitative data revealed key findings which answered the two research questions.

The overriding finding of this case study research is that EFL teacher leaders developed their leadership skills and knowledge mainly through experiential learning throughout their professional careers and specifically at the ELI. Prior to the current teacher leadership roles at the ELI, they had some experience of management, either in educational or non-educational organisations, which proved to be immensely helpful in their bid to function as EFL teacher leaders. Besides previous job experience, a certain level of leadership qualifications also helped them raise their awareness of leadership practices. Although five participants had no leadership experience or qualifications whatsoever, they were able to establish themselves as effective teacher leaders at the ELI. Despite the crucial role of leadership experience, the significance of relevant

qualifications and training is highlighted and the findings suggest that a combination of the two can optimise their professional decisions.

Experiential learning, along with various other factors, contributed to the professional development of EFL teacher leaders at the ELI. As keen learners, they reflected on their leadership practices, both individually and collectively as a group, and this helped them assess their strengths and weaknesses, consequently leading to improved practices. Reflectivity stemmed from the tasks assigned to the group members in a unit who relied on teamwork and collaboration to produce the expected outcomes. Collective efforts were also indicative of the teacher leaders' motivation to improve their practices and achieve organisational objectives. This can be accounted as the third wave of teacher leadership (Silva et al., 2000), which includes collaboration among the teacher leaders as a way of enhancing educational practices. This collectivism was also due to the teacher leaders' awareness of the inherited professional challenges of the bureaucratic structures of the ELI, which compelled them to work together and cope with them professionally. Moreover, it showed their desire to learn about themselves and their leadership roles in order to become more effective.

Collegiality is an overarching theme in the data; it enabled teacher leaders to acquire various types of leadership knowledge and skills that were required for their current roles. It was both the outcome of formal learning, in the form of leadership courses in other contexts, as well as the result of informal experiential learning at the ELI that developed teacher leaders' knowledge and skills. Whilst ELI based PD activities were deemed largely ineffective and non-context-specific, therefore failing to address the professional development needs of the EFL teacher leaders, group-based interdependency, collegial relationships and intrinsic motivation to read and learn about leadership practices were the key sources of gaining leadership knowledge. In addition, teacher leadership roles further created learning opportunities for teacher leaders. Availing themselves of

leadership opportunities helped them develop their tacit and conceptual knowledge of teacher leadership by being in the role. This is a characteristic of experiential learning or knowledge gained 'on the job'.

This study explored teacher leaders' perceptions of the nature of EFL teacher leadership at the ELI. The findings established that a deep-rooted top-down management model led to a bureaucracy that impacted teacher leadership practices. As a result, teacher leaders faced resentment from teachers while implementing institutional policies. The bureaucratic form of leadership practice at the top level aimed to achieve organisational objectives through a managerialism that compromised teacher leaders' autonomy, professional support and their right to have their say in professional matters at the ELI. Consequently, teacher leaders found it hard to bridge the gap between top management and fellow teachers.

The teacher leadership roles also give an idea of the nature of teacher leadership at the ELI. The assigned roles of teacher leaders show many similarities to the literature. The two kinds of teacher leadership roles, instructional and operational or (institutional) were mostly based on the teacher leaders' pedagogical expertise and credibility as ELT professionals, thus largely falling into the second wave of teacher leadership (Silva et al., 2000). In these roles teacher leaders led within and beyond the classroom, identified with and contributed to a community of teacher leaders, and influenced others towards improved educational practices, particularly within their respective groups. While heavy administrative workload and stern accountability measures restricted teacher leaders to more managerial roles, their teacher leadership roles allowed them to work collaboratively within their own units. However, despite the restrictions inherent in a system with a hierarchical leadership model, it has the effect of positively influencing the teacher leaders' efficacy, which helped them with their planning and implementation of institutional policies.

The various kinds of leadership knowledge that this study found crucial for teacher leadership roles at the ELI were similar to those suggested by Lovett et al. (2015) and Inman (2007). The participants' accounts show that *pedagogy – leaders learning about teaching and learning* was one of the key reasons for their credibility among teachers since most of them had knowledge of TESOL pedagogies, which they considered important for instructional leadership roles. This kind of knowledge was mainly attained through formal courses prior to the current leadership roles as all of them came into the EFL field after acquiring some kind of English language teaching qualification.

Similarly, *knowledge about the people and context* are the types of knowledge that assisted the teacher leaders' roles at the ELI. Their acute awareness of the culture, people and the context led to their effectiveness. Presumably, this kind of knowledge was gained through informal and collegial interactions within the groups of teacher leaders at the ELI. As learning about the education system was underscored by Inman (2007) in higher education institutions, similarly, knowledge of the people and context can be expanded to other educational systems in which teacher leaders operate in middle-level leadership roles.

There is an emphasis on improved pedagogical skills for teacher leaders; however, those with operational duties such as academic coordinators did not consider teaching skills important for their jobs. The findings also highlight the importance of role-related skills and basic leadership skills for the teacher leadership roles at the ELI.

7.2. Implications of the research findings

The interpretive perspective of this research allowed for a detailed explanation of how the EFL teacher leaders' learning and development occurred at the ELI. It also shows factors that impacted the professional knowledge and skills of the teacher leaders in the context of the ELI. The accounts of the teacher leaders present a comprehensive picture

of the leadership model at the ELI, how it influenced teacher leadership practices and what skills teacher leaders needed to have in order to suit the contextual demands. Based on the participants' perspectives, the following suggestions are put forward.

7.2.1. For teacher leaders

As leadership learning and development is a gradual process, teacher leaders developed leadership knowledge and skills gradually in formal and informal ways. Whilst the role of formal training in the form of professional development courses has been acknowledged in this research, the primary source of development for teacher leaders was experiential learning both at the ELI and in other contexts. This required the teacher leaders to reflect on their experiences and relate them to their current leadership roles in order to overcome the challenges that might hinder their progress. Reflection involved individual effort, their high level of intrinsic motivation and interest in their leadership roles, which led to collegiality and collaboration. These informal activities compensate for the lack of formal professional training at the ELI. Research literature emphasises the role of PLCs and mentoring for teacher leaders, but the existence of these activities at a more formal level has not surfaced in the data. It is suggested, then, that ELI based PLCs and mentorship can enrich teacher leaders' experiential learning and facilitate their professional development.

The lack of context-specific professional training impacts sustainable professional development of teacher leaders at the ELI. The findings suggest that teacher leaders should seek high level interactions with their group members in order to improve their contextual and professional knowledge. Consulting senior colleagues and discussing issues in a collegial environment raise awareness of social, contextual and professional matters. As contextual knowledge is one of the key factors for effective teacher leadership, EFL teacher leaders from non-Arab contexts can acquire it through teamwork within the groups.

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The findings also suggest that prospective teacher leaders should have a strong professional identity as classroom teachers. While some teacher leaders' roles may not require them to apply their pedagogical skills, their identity as classroom teachers might give them credibility among their colleagues and fellow teachers. A combination of management and leadership skills were suggested that could make the teacher leadership roles more effective. As teacher leaders play an active role to communicate with the top leadership and teachers, they should have effective interpersonal and communication skills to successfully play the role of intercessors.

7.2.2. For trainers of teacher leaders

Professional development is an ongoing process and those responsible for conducting professional development courses, workshops and seminars are mostly held accountable for the trainees' failure. The trainers must understand the teacher leaders' learning needs by considering needs analysis surveys prior to the courses, which can help them tailor the material accordingly. These PD activities should target the capacity building of teacher leaders, rather than exposing them to generic management theories. As leadership is considered a context-specific phenomenon, the local context, socio-cultural values and political norms should be taken into consideration by the trainers while preparing training material. As novice and experienced teacher leaders often have different professional and academic backgrounds, their needs also vary. The trainers' continuous engagement with the context and with the trainees can help them assess the effectiveness of their PD courses and other formal activities. As a result, they will be in a better position to address the professional development needs and challenges of the teacher leaders. Besides formal PD courses, trainers should encourage reflective activities in the form of reading, writing, and group discussion.

7.2.3. For top leadership

Teacher leaders' collaborative efforts had a positive effect on their professional learning and development, but they also needed to engage in a more formal process of development that could help them with their current role. It should be one of the priorities of top management to ensure that teacher leaders in the middle-level leadership roles have knowledge of the field in order to ensure their contribution to the overall outcome of the Institute. Moreover, facilitation and professional support from the top management may lead to more autonomous practices and add value to the work of teacher leaders at the ELI. Despite rigid bureaucratic practices at the ELI, EFL teacher leaders managed to develop a shared form of leadership within their groups, which indicates a space for participatory leadership at the top level too. Thus, top leadership can be a bit more flexible by allowing teacher leaders to have their say in the policy making process. They should recognise that the people in the organization are its source of greatest value and the key to its effectiveness. They should create an environment of trust and acknowledge that trust is the foundation of effective relationships and therefore of effective institutions.

To consider teacher leadership as an integral part of the ELI, top leadership should provide EFL teacher leaders with the opportunity to engage in learning experiences and transform the Institute into a learning organisation. It should also create an environment of collegiality and collaboration among the teachers and teacher leaders. Finally, top leadership should support teacher leaders by incorporating the process of change into the professional development programmes at the ELI.

7.3. Contribution to knowledge

This case study provides an important contribution to the body of knowledge on the issue of teacher leadership development in TESOL. The findings of the qualitative case study

presented within a detailed description of the context, offer important insights that are applicable to a broad range of contexts that share similar systems of management and leadership. The valuable experiences of these EFL teacher leaders can be considered as guidelines for ESL/EFL professionals in other contexts and especially in the Saudi EFL context to develop leadership skills and knowledge. The findings of this research can be applied in the following ways:

1. To the Academic Leadership Centre (ALC) in the Saudi higher education ministry which mainly trains top tier educational leaders and ignores the teacher leadership. The findings of this study broadens the scope and significance of teacher leadership in the EFL context. The teacher leaders' experience, knowledge and influences can give directions to the ALC to widen its range of training and support for teacher leadership in Saudi higher education institutes.

2. To give guidelines to aspiring and novice teacher leaders so they can learn about organisational constraints and leadership practices (top and middle-levels) and their impact on teacher leadership roles to promote their understanding of how to best tackle challenges with confidence and improve practice. This would also give them a deeper understanding of their leadership roles in the EFL context.

3. To assist course designers, trainers or educators who are responsible for the professional development of teacher leaders to consider contextual realities and teacher leaders' PD needs and incorporate them into the professional development programmes.

7.4. Limitations of the study

As the current research investigated learning and development of EFL teacher leaders in the ELI context, the case study methodology was preferred. A different methodology such as narrative research with a life history approach could have been used to understand the learning curves that occurred in the individuals' different phases of life and to gain more

insight into the process of developing teacher leadership skills and experience. However, this study was context-bound, aiming to understand the factors that helped EFL teacher leaders to develop their leadership skills at the ELI, and a case study approach was deemed most appropriate for the current research. Nevertheless, a more comprehensive study in other EFL/ESL contexts would draw up teacher leaders' diverse experiences in TESOL which may be very different from the current findings.

One of the key inherited merits of a case study methodology is that it captures lived reality and presents rich description of the context. However, it is only possible when it is applied successfully using multi methods and tools. Since educational institutions are complex places, capturing lived reality while using one or two data collection tools might not be an easy task. As this case study has utilised semi-structured interviews and an open-ended questionnaire, it can be assumed that the full potential of a case study design was not exploited and a range of qualitative methods could have given more depth and richness to the data. Therefore, future research can consider the application of multi-methods case study design to explore teacher leadership development in similar contexts as the ELI, which may improve rigour in the data and reduce researcher's subjectivity.

7.5. Implications for future research

As little is known about teacher leadership in ESL/EFL education, particularly in the Middle East and Saudi context, it would be appropriate for future research to further explore this area by employing an inductive approach with a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. The triangulated data can give a rounded view of how EFL/ESL teacher leaders learn leadership skills.

A longitudinal study through self-reports can further track the different stages of teacher leadership learning in more depth and offer insights into how teacher leaders in different phases of their professional careers learn and develop a new leadership identity.

The study pointed out the inappropriateness of the existing professional development programmes at the ELI; hence future research could investigate the relevance, effectiveness and contribution to teacher leader development of these courses.

The data were collected only from male teacher leaders at the ELI as access to the female campus was impossible due to cultural barriers. It is possible that a similar study on women teacher leaders, or their inclusion in a study, would yield different findings and this is certainly research that should take place in the future.

The teacher leadership roles in this study reflect the individuals' expertise in a specific area as well as their improved pedagogical skills, therefore it can be assumed that their leadership practices would aim to enrich the learning experiences of EFL learners in the ELI context. Enhancing students' learning is one of the key goals of teacher leadership; however, the findings do not explicitly bring about the positive influence of teacher leadership roles on EFL learners' outcomes, which can be a researcher's future endeavour. Moreover, this study has not included the views of EFL learners in the operation of teacher leadership roles at the ELI, thus, future research should look into teacher leader development from the learners' perspectives to develop an understanding of how teacher leadership influences their language learning outcomes or what kinds of teacher leadership practices may contribute to the EFL learners' achievement. As teacher leadership mainly aims to influence instructional practices and contribute to the learners' learning outcomes, it is important to see whether teacher leadership practices in the hierarchical structure of the ELI positively or negatively influence EFL learners' performances and the skills and knowledge teacher leaders develop overtime have any benefit to the students. In addition, taking students' views into consideration may help with appointing EFL teachers for leadership roles which could result in the effectiveness of organisations, pedagogical practices and assessment methods.

In the same way, EFL teachers should be given an opportunity to share their perceptions of teacher leadership practices at the ELI. Such research can explore factors that lead to teacher motivation or de-motivation to opt for EFL teacher leadership roles at the ELI. Moreover, EFL teachers should be investigated to identify their views about effective teacher leadership practices and their impact on instructional practices at the ELI. The findings may help the top management to adapt and improve the selection criteria of EFL teachers for leadership positions.

Future research should also consider the impact and outcomes of reflective practice on EFL teacher leaders' professional development in higher education. As this study provides a snapshot of their reflective practice as one of the factors to overcome their weaknesses and enhance their practice; however, it is not clear that what different approaches, strategies and methods can be seen effective as a reflective practice. For instance, how research based and action learning inquiry approaches may contribute to the practitioners' commitment to their continuing professional development and evaluation of leadership practices in an EFL context.

Last, but not the least, the leadership practices at the top, the attitude of top leadership towards middle-level leadership roles and its understanding of teacher leadership practices in TESOL can be an interesting research topic to draw a comprehensive picture of EFL leadership model in a higher education institute of Saudi Arabia.

7.6. Concluding remarks

This thesis constitutes an addition to the empirical research on the notion of teacher leadership in mainstream education as well as in the field of TESOL. Through a two-pronged approach, this qualitative case study has explored teacher leadership, on one side, and understood teacher leadership development on the other. The significant role that EFL teacher leaders play in the operation of the ELI, the contextual challenges they

encounter due to the bureaucratic structures of the organisation, the knowledge and skills they exhibit to accomplish their leadership tasks, and the abilities they demonstrate to learn and enhance their leadership capacities, are the salient characteristics of EFL teacher leaders at the ELI. I hope that this thesis will encourage educational researchers in the field of TESOL to unveil teacher leadership practices and professional learning processes of teacher leaders in other contexts too.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Teacher leaders' day-to-day activities

Head of the Professional Development Unit:

Supervises the teaching process to achieve curriculum goals, objectives, and learning outcomes within the expected time frames.

Conducts teacher observations (formal and informal).

Arranges pre and post observation conferences.

Gives feedback (written and verbal) on teachers' classroom performance.

Organises professional development workshops for teachers.

Delivers professional development workshops.

Trains teacher mentors.

Conducts coaching sessions with faculty members, as and when needed.

Holds regular meetings with teachers to get feedback on the performances of PDU.

Delegates work to PDU members, i.e. classroom observations, arranging PD workshops.

Head of the Curriculum Unit:

Ensures the implementation of curriculum objectives through monitoring of curriculum, texts and pacing schedules.

Provides input to the ELI administration and curriculum committee regarding curriculum effectiveness and issues/areas requiring improvement or investigation.

Monitors curriculum effectiveness through faculty and student interactions.

Develops instructional resource bank for teachers and students.

Prepares supplementary speaking/reading/writing/listening materials for students and teachers.

Monitors faculty members' delivery of curriculum materials.

Prepares digital learning materials.

Develops and maintains teacher resource centre.

Conducts surveys to get students and teachers' feedback on the ELI curriculum.

Communicates with Cambridge team and editors of the students' text book.

Delegates work to team members.

Head of the Testing Unit:

Develops computer based exams, quizzes and tests.

Provides examination support, including development, preparation, administration and examination of students' grades.

Conducts surveys to receive input and feedback on exam validity and fairness.

Ensures tests production, packaging, distribution and administration process; assists in exam correction and grading reviews.

Maintains a record of the students' grades.

Holds regular meetings with team members and delegates tasks.

Delegates work to team members.

Head of the Academic Coordination Unit:
Holds regular meetings with faculty members.
Supports the work of the ACU.
Oversees faculty members' attendance (classroom arrival/departure, office hours, online submission of student attendance, meetings, exams etc.) and adherence to professional ethics.
Provides support to faculty members in services such as assigning office space, classroom services and equipment and scheduling matters in collaboration with senior coordinators.
Maintains a complete record of the assigned faculty members' schedules, attendance, and office hours.
Delegates work to ACU members.
Mentors ACU members.

Head of the Student Support Unit:
Communicates with student representatives, to maintain the overall quality of learning.
Handles student complaints and holds meetings with faculty members and students in cases of grievances.
Creates career counseling opportunities for students.
Advises students on academic issues.
Provides support to students by maintaining regular communication with them to maintain overall quality of learning.
Arranges extra tutorials to learners, as and when needed.

Head of Academic & Educational Development System Unit:
Manages evaluation of faculty members' overall professional performance; evaluation of extra-curricular activities; professionalism; instructor feedback and ad hoc responsive reviews, when deemed necessary. Evaluation of instructional performance inside the classroom through class observation process.
Conducts coaching and development sessions with senior and academic coordinators on matters concerning the implementation of curriculum, instruction, and assessment policies.
Conducts semester evaluation reports of the entire coordination system performance, including four level-based curriculum and assessment reviews.
Assists relevant ELI committees with faculty member interface and liaison.
Delegates work to team members.

Head of the Research Unit:
Conducts empirical research studies and publishes them in peer-reviewed journals.
Holds regular meetings to discuss research projects with fellow researchers.
Assists colleagues with data collection and data analysis procedures.
Takes the lead in design and development and conducts collaborative research projects.
Sets up timelines and deadlines for new research studies.
Gives workshop on research methods and other research related issues.
Delegates work as required to execute surveys, collect and analyse data and publish findings in peer-reviewed academic journals.
(Adapted from the Faculty Handbook)

Appendix 2: Participants' profile

Gray: He is a British citizen. He has been in the field of ELT for 7 years and in Saudi Arabian EFL context for 2 years. At the ELI, he has taught preparatory year EFL students for the first 3 months of his teaching contract. Due to his PhD in Applied Linguistics, he was promoted to the middle-level leadership role during his first year of service at the ELI and assumed the position of Head of Graduate Studies Unit. Before entering the EFL/ESL profession, Gray was a civil engineer in the UK where he remained in management roles for 4 years. In terms of leadership or management courses, he has not attended any programme or workshop in or outside the ELI that could teach him leadership skills. His key source of leadership learning was on the job. Alongside his leadership responsibilities, he also teaches MA TESOL students on the graduate programme at the ELI.

Hamza: He is from Australia and has been working as Head of the Academic and Educational Development System Unit at the ELI for three years. With CELTA and M.Ed as his main teaching qualifications, he has taught English language at the ELI for 5 years. He has been in leadership roles for 5 years; 2 years outside the EFL/ESL domain and 3 years at the ELI. He majored in mechanical engineering and worked as an engineer for 7 years in Australia. He has no leadership or management qualification, but he has attended some leadership workshops or courses at the ELI. Mainly, his learning has been experiential while reflecting on his past management roles outside the EFL/ESL contexts. He teaches EFL to online learners at the ELI, a job that is often considered overtime teaching.

Harrison: He is a British national who has been working as Head of the Research Unit for 3 years. He has 13 years of language teaching experience both in ESL and EFL contexts. He majored in Educational Management and Leadership from a British university. His 2 years of management experience outside the ELI and his theoretical understanding of educational leadership were his two core strengths in the current role. Currently, he is pursuing his EdD in TESOL (p/t) from a university in the UK.

Ibrahim: He is a Canadian national of Pakistani origin who completed his first degree in Pakistan and then moved to Canada in 2001 where he achieved his PhD in Educational Leadership. He has been in the field of education for 25+ years. He has 20 years of management experience outside the ELI, and at the ELI he has been working as Head of the Student Affairs Unit for 3 years. He has attended numerous leadership courses and seminars and has worked in a number of leadership roles mainly in Pakistan and Canada. His immense management experience and highest level of qualification make him a unique participant in this study. Ibrahim has 5 hours weekly teaching alongside his leadership responsibilities.

Ismael: He is Algerian and has been working at the ELI for 8 years. He has performed his role as Head of the Student Support Unit for 7 years at the ELI. Before joining the ELI, he worked as a state agent in the US where he also studied MA in Educational Leadership. He has attended various management and leadership courses offered at the ELI. His leadership qualification

assisted him in his current role. Ismael teaches 3 hours a week as most of his time is devoted to leadership responsibilities.

Khan: He is Pakistani who has been teaching EFL for 17 years in Saudi Arabia. He held a leadership role in his previous EFL/ESL employment. At the ELI, he has been Head of the Testing Unit for the past 7 years. He did his MA in Educational Leadership from a British University. Currently, he is enrolled on PhD in Educational Leadership programme as a part-time student in the UK. His broad experience of language teaching and EFL context alongside his leadership qualifications were key to his sustainable learning and development in the current role. Apart from 3 hours mandatory teaching, Khan often teaches online EFL learners at the ELI as overtime teaching.

Moh: He is British and he has spent most of his childhood in Saudi Arabia due to his parents' professional commitments. He majored in IT and worked as IT specialist in a company for 4 years before getting into EFL teaching. CELTA brought him into the EFL world and enabled him to start working on E-learning projects. Although he had no prior management experience or qualification, he was promoted to the Head of the E-learning Unit, the role which he has been performing for 9 years. His main source of leadership learning has been on the job and experiential. Moh has 3 hours teaching per week besides his leadership responsibilities in the unit.

Natlus: He is Pakistani and has been in the teaching profession for 20 years. He has been working in Saudi Arabia as an EFL teacher for 10 years and as Head of the Academic Coordination Unit for 5 years. He gained an MA in Applied Linguistics from a British university. He had no management experience or leadership qualification prior to the current role. In addition to his management role, he often teaches online students. As he had no management experience or qualification, his main source of learning and development occurred on the current role; however, his extensive teaching experience was helpful to a great extent.

Omar: He is Pakistani and has a master's degree in English literature. He has 22 years of teaching experience in Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. He has been teaching EFL learners in Saudi Arabia for 15 years and at the ELI for 11 years. Omar has been Head of the Quality Assurance Unit for 9 years at the ELI. He has no leadership qualifications, but worked in management roles in Pakistan as well as in a Saudi Arabian EFL college. He attended workshops and courses offered at the ELI, which was his only means of formal learning. He mainly relied on his previous experience and on-the-job learning at the ELI.

Peter: He is American and works as Head of the Professional Development Unit (PDU). He earned his MA TESL from an American university and worked as a language instructor in the US, UAE and Yemen. Peter has never held a leadership position before. Moreover, he had never completed a leadership course prior to his current role. He is an experiential teacher leader who believes in reflection and teamwork.

Rahat: Rahat is British-Pakistani, born and raised in the UK. He works as Head of the External Student Affairs Unit at the ELI and has 3 hours weekly teaching. Although he does not have any

significant management experience, or leadership training or qualification, his teaching qualifications, such as PGCE and CELTA and excellent classroom teaching skills enabled him to take a leadership role at the ELI. He has participated in leadership courses and workshops at the ELI which assisted in his current role.

Sachin: He is Canadian and has been working as Head of the Curriculum Unit for 4 years at the ELI. He majored in curriculum studies and worked in Canada for 6 years. CELTA and other language teaching courses enabled him to make his way to EFL teaching. He was given curriculum related responsibilities soon after joining the ELI. Before switching to the field of education, Sachin achieved MBA in hotel management and worked in the hospitality industry for 4 years in Canada.

Appendix 3: A letter/form of informed consent

Title of Research Project: *Teacher leadership: A case study of teacher leaders' professional development in an EFL institute of a Saudi Arabian university*

You are invited to participate in a research study as part of my doctoral programme at the University of Exeter, UK. The aim of this study is to explore the process through which EFL teachers learn to exercise leadership and develop an identity as teacher leaders. You are chosen as a potential participant for the purpose of this research based on your experience as a teacher leader in your institute. Your participation will be highly appreciated.
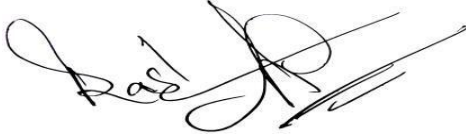
This research has two phases of data collection. If you decide to take part, you will be asked to complete a 50-60 minute interview at a time and location most convenient to you. Your interview will be recorded in a Sony Digital recorder and saved on a password-protected laptop with your pseudonym in order to ensure full anonymity. The interview will be followed by an open-ended questionnaire that will be emailed to you 3 to 4 weeks after your interview. You will be requested to complete it and send it back within two weeks. The completed questionnaire will be saved on my laptop with your pseudonym and no information will be shared with anyone without your permission. At the completion of the study the recorded interview files will be erased. To further ensure confidentiality and minimise the risk, no names will be mentioned during the interviews, and any details or facts that might point to you will not appear when the results of the study are published.

The findings of this research may help aspiring teacher leaders to learn from your experiences and model your way of learning and developing leadership skills in an EFL context. The information gathered from this study will assist the higher management to understand the professional development needs of the teacher leaders. In addition, the interviews will offer you an opportunity to reflect on your professional career and current role as a teacher and teacher leader.
Your participation in this research is voluntary and your decision whether or not to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits. If you decide to participate, you are free to discontinue

your participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Thanking in anticipation

Sayyed Rashid Ali Shah
I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the project.
I _____understand that:

there is no compulsion for me to participate in this research project and, if I do choose to participate, I may at any stage withdraw my participation and may also request that my data be destroyed.
I have the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about me.
Any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications or academic conference or seminar presentations.
If applicable, the information which I give may be shared between any of the other researchers participating in this project in an anonymised form. All information I give will be treated as confidential. The researcher will make every effort to preserve my anonymity.

..............................………………..   ....
(Signature of participant)   (Date)

……………………
(Printed name of participant)

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher.
Contact phone number of researcher: +966 583063060
If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact:
Sayyed Rashid Ali Shah   (researcher)   Email: sras201@exeter.ac.uk
OR
Dr. Susan Riley (research supervisor)   Email: S.M.Riley@exeter.ac.uk

* when research takes place in a school, the right to withdraw from the research does NOT usually mean that pupils or students may withdraw from lessons in which the research takes place

Data Protection Act: The University of Exeter is a data collector and is registered with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner as required to do under the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide will be used for research purposes and will be processed in accordance with the University's registration and current data protection legislation. Data will be confidential to the researcher(s) and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties without further agreement by the participant. Reports based on the data will be in anonymised form.

Revised March 2013

Appendix 4: Certificate of ethical research approval

This form should now be printed out, *signed by you on the first page and sent to your supervisor to sign. Your supervisor will forward this document to the School's **Research Support Office** for the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee to countersign. A unique approval reference will be added and this certificate will be returned to you to be included at the back of your dissertation/thesis.*
N.B*. You should not start the fieldwork part of the project until you have the signature of your supervisor*

project has been approved for the period: June 2015   until: June 2016

By (above mentioned supervisor's signature): . ....*S.M.Riley*............date:.........May 11th 2015 ....

N.B. To Supervisor: *Please ensure that ethical issues are a*   *ly in your report and ι* *any hanges in the research occur a further fo is completed.*

GSE unique approval reference:……….**D/14/15/46**

Signed:………………   **date:………13.05.2015**
Chair of the School's Ethics Committee

Appendix 5: Semi-structured Interview

Teacher leadership: A case study of teacher leaders' professional development in an EFL institute of a Saudi Arabian university

Major Themes
Your professional career (teaching/administrative)
Your perceptions of teacher leadership
Your role as a teacher leader (e.g. academic coordinator, head of a unit, PD specialist)
Skills and knowledge acquired for leadership roles at the ELI
Leadership opportunities at the ELI
Professional development activities for teacher leaders at the ELI
Your preferred means of professional development at the ELI
Your formal/informal professional training as a teacher leader
The role of professional circle/colleagues in your PD

Interview questions
1. Could you tell me about your teaching career and how it has led you to this point in your professional life?
2. Have you held a professional career outside of education?
3. What do you mean by the term 'teacher leader'?
4. What is your role as a teacher leader at the ELI?
5. What professional skills are important to your leadership role? How have those skills evolved over the years?
6. Have you had any planned or formal training or development for leadership?
   Could you outline what you have had and how helpful it has been?
   Is there any type of training or development that you would have liked or would still like?
7. Do you think leadership can be learned while doing a leadership role?
8. What do you do to learn more about your role as a teacher leader?
9. What did you do to establish yourself as a teacher leader?
10. How do your administrator(s) support you in your leadership growth/development?
11. Do you think that the development of teacher leadership would benefit the Institute?
12. How do you see the role of your colleague coordinators in helping you learn about leadership?

Appendix 6: Open-ended questionnaire

Teacher leadership: A case study of teacher leaders' professional development in an EFL institute of a Saudi Arabian university

Dear Participant, as the second phase of my data collection has approached, I would like you to respond to the following questions:

1. In your opinion, how does the structure of hierarchical management in your institution help/hinder you in performing your role?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

2. How have your previous management learning and experiences contributed to your professional development as a manager/leader in this context?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

3. How have you learned the skills to motivate, encourage and influence teachers towards improved educational practices?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

4. What strategies do you adopt to motivate, mobilise and lead teachers?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

5. Can you list the skills, knowledge and expertise which you learned on your current job?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

6. How have your colleagues and top management contributed to leadership/management learning and development?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

Your cooperation is highly appreciated.
Thank You!

Appendix 7: Sample interview transcript

Q. Could you tell me about your teaching career and how it has led you to this point?

A: As far as my teaching experience is concerned, it was in 1999 when I started English language teaching. As - in our context - English language teachers have a Master's degree in English literature and it is a sort of pre-conceived notion how language is taught in classrooms based on our personal experience as students. Luckily, my case was a bit different. After doing my masters in English literature, I did one year advanced diploma in English language teaching and I studied the component of TEFL for one full year which prepared me for language teaching. When I started my career as a language teacher, I had the basic or background knowledge of learning and teaching a 'second language'. The teaching of English language and literature were basically a sort of training for me and I could easily differentiate between teaching a literary text and teaching language in isolation. So my experience of teaching was quite different from other fellow teachers who had only the literature background.

Q: What responsibilities do you have at the ELI?

A: To understand my role at the ELI, it is important to understand the whole system and how it works. It's a typical hierarchical and top-down management model. In the current system, the academic coordination unit is led by a chief coordinator. A chief academic coordinator is basically the head of the unit and a highly qualified faculty member who also possesses excellent organizational skills. Probably management skills are considered as a prerequisite for this role. Another prerequisite for this position is that a person must be a bilingual and well versed in Arabic in order to effectively communicate with supporting administrative staff and the students. The chief coordinator is subordinated by four senior coordinators. These senior coordinators have extensive experience in the field of ELT. They are mainly chosen on the basis of their performances as academic coordinators, their exceptional academic record as instructors and their organizational skills which they prove as coordinators. With basic managerial duties and responsibilities and reduced teaching load, these coordinators manage the unit. They have usually zero teaching load, but there are certain teaching hours for coordinators as over time which is mostly online teaching.

There are four broad-based categories which the senior coordinators are responsible for, i.e. informal mentoring of the academic coordinators and providing them with feedback on their performance, management and administration, administering end of the year evaluations, etc.

Q: Do you think your current position has become more ideal for you?

A: Basically, my present role has gradually become an ideal one. The situation we had four years ago was very challenging. There was a huge conflict between the teachers and academic coordinators as the sole purpose of the administration were to locate instructors who were underperformers or whose overall performances were below par. So the basic aim of the ACU was to hunt teachers down and terminate them and this was the key objective of the new administration at the beginning, which slowly changed with the passage of time, but the element of threat remained for four years until the dean and vice deans were changed two years ago. So,

with the change of policy and administration, now it is more for development purposes and the element of threat has reduced greatly. In addition, that rift has been decreased, but that grudge which was created four years ago still persists there between the instructors and the academic coordinators, which often affects the relationship of the coordinators with teachers.

At the beginning, I taught and coordinated e-learning unit which was newly created and a completely different experience for me. Meanwhile, the change of management took place at the ELI and the new administration started and taking some revolutionary steps to transform the whole system. As a result of many changes, the academic coordination unit emerged which previously did not exist. So I was offered this position for which I was interviewed and selected. However, I had no intention of joining this unit, but the invitation came from the top management which I accepted. Thus, I availed the opportunity which took me into the field of management and moved me away from classroom teaching.

Q: What do you mean by teacher leader?
A: I never heard the term 'teacher leadership' and do not know how it actually works in other context.

Q: How do you see the definition of teacher leader in relation to your own position? [The definition written a page is handed over to the interviewee]
A: This is not very different from what I do, but my role tends more to be of managerial nature. Presently I am a senior coordinator at the English language institute. I have taught at the same university for almost 8 years and I joined this university as an English language instructor. For the first four years, I worked as EFL instructor or a teacher. Over the past four years, I have worked as an academic coordinator and senior coordinator. For the first couple of years, I worked as a coordinator and then promoted to the position of a senior academic coordinator which is my current role as a teacher leader.

Q: Do you often stick to the scripted role or there are deviations as well?
A: My scripted role as a senior academic coordinator is to give coordinators feedback on their tasks, to offer the coaching, to conduct module, semester and end of the year evaluation of the instructors, to communicate and explain the ELI and university's policies to the instructors, to set common guidelines for the coordinators and monitor their performances as well as facilitate the administration in the implementation of whatever ELI policies are. So these are the roles that I am supposed to perform as per the written script, but in reality we have to do certain other tasks as well. For example, I just talked about the resentment of the instructors, so the very first thing I have to do is to develop a very good rapport with the instructors and try to accommodate them as much as possible. On a personal level, I develop some sort of strategies and policies to mitigate the fear of the instructors which was created a few years ago and create an atmosphere where teachers feel safe and that I am there as a facilitator and not as a terminator. Such strategies have nothing to do with the ELI policies. These strategies are very effective when I develop a special rapport with instructors to encourage them and mentor them at certain levels. Moreover, I offer help to facilitate and train them where we think they need to acquire certain skills, however, these roles are not assigned to me and not a part of any written policy. It gives me

pleasure to assist them and improve my own relationship with them, which earns my respect and credibility among the fellow coordinators and the instructors.

Q: What leadership skills are required for your role?
A: Basically the leadership skills that are required at the ELI are: Excellent communication skills- both spoken and written and learning about cross culture awareness, as there is usually no prior training for coordinators; and the fact that the ELI is a multi-cultural place where instructors from 23 different countries work, making it very important to have cross cultural awareness and exceptional interpersonal skills to manage the misunderstanding between the top management and the instructors. With effective interpersonal skills, coordinators play the role of a bridge between teachers and the top management. A senior coordinator who has these personal skills and a good rapport with his team is more successful as compared to one who merely possesses management skills in general that are not context-specific. For example, the general administration skills usually fail at the ELI due to certain cultural and contextual factors as I have observed in ACU so we have to adopt and adapt certain other things which are ELI specific. Various strategies can be used for this purpose. For example, you have to have a special meeting with the instructors whenever you have to implement a new policy by the ELI as a manager. Although, it is not a written policy but before its implementation you have to take teachers into confidence.0ne has to explain the nature, objectives and goals of the policy at certain points and give a rationale why such a step had to be taken. This will help to avoid negative feelings of the general staff towards the administration and we can focus more on our tasks. Although, these steps are not encouraged by the ELI administration, but to keep good relationship with the faculty we have to use such strategies to ensure the smooth execution of our duties.

Q: What are other teachers' perception of your role?
A: Basically, what teachers think of the academic coordinators at the ELI is just like policing or spying on instructors as their objective used to be to find out the weaknesses of the instructors and fire them. This is the general perception and it was true a couple of years ago. I believe it is not the case anymore.

Q: How did you actually earned the trust of your fellow teachers and changed their perceptions about your role?
A: I try my best not to give that impression and gain the confidence of the instructors by building my personal relationship with them. It has resulted as a positive experience as a senior coordinator and I find myself more successful than others because of my personal efforts to understand teachers' issues and develop rapport with them. I believe I'm firm and polite as compared to the administration, which is normally very strict with a certain attitude of aggressiveness as well. Basically, it was the basic requirement of the academic coordinator's role to be strict, to be anti-faculty and to be indifferent to the staff as well. But I have a different approach as through personal rapport at certain psychological levels, I have to communicate and implement rules and regulations which are demanded by the ELI administration in such a way that they are not taken negatively. So my personal attitude, my relationship with instructors and the way I convey my message through coordinators to my team are very important leadership strategies to effectively perform and produce good results. In my view, such rapport is developed

by a series of meeting that I usually have on an individual basis with instructors. Officially, I have only one meeting with the teachers, but I conduct four to five meetings with teachers to explain the policies, answer their queries and cool down the situation if teachers show resentment towards certain administrative policies and orders. Thus, I arrange a meeting to convey the administrative message to them in a positive way and reduce the element of fear and negative aspects by explaining the professional benefits and other positive attributes related to the newly introduced policy. The whole process helps me a lot to improve my leadership skills and learn more about the process of motivating teachers and helping them with their tasks.

Q: Do you think your excellent pedagogical skills helped you learn about your current role?
A: At the start of the ACU, the academic coordinators used to observe teachers, the process continued for the first two years. As an observer, my teaching skills and professional experience in the field helped me a lot to observe and mentor the teachers in whatever weak area they had, so I found my teaching knowledge very useful but at the later stage when the observations were shifted to the PDU, the role of my teaching skills became zero as the role required my management skills rather classroom expertise. But it did help me in a way that things which I did not like about my coordinators and that gave me an impression that I was being spied on, the impression of what I felt aggressive about the administration or felt offended about, reflection on these experiences helped me a lot to adopt certain techniques to be less disliked by the instructors. Such skills are not there in any management training courses and can be achieved through personal experience, reflection and effort to bring change in attitude.

Q: So, your current job doesn't need your teaching skills? Why?
A: Excellence as a classroom teachers have got nothing to do with my role as a coordinator. Presently, coordinators with more of administrative skills and with normal teaching abilities are preferred. Previously, teachers with excellent teaching skills and management skills were preferred as classroom observation was one of their responsibilities but not anymore. As my role is completely of a manager now, it has nothing to do with teaching.

Q: What exactly helped you learn leadership skills? Can you outline them?
A: Basically, there are three main things that helped me learn and improve my leadership skills. First thing was mentoring of my senior colleagues, which was very crucial in the first year of my coordination. In the second year, there were 3 management courses arranged by the ELI management at the ELI which were of course very useful, however they were not based on our context, but helped me gain an overview of the management. These training courses were very basic, mainly telling us what management is and how it works in an ideal situation. In short, that was a bookish knowledge but helped me understand the key things such as with a very positive attitude manager can be a facilitator and mentor, who identifies the areas of development and helps the teachers to develop their skills. Similarly, the role of the academic coordinator should be very positive to help instructors in order to get rid of their weaknesses. So basically that training session targeted very idealized settings which could not suit the ELI context as the requirement of the ELI was totally different from what was told by the trainers. However, we got the very basic concepts of the management and then we realised which directions we are going in administration and whether it was very ideal and useful or we have induced certain type of

strategies which got nothing to do with the management courses. Later it helped us to design our own management course offered at the ELI which we later molded according to our own needs and requirements at the ELI context.

The third thing that I learnt the leadership skills was my personal experience and experimentation, reflection and remedial actions. At the start, it was a trial and error sort of process. At certain points I thought as I flopped as an administrator, but later through reflection, I improved those areas and moved on.

Q: Can you think of any other factors that helped you learn?
A: Various factors helped me learn the art of leadership that gave me a recognition of a teacher leader at the ELI. For example:
1- Previous managerial experience
2- Their classroom performance and interaction with coordinators on various class related issues
3- Readings in the relevant field
4- Professional growth through a continuous stream of self-financed courses in the relevant field
5- Senior Mentoring
6- Trial and Error

Q: How often do you reflect on your role and duties? Do you think that reflection helps you assess your needs?
A: When I reflect on my current practices, I feel as I need training to plan ahead, time management. I am trying to cover them through self-reflection and feedback from the seniors and colleagues, but there is always a need for a proper training in a particular area of development that we consider important because I innovate and explore through experience. The second thing is that I discuss it with the colleagues to guide the administration and get its opinion, then pick the most suitable one. Yet more professional training is required in areas which are explored in daily practices in Saudi context.

Q: How do you see the leadership learning opportunities offered at the ELI?
A: Basically, whatever type of training is offered to us it is the same stereotype training. The training is supposed to be twice a year, but this year there has been no training at all. But I feel that with changing policy, changing environment, changing instructors' attitude, I need training in certain areas which can be specified, not the generic ones offered by the trainers because that is stereotype and not relevant to the ELI context.

Q: Do you consider the support of the administration sufficient?
A: The support offered by the administration is insufficient in my opinion. There is always a miss link and a gap between the higher management and the middle-level teacher leaders. I believe there are certain things which can be done in a much better way if the trainers are explained the context and nature of our work, the basic requirements, and the weak areas. Basically what happens that when the trainers arrive, they ask us about the context, we explain the context,

they accept and admit it immediately that they are not aware of the context, so they are going to give us a general training in the field, but it would not be ELI specific.

Q: Do you think, collaboration with your colleagues contributed to your learning and your colleagues'' learning?
A: A: Yes, it surely did.

Q: How?
A: Basically within the unit (ACU) we have certain presentations by senior coordinators. There are two types of presentations, one is that we figure out what are the areas that need development and then one of us volunteer to prepare and give a presentation on that. In such presentations, certain coordinators who have done management courses on particular areas, for example, developing rapport with your team, if he had done any course on that, he volunteers to give a presentation and pass on the knowledge to other colleagues and facilitates others. Likewise, by the end of the year, we sit together and find out the major areas of development for the coordinators. We choose two common areas of development and then either volunteer or sometimes a senior coordinator is assigned to give a presentation on that area, so other coordinators can learn. Again, we have certain meetings in which we sit with the coordinators on an individuals' team basis, because each senior has 2 to 4 coordinators depending on number of sections in a particular building. So we sit together and discuss the problem areas, for example, if an instructor has a certain problem, and he lacks the skills to tackle it or to address it himself, we sit together, discuss it and senior coordinator as a mentor prepares it well for which he either reads relevant books, articles to learn more about that area of weakness and how to improve it. Normally, a senior who is well versed in a particular field, he is selected to work with those coordinators. These are all formal meetings, we never disclose that a certain coordinator has this weak area. We simply say 'the next topic of our discussion is for example IT issues' we simply send a message that the next meeting will be about it. If they have any questions, queries any information related to it, they can sit together and discuss and share them. That discussion often gives the senior an insight into the weaknesses of other coordinators who need to develop certain skills. For example, personally I am not good at IT, so when we discuss something related to it, it gives me a chance to learn about it from those who have expertise in this.

Q: Why does the collaboration take place?
A: This collaboration among the coordinators is a kind of intrinsic motivation and it has nothing to do with the top-management, in fact they don't even know about it. Such teamwork and collaboration have helped us a lot because the training and workshops were previously held, they generally gave us an overview of the things and we had to develop certain techniques based on those managerial training sessions to get or adapt to ELI situations. So these interactive sessions helped us a lot, especially when certain team members who take certain courses each year on their personal expenses and share those ideas with us. We have workshop sometimes like three weeks ago, we had a workshop by the deputy chief coordinator who took a course last year in the UK on how to communicate effectively and appropriately with your team. So a session on communication was arranged and it was a good learning experience for all of us. The learning environment is created by the individuals rather than the administrators.

Q: What should be done to make the environment more conducive for leadership learning?
A: We did number of things to make the training workshops context-specific. Our aim was to communicate it to the top management that the training sessions offered by external trainers have no relevance, that's why we didn't have any training course this year. The main purpose of our self-arranged workshops and session is to develop ourselves as managers in our contexts. So we asked the top management that the trainers should consider our needs, requirements and context and learn from us before designing a course for us. For example, what are the issues in the ELI context and what are the areas that need to be developed. For example, if a trainer comes to train us the area that we need specifically to focus on may consume his one hour, but rest of the time he discusses already known things which is just a waste of time.

Q: How can novice leaders learn leadership skills?
A: For novices, first we should identify the areas that need training and then train them. Basically what happens is that they just jump into the management without having prior training. Initially, when the coordination unit was new, the coordinators had no training but they learned on the job and identified different problem areas. But now we have a new system based on the experiences of the senior coordinators as an orientation sessions are conducted for the newly inducted coordinators to learn more about the system. Moreover, an experienced and a senior coordinator is given a group of new coordinators who work in his mentorship, so he learns from his team and his mentor who all work in a collaborative environment. So they work together for a couple of weeks, his emails communications, his interaction with the teachers, the language used with the team members, each and everything is monitored and feedback is given by the senior coordinators for learning and improvement purposes.

Appendix 8: Sample open-ended questionnaire

Teacher leadership: A case study of teacher leaders' professional development in an EFL institute of a Saudi Arabian university

Dear Participant, as the second phase of my data collection has approached, I would like you to respond to the following questions:

1. **In your opinion, how does the structure of hierarchical management in your institution help/hinder you in performing your role?**
   The structure of the institution that I work at is highly bureaucratic and centralized. On top of that, the decisions that are to be made within our unit both on an academic and administrative level can come from various higher-ups. Generally speaking, this is not a favorable situation as the higher-ups do not really have a pulse on what is happening in the unit on a day-to-day basis. Having said that, the higher-ups do provide excellent suggestions at times with regards to student and teacher motivation and academic practices.

2. How have your previous management learning and experiences contributed to your professional development as a manager/leader in this context?

I have not had much previous management experience prior to this position. However, my experiences in this position have taught me the importance of people skills, conflict resolution, employee motivation - which is directly linked to performance - and being a good listener combined with being a good decision maker. I have also become aware of the importance of identifying skills within a person and therefore being able to delegate successfully as required. This is something that I have only learnt over time and through experience. In smaller institutions, being more of an associate, on an equal par with teachers has its advantages. However in larger institutions, the role of manager has to be more defined and impressed upon, especially when dealing with employees. The concept of 'leader' has to be defined and made apparent otherwise the direction of the unit and the overall performance will suffer.

3. How have you learned the skills to motivate, encourage and influence teachers towards improved educational practices?

Teachers, especially ones with 15+ years of experience, tend to shy away from new innovations within the domain of education. Therefore, individuals have to be identified for their skills and abilities to change and be innovative. These individuals are the ones that need to be tapped in order to introduce new practices, provide renewed motivation and encouragement and for the implementation of new educational practices.

4. What strategies do you adopt to motivate, mobilise, and lead teachers?

Skill identification, presence or lack of natural motivation and love of the job, desire for excellence and achieving. Delegation is best achieved from employees that have the aforementioned attributes. With regards to motivating teachers, getting them involved in decision making and identifying what areas of the course they have an interest in developing helps. Assigning responsibility to others is also something that can be done.

5. Can you list the skills, knowledge and expertise which you learned on your current job?

Administrative skills, new practices in education, importance of practical application of skills learnt by students, skill identification in employees, delegation, conflict resolution, employee motivation, listening, decision making, people skills and institute management.

6. How have your colleagues and top management contributed to leadership/management learning and development?

Colleagues have provided advice from time to time and constantly provide feedback on how to handle specific situations, whether they be conflicts or disagreements between teachers or of an academic nature.

Your cooperation is highly appreciated.
Thank You!

Appendix 9: Summary of codes (NVivo nodes)

Codes	No of sources	References
1. A traditional top-down model	3	3
2. Multiple Tasking	3	3
3. To Convince	5	5
4. To Delegate	5	6
5. Developing Rapport	4	4
6. Devising plans	2	2
7. Identifying People's Potential	4	4
8. To Influence	8	9
9. Lead from the Front	5	5
10. Leading Large Teams	1	2
11. To Make Decisions	1	1
12. Providing Vision	5	6
13. Absence of CoP	12	12
14. Accountability	9	13
15. Active Listener	3	3
16. Administrative Skills	3	3
17. Shared leadership practices	1	2
18. Courses offered at ELI	8	16
19. Artificial System	1	1
20. Leadership Positions	7	10
21. Learning Opportunities	5	5
22. Avoiding Resentment	5	7
23. A Facilitator	2	2
24. Qualified	1	1
25. Confident	8	8
26. Diplomatic	6	7
27. Fair-seeming	10	14
28. Honest	10	12
29. Bureaucratic Learning Experience	1	1
30. Cambridge workshops	8	8
31. Clear Approach	1	2
32. Collegial Support	7	10
33. Communication Skills	12	14
34. Construction Industry	1	1
35. Cooperation	1	1
36. Crises Management Skills	9	10
37. Cultural Awareness	12	14
38. Curriculum Knowledge	1	3
39. Demanding Compliance	1	1
40. Discipline	1	1
41. Disconnect between Units	6	6
42. Discussion Sessions	2	2
43. Participatory Leadership	6	8
44. Earning Credibility	5	5
45. Educational Management Background	4	5

46. Influence of hierarchical structure	4	4
47. Faculty Evaluation	4	6
48. Friendliness	7	7
49. EFL Leadership Experience	1	2
50. Empathy & Sympathy	12	12
51. Emphasis on Teaching Skills	7	14
52. Engineering background	2	2
53. Flexible	2	2
54. Gaining Trust	5	5
55. Hardworking	5	5
56. Hospitality Industry	1	1
57. Urge for learning	3	3
58. Reflection	8	13
59. Informal Learning activities	12	33
60. Interdependence	2	3
61. Interpersonal skills	12	12
62. Intrapersonal Skills	4	4
63. Intrinsic Motivation	12	12
64. IT Background	1	1
65. Knowing about Best Practices	7	7
66. Knowing the Task	5	7
67. Knowledge of TESOL	8	9
68. Experiential Learning	1	2
69. Contextual knowledge	8	10
70. Lack of Autonomy	8	12
71. Lack of Appreciation	4	5
72. Lack of Support	12	15
73. Leadership roles at the ELI	7	8
74. Leadership Roles Outside ELI	2	2
75. Leadership Training	2	3
76. Ability to guide	1	1
77. Learning from Colleagues	1	3
78. Learning from Other Contexts	3	3
79. Learning Opportunities at ELI	3	4
80. Learning the Leadership Art	1	1
81. Learning through Training	2	5
82. Management Background Outside EFL	7	9
83. Training Outside EFL	1	1
84. Management Courses in EFL Context	1	1
85. Managing Teachers	5	10
86. Managing things in a systematic way	1	1
87. Mentoring	2	3
88. Misinterpretation of Western Education System	2	3
89. Nature of Courses	12	21
90. Negative Learning Experiences	3	4
91. Offering Assistance to Teachers	2	2
92. People Skills	12	12
93. Perception about TL	9	17
94. Personal Strategies	2	3
95. Positions Offered	8	10

96. Power from Hierarchical Position	2	6
97. Professional Presentations	11	12
98. Reliable	10	12
99. Resentment	9	10
100. Research Skills	1	2
101. Reshuffling of Coordinators	1	1
102. Self-Arranged Workshops	10	12
103. Seminars	5	5
104. Setting Realistic Goals	3	3
105. Strategic Planning Skills	6	6
106. Surviving in Bureaucracy	2	2
107. Perceptions about TL	3	4
108. Teaching Methodologies	8	10
109. Teaching Skills not Required	3	5
110. Teamwork	6	10
111. Technocratic System	9	12
112. Technical Skills	5	7
113. Testing	1	1
114. Trustworthy	5	7
115. The Impact of Reflection	1	2
116. The impact of Participatory Leadership	3	4
117. Time Management Skill	12	12
118. Leadership Responsibilities	4	6
119. Workload	5	6

Appendix 10: Example of initial NVivo coding

Coding Summary By Node
EdD Thesis Project
6/26/2015 3:05 PM

Aggregate	Classification	Coverage	Number Of Coding Reference	Reference Number	Coded By Initials	Modified On
Node						
Nodes\\A traditional top-down model						
Document						
Internals\\Interviews\\Hamza						
No		0.0091	1			
				1	SHAH	6/8/2015 12:58

I think it's more of a cultural thing. The higher management has to be all Saudi which is part of the culture.

Internals\\Interviews\\Rahat						
No		0.0183	1			

Well, the top-down leadership is more of a cultural thing.

Internals\\Interviews\\Sachin

No		0.0415	1			

But here the main difference is, for example in this part of the world, at KAU more specifically, it's very traditional structure, meaning that it's very top-down. The decisions are made at the top and trickle down.

Aggregate	Classification	Coverage	Number Of Coding References	Reference Number	Coded By Initials	Modified On
Nodes\\To Achieve Tasks						
Document Internals\\Interviews\\Moh						
No		0.0186	1			
				1	SHAH	6/8/2015 9:11 PM

Establishing myself, basically being able to show you are good at a job primarily revolves around the end of the show results. Being able to do things in a smooth and efficient way and be able to make all the stake holders happy.

Aggregate	Classification	Coverage	Number Of Coding References	Reference Number	Coded By Initials	Modified On
Nodes\\To Convince Others						
Document Internals\\Interviews\\Omar						
No		0.0146	1			
				1	SHAH	6/9/2015 8:04 PM

Apart from excellent teaching skills, you should have the ability to convince people, but how can you convince or persuade people.

Aggregate	Classification	Coverage	Number Of Coding References	Reference Number	Coded By Initials	Modified On
Nodes\\To Delegate						
Document Internals\\Interviews\\Harrison						
No		0.0268	1			
				1	SHAH	6/8/2015 1:56 PM

I've to be in a position to question my skills and abilities. For instance, can I delegate work? Can I designate the work of research to certain people under me to carry on them with regards to the master's degree programme, with regards to giving research workshops etc.

Aggregate	Classification	Coverage	Number Of Coding	Reference Number	Coded By Initials	Modified On

Internals\\Interviews\\Ibrahim

No		0.0155	1			
				1	SHAH	6/8/2015 3:35 PM

In this position, I am able to provide some kind of direction and guidance to the group of people I am working with … I assign them work, I give them different task to complete.

Internals\\Interviews\\Ismael

No		0.0209	2			
				1	SHAH	6/8/2015 5:30 PM

It's crazy if you have to do everything by yourself then you can end up losing. That's why you should be able to delegate.

				2	SHAH	6/8/2015 5:52 PM

So your ability to delegate and identify the skills of the individuals that are needed and match them with the tasks.

Internals\\Interviews\\Moh

No		0.0342	1			
				1	SHAH	6/8/2015 8:58 PM

If you want results as a manager or leader or if you want results from the unit in general, you have to be able to know who to go to, who to delegate to, when to delegate, how to delegate. So, this is something which I believe that the theory can be learnt in a course but really you are not going to be able to do much about that, unless you face the situation and then you have to apply the theory.

Internals\\Interviews\\Sachin

No		0.0205	1			
				1	SHAH	6/10/2015 3:08

My main objective is to first understand my task and then delegate tasks.

Aggregate	Classification	Coverage	Number Of Coding References	Reference Number	Coded By Initials	Modified On
Nodes\\Developing Rapport						
Document						
Internals\\Interviews\\Natlus						
No		0.0200	2			

				1	SHAH	6/9/2015 10:44

I just talked about the resentment of the instructors, so the very first thing I've to do is to develop a very good rapport with them and try to accommodate them as much as possible.

				2	SHAH	6/9/2015 10:58

I've a different approach as through personal rapport at certain psychological levels, I have to communicate and implement rules and regulations which are demanded by the ELI administration in such a way that they are not taken negatively.

Nodes\\Devising plans
    Document
Internals\\Interviews\\Khan

No		0.0328	1			
				1	SHAH	6/8/2015 7:04 PM

I would think and plan how specific group of teacher and different teachers would act differently and I did not have 'one size fits all' approach for all of my teachers. I would deal with them differently. My own strategies would help me achieve the assigned tasks.

Internals\\Interviews\\Omar

No		0.0141	1			
				1	SHAH	6/9/2015 8:30 PM

No doubt you have to foresee the challenges and plan accordingly because every context is different as here we have so many nationalities, so many entities, characters, cultures.

Aggregate	Classification	Coverage	Number Of Coding References	Reference Number	Coded By Initials	Modified On

Nodes\\Ability to Guide
    Document
Internals\\Interviews\\Omar

No		0.0220	1			
				1	SHAH	6/9/2015 8:38 PM

You should tell teachers, hey, come and do this job, learn some skills, interact with colleagues. We need to sit with them and give them tips. We need to make them very objective.

Nodes\\Identifying People's Potential
    Document
Internals\\Interviews\\Moh

No		0.0360	1			

| | 1 | SHAH | 6/8/2015 8:56 PM |

For me, the main thing is the understanding. I mean if you are leading a team, obviously a team is there for a purpose to contribute to the development of your unit. So it's really important to be able to identify what people are good at from early on. Here we are talking about the skills that they have and they skills that they might not have, but also I am talking about the personality, how to deal with them because people are different.

Nodes\\To Influence
Document
Internals\\Interviews\\Harrison

No		0.0169	1	
			1	SHAH

| | 1 | SHAH | 6/8/2015 1:47 PM |

On top of that you need to have skills to influence teachers so that everything runs as smooth as possible without rejecting suggestions and opinions from fellow colleagues.

---The End------