

The Teacher's Leadership Styles at Higher Education Institutes in District Panjgur, Balochistan

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ABSTRACT

In this research, the authors explored the transformational and transactional leadership styles between the Heads of Departments (HODs) and faculty at the University of Makran, Balochistan. The study has followed the quantitative design based on a cross-sectional study founded on Full Range Leadership Theory. (Bass and Avolio, 1995). Thirty respondents (five HODs and twenty-five faculty members) in five departments were used to collecting the data using a structured questionnaire based on the Multifactor Leadership Model. Statistical tests were performed, which composed descriptive statistics, independent samples t-tests, ANOVA, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), and Cronbach alpha reliability tests which were completed using SPSS (Version 26). The findings have shown that transformational leadership practices, particularly motivation, praise, and feedback, were more common than the transactional ones, including decision inclusion. HODs had much higher scores on transformational dimensions, and faculty members were average. The difference between the departments was found to be significant ($p < 0.05$), which means that there was context of leaders effects on leadership perceptions. The research found that transformational leadership positively influences academic innovation, collaboration and faculty motivation, but the transactional mechanisms are required to ensure stability in the form of procedural mechanisms. The findings help the literature of the field of leadership with respect to the development of higher education in the context and indicate assimilation of both leadership styles in order to realize the institutional effectiveness.

Keywords: Transformational, leadership, transactional leadership, Higher education, Leadership theory.

INTRODUCTION

Leadership is a multidimensional construct that is at the core of the success of an organization since it is described as the process of influence, motivation, and empowerment of individuals to add towards a common goal (House et al., 2002; Northouse, 2018). Leadership in the context of higher education institutions (HEIs) plays a critical role in facilitating academic excellence, innovative practices as well as sustainability of the institutions amid rising competition and resource scarcity (Baker, 2011; Bush, 2013). Research and teaching performance are driven by Heads of Departments (HODs) who are key figures in faculty motivation, the establishment of conducive learning environments to improve student performance (Altun, 2017; Budur and Poturak, 2021). In this context, it is possible to discuss the Full Range Leadership Theory according to which the transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership behaviors can be analysed in a powerful lens (Bass and Avolio, 1994). Transformational leaders are motivational, mind-stimulating, and they take care of the followers individually, unlike the transactional-leaders who are structure-reward-responsibility-based (Bass and Riggio, 2006). The combination of the

two styles by using both styles in a balancing manner has been found to increase levels of faculty satisfaction and student achievement (Leithwood et al., 2008).

Although the leadership style correlates with the effectiveness of the institutions globally, there has been very little empirical effort to comprehend the dynamics of leadership within the specific socio-cultural environment of the higher learning sector of District Panjgur. This divide interferes in formulating context sensitive leadership approaches that will be able to optimize on faculty motivation, quality of teaching and institutional performance. This research, therefore, examines the styles of leadership by HODs and faculty members at the HEIs of Panjgur, in terms of transformational and transactional aspects. The results are likely to be used in the process of leadership training as well as institutional policy making, and the evidence-based leadership practices specific to the education context of the region are likely to be developed. This study would reinforce the principles of higher education leadership by determining the most effective leadership behaviors that promote engagement, collaboration, and academic excellence, as well as advance the purposes of wider educational development in Balochistan and the entire Pakistan in general.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The leadership in institutions of higher learning is changing paradigm as the issues of globalization, digitalization, and socioeconomic changes are changing the face of academia. Universities are able to require leaders that can help bring innovation, deal with complexity, and guarantee academic excellence despite swift change (Chowdhury, 2024; Bou et al., 2024). In advanced countries, the shift in leadership has taken the form of participatory approaches of leadership that focus on inclusivity, academic freedom, and decentralized decision-making processes (Settles et al., 2024). Conversely, developing nations are affected by a number of systemic issues including bureaucratic inflexibility, restricted resources and hierarchical organizational structures and cultures which limit efficient leadership (Maama, 2024).

The HEIs in Pakistan must work within the background of a socio-cultural environment that is characterized by Islamic values, political centralization, and patriarchal orientations (Yousef et al., 2022). Higher Education Commission (HEC) has tried to change the system of leadership, yet the situation with nepotism, gender disparity, and insufficient professional development remains (Sarwar et al., 2023). Globalization has forced these forces of change that demand adaptive leadership models that can harmonize global best practices with local realities. This review investigates how leadership theories have changed and been used in HEIs especially in the theories of transformational and transactional leadership as the theoretical concept to study the leadership of Heads of Departments and faculty in the District of Panjgur.

History Overview of Leadership Theories.

Leadership study has gone through various theoretical stages, and each has led to our learning of how leaders shape organizations. The initial theories of leadership, including the Trait, Behavioral, and Contingency, formed the basis of the subsequent approaches to leadership, including the Transformational Leadership Style, the Transactional Leadership Style, and Full Range Leadership Theory (FRLT).

Trait Theory

The Trait Theory that has emerged in the early twentieth century, suggested that good leaders were born that way, with certain traits that made them unique among others (Stogdill, 1948). They were intelligence, self-confidence, determination, and integrity (Northouse, 2022). Anyway, later empirical studies found

that traits were not sufficient to explain the leadership effectiveness as situational factors and other characteristics of follower were also critical to it (Judge et al., 2002). Traits-based leadership in education did assist in defining features shared among the best academic leaders (e.g. emotional stability, openness in intellect) though could not account for the differences between institutional settings.

Behavioral Theories

During the 1940s-1950s the focus of leadership research was changed to behavioral theories, which focused more on what leaders did and not the personalities (Lewin et al., 1939). The studies of Ohio State and Michigan recognized that the dimensions of effective leadership are task-oriented and relationship-oriented behaviors. This difference is still crucial in HEIs: academic leaders have to achieve efficiency in administration and at the same time promote growth in faculty (De Boer and Goedegebuure, 2021). There was, however, criticism with behavioral approaches due to their inflexibility in different situations, hence the emergence of more adaptive models.

Contingency and Situational Theories.

Fiedler (1967) developed Contingency Theory which stated that effective leadership relied on the adequacy of a specific leader to fit within given circumstances which included the task structure and follower preparedness. In the same spirit, the Situational Leadership Model developed by Hersey and Blanchard assumed that a leader ought to change the style depending on the competence and dedication of the followers (Thompson and Glasø, 2022). These models put an important emphasis in higher education on the need of adaptive leadership the ability to handle the various academic cultures, the level of expertise of the staff, and the limited resources available (Ololube, 2015).

Transformational Leadership and Transactional Leadership

At the end of the twentieth century paradigm shift was observed as Burns (1978) and Bass (1985) are the ones who presented their theories of Leadership Transformational and Transactional focusing on motivation, vision and exchange mechanisms. Transformational leadership entails using charisma, intellectual stimulation and consideration of individuals to inspire their followers whereas transactional leadership uses rewards and performance review (Bass and Riggio, 2006). These two sets of style are the foundations of the Full Range Leadership Theory (FRLT) and their ability to merge the two styles into a holistic framework that takes the spectrum of leadership passive to highly active (Avolio and Bass, 2004).

Full Range Leadership Theory

FRLT sums up leadership behaviors spectrum: laissez-faire (passive), transactional (active management by exception and contingent reward), and transformational (idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration). Modern research states that FRLT is a predictive validity in any sector, such as education (Antonakis and House, 2014; Pavlou, 2025). FRLT facilitates the model in finding equilibrium between administrative control and empowerment, as well as conviction in HEIs; hence, it is especially applicable to the dynamic dealings in educational settings.

Leadership Styles within the Higher Education.

The role of leadership in HEIs is not limited to the administrative role but it determines the academic culture, faculty morale, as well as innovation in the institution. The seven leading leadership styles that include autocratic, democratic, laissez-faire, servant, situational, transactional, and transformational leadership styles provide seven different avenues to influence.

Autocratic Leadership

Centralized authority characterizes it, and it makes the organization have control; however, it kills creativity. Autocratic leadership within South Asian HEIs activity has been recorded to correlate with dissatisfaction of the faculty and lack of innovation (Khan et al., 2025).

Democratic Leadership

Encourages decision making and team work. Eva et al. (2019) discovered that participatory leadership improves faculty participation and shared accountability.

Laissez-Faire Leadership

Minimal contact identified by lack of morale, and inefficiency (Hetland et al., 2021).

Servant Leadership

Grounded on the ethical responsibility and the growth of followers, which is consistent with educational mission of service (Greenleaf, 1977; Mukan et al., 2015).

Situational Leadership

Changes to suit contextual requirements, which is useful in multidisciplinary HEIs with different levels of faculty preparedness to change (Thompson and Glasø, 2022).

Transactional Leadership

Facilitates responsibility with organized interactions and the performance measurements (Bass, 1985).

Transformational Leadership

Inspirer of innovation, trust, and vision sharing - generally recognized as the most useful leadership approach in an academic setting (Northouse, 2022; Bou et al., 2024).

These styles are seldom applied individually; effective academic leaders combine the styles to bring balance to the institutions. The key to FRLT is transformational and transactional leadership, which provides the most flexible and empirically validated model of HEIS.

Leader Effect on University staff Motivation and Performance and Student Results

Faculty motivation and performance directly depends on leadership and is known to influence student outcomes. Intrinsic motivation is achieved with the help of empowerment and recognition by transformational leaders (Nguyen et al., 2021) and extrinsic motivation by performance rewards provided by transactional leaders (Belias et al., 2023). Research conducted in Asian HEIs shows that transformational leadership promotes engagement and innovation in faculties, and transactional model only results in compliance, but not creativeness (Pavlou, 2025).

The performance of the faculty is enhanced when leaders are able to offer intellectual challenge and personalized services. In transformational leadership, Leggat and Balding (2022) found that it is associated with increased pedagogical innovation and research productivity. On the other hand, autocratic style or laissez-faire inhibits initiative (Iqbal et al., 2020). Transformational leadership is also helpful to student learning outcomes as visionary and supportive faculty also create a more interesting and inclusive learning atmosphere (Demirbilek et al., 2023).

Yousef et al. (2022) observed that transformational leadership among HODs facilitates employee collaboration, student-centered pedagogy, and teacher collaboration, thus increasing the effectiveness of the institutions in Pakistan. As a contrast, transactional and bureaucratic leaders within the context of public universities have low morale and sluggish innovation (Sarwar et al., 2023). Thus, the fact that FRLT puts dual focus on both vision and structure offers the practical balance to institutions like the one in Panjgur.

METHODOLOGY

The given study was designed as quantitative, descriptive and inferential research to explore the phenomenon of leadership styles in Heads of Departments (HODs) and faculty members at University of Makran, Balochistan. A quantitative approach was chosen to make assessment of leadership behaviors objective and ensure statistical comparisons in different groups (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). On the basis of Full Range Leadership Theory (Bass and Avolio, 1995), the research had focused on both transactional and transformational aspects. The items included in the questionnaire were based on the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ -5X; Avolio and Bass, 2004) and were adjusted to simplify the questionnaire structure and reduce the time spent on its completion. A total of 20 items were included in the structured questionnaire, each with a 5-point Likert scale to evaluate the employees. The tool was comprised of transformational and transactional elements of leadership.

The thirty academic respondents included five HODs and twenty-five of the faculty representing other departments like Education, English, Social Work, Computer Science, and International Relations, and they were all selected in the University of Makran. Due to the small and completely accessible number, a census sampling method was used thus allowing the inclusion of all the eligible individuals. This prevented sampling bias and increased representativeness (Gay et al., 2012). The information was collected using self-administered questionnaires, which were issued physically, which led to a perfect response rate (n= 30).

The SPSS (Version 26) was used to analyze the data. The mean and the standard deviation (descriptive statistics) were calculated to describe the leadership tendencies; and independent samples t-tests compared the perceptions of HODs and the faculty members. ANOVA was used to check the inter-departments difference in interpreting leadership styles. Also, EFA was used to affirm construct validity (KMO=0.823, $p=0.001$), and the values of Cronbach alpha testified to excellent internal consistency (alpha= 0.86 overall; transformational= 0.88; transactional= 0.83). These analyses guaranteed the statistical reliability and validity of the measurements of leadership styles in the context of higher education of University of Makran.

RESULTS

Thirty respondents, totaling five Heads of Departments (HODs) and twenty-five faculties involved with higher education institutions (HEIs) in District Panjgur, were used to get the data. Quantitative studies considered leadership - transformational and transactional - in terms of descriptive statistics, independent-

samples t-tests, one-way ANOVA, and exploratory factor analysis (EFA). The descriptive findings indicated that HODs rated themselves higher on transformational (M 0.23) and transactional (M 0.16) leadership as compared to the system members (transformational: M 0.58; transactional: M 0.71). Such results suggest that HODs view their leadership behaviors as being more dynamic and effective in comparison to those related by the faculty.

The independent-sample t-tests showed the significant differences between the HOD and faculty between perceptions of transformational leadership ($t(28) = 5.80, p = .001, d = 1.38$) and transactional leadership ($t(28) = 9.11, p = .001, d = 1.97$), which were large effect sizes. ANOVA with one way showed that there were significant differences between the departments at the level of the mean score where Education Department and the English Department received higher mean scores on both styles of leadership when compared to technical departments (Transformational: $F(4, 20) = 9.73, p = 0.001$; Transactional: $F(4, 20) = 6.71, p = 0.001$). There were no important gender effects within the perceptions of leadership. The EFA was used to derive five factors which explained 83 per cent of total variance with the strongest loadings relating to motivational and decision-making items, which also supports the Structural integrity of Bass and Avolio Full Range Leadership Model in Panjgur HEI situation.

DISCUSSION

The results demonstrate that there is a strong disjunction between leaders and subordinates in their perceptions, especially with regard to the transactional leadership behaviors, such as performance monitoring and decision-making. The two dimensions of leadership are rated positively by HODs a finding which is consistent with self-enhancement bias recorded in leadership literature (Atwater and Yammarino, 1992). On the other hand, the faculty members expressed relatively lower motivation and managerial behaviors, which suggests the low visibility or effectiveness of the practices. These findings are agreeing with the argument of Bass and Riggio (2006), that transformational leadership is largely recognized within the framework of a set of observable behaviors that lead to trust and commitment and not upon the self-assessments of the leaders.

The idea of the departmental variations supports the contingency theory presented by Fiedler (1967) and, consequently, emphasizes the fact that the efficacy of leadership depends on contextual and interpersonal factors. The reason could be that higher scores in transformational and transactional in the Education and English departments might represent the collaborative, discussion-based cultures of the departments, unlike the more procedural or hierarchical setting of technical disciplines. This coincidence with the findings of Eagly and Carli (2007), who found a small impact of gender on the perceptions of leadership in the context where institutional and cultural factors play the dominant role. The EFA results also support a theoretical consistency of Full Range Leadership Model (Bass and Avolio, 1995) that suggests both transformational and transactional leadership styles are present in some state of being complementary to effective academic management.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the current findings, a number of recommendations to improve leadership and faculty participation are developed:

- Recommendations A 360 -degree performance appraisal scheme should be enacted in institutes of higher education in District Panjgur to reduce the self-other perception gap between the faculty and HODs.
- Leadership-development programmes must emphasize the levels of balanced integration between the transformational aspects of leadership (vision, motivation and individual consideration) and

the transactional aspects (clarity, feedback and accountability). Through this dualistic way of people use, innovation and disciplines in the organization can be cultivated.

- The policy must be institutionalized in a way that it rewards decision-making that involves the participation of all, free flow of information, and professional growth of faculty members as a way of strengthening trust and teamwork.
- Future research should therefore increase the sample size as well as implement a longitudinal design in order to determine how leadership behaviors may change through time, therefore making development initiatives evidence-based and sustainable.

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