

Exploring Leadership Styles of School Administrators in Pakistan

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This research looked into the leadership styles of 50 school head teachers of district Lahore, Pakistan. The researcher used quantitative survey research design in this research. A five point Likert scale questionnaire was used to collect the data. It was Multi-factor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) 5X (shorter-version) made by Bass and Avolio (1995). It was used to measure the Transformational Leadership, Transactional Leadership and Laissez faire leadership. A few modifications were made in the items of the above mentioned questionnaire to validate it for the school heads of Pakistan. Descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were applied to analyze the data. The results showed that transactional leadership style is emerging as the most popular style of leadership among the school administrators as compared to the transformational and laissez faire leadership styles. It was also found that female administrators are more transactional leaders as compared to the male administrators.

Key words: transformational leadership, transactional leadership, laissez-faire leadership.

Many schools have been facing challenges lately in the name of reforms, transforming their governing bodies and organizational structures, and binding themselves to the community influence which has made them more accountable so as to corroborate their standards for the content and performance. It has introduced many adaptations in teaching and learning approaches (Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbech, 1999).

All of these challenges have brought reforms to the schools. These reforms are referred to as its problems for change and modification of leadership in the schools as it has the capacity for restructuring high level educational bindings among teachers, educators and instructors in the complex and unplanned nature of the school reforms. It will not only foster growth in the capacities of the teacher but also provide them a chance to respond positively to the change agenda (Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbech, 1999).

According to (Adeyemi & Bolarinwa, 2013) Leadership is an art of processing and influencing people so that they may be able to struggle vigilantly towards the achievement of their goals. Ample studies have been found that exhibit the significance of profound managerial leadership practices, critical to establish an effective organization (Lussier & Achua, 2015).

Transformational leadership can be segregated into ideal leadership characteristics, idealized subjective behaviors, encouraging inspiration, and logical inspiration. Schools are facing many challenges to restructure their mechanisms, improve their governance systems, open themselves up under the influence of the community, establishment of accountability mechanism, clarify the standards for performance and content, and introduce the changes in teaching learning approaches (Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbech, 1999). Restructuring mechanism challenges have become the reasons to exercise the transformational leadership style in the school. This factor has the ability to create high level of commitment among the teachers and staff to face the challenges of complex and uncertain nature of school reforms agenda. This may be helpful for the teachers to foster growth in the capacities teachers must develop to respond positively (Leithwood Jantzi & Steinbech, 1999).

Leadership is seen as the sensitive process of influencing the followers to strive willingly to achieve the set goals of the school (Adeyemi & Bolarinwa, 2013). An extensive literature review demonstrates that powerful leadership and management practices are very critical to create a sound organizational system (Lussier & Achua, 2015).

The leaders, who practice the transformational approaches and have keen interest in building an organization effectively, must share their vision, and provide an opportunity to their staff to build the school culture necessary for the ongoing streamlining efforts in the schools (Leithwood & Sun, 2012). To handle the challenges like risk management,

uncertainty, and ambiguity, the school leadership must play a prominent role. In this regard the currently best educated students are the best employees or workers of tomorrow (Kanter, 2015).

Gemora (2014) emphasizes that a teacher is the immediate subordinate of school administrative in a school management system. Teachers under an effective leadership feel comfortable and take every available opportunity to adopt the changes rather than taking it as a threat towards their career. Therefore, a strong and up to the mark leadership, creates a balance between valuable administrative steps and effective use resources which are required to support changes.

The leader of an organization must be very confident, flexible and powerful (Antonakis, Avolio & Sivasubramaniam, 2003). Furthermore, they claim that dynamic leaders have a brilliant decision power and they take wise decisions which are based on their firm believes, rituals and values. In order to maintain the decorum of the leadership, they tend to be good motivators for their team members. Besides, they have a spark and energy to motivate their workers to perform well. They are more focused to their ultimate mission and vision to achieve all the set standards and goals. According to Nicholson (2007) leaders have the ability to openly accept innovative ideas and are open to accept the new challenges in order to meet the market and global needs. Simultaneously, the leaders are good role models as they act like mentors to teach and train their staff for better professional expertise.

According to Burns (1978) rewards and incentives play a key role in the motivational level of the employees. The best achievers of the school objectives receive good rewards and incentives (Antonakis, Avolio & Sivasubramaniam, 2003). The transactional leadership style is classified into three main sub sets, namely; 1) contingent rewards, 2) management by exception (active), 3) management by exception (passive). Contingent rewards lead to assigning work clearly, and rewarding leads to gaining the results (Nicholson, 2007). Leaders who intervene in the matter when problem occurring in an organization are called management by exception (passive) while the leaders who maintain the standards of the work activities lead to management by exception (active) (Antonakis, Avolio & Sivasubramaniam, 2003).

The leader who adopts a laissez-faire leadership style to exercise his powers to control the followers, has little control over the followers as compared to the leaders adopting transformational and transactional leadership styles. They give complete freedom to their followers to carry out their assigned work without any proper direction (Wu & Shiu, 2009).

Correlation of leadership Styles and Organizational Outcomes

Snodgrass and Schachar (2008) in their studies of several different organizations found out that both transformational leadership and transactional leadership styles clearly correlate with the organizational consequences. Many other studies have shown the same conclusion that transformational leadership is completely correlated with the efficiency of various organizations (Avolio, Bass & Zhu 2004; Dumdum, Lowe & Avolio, 2002). Studies of Michigan State University as well as Ohio State University, the Managerial Grid, and the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDO), (Bryant, 2002) are some other most important works on leadership styles.

In addition to these, many other research works (Snodgrass & Schachar, 2008) also confirm that the followers feel more satisfied and work more effectively under a transformational leadership as compared to a transactional style of leadership. It is also concluded that transformational leadership has a considerably greater effect in envisaging the contentment of the workers with their leader than under a transactional leadership (Bass, Avolio, Jung & Berson, 2003) Similarly, Koh, Steers & Terborg (1995) have proved that the workers' sense of belonging is strengthened, their needs for self-actualization are fulfilled and their productivity is increased by transformational leadership. This is a clear indication of the employees' inclination towards transformational leadership rather than towards transactional or laissez faire styles of leadership.

Likewise, Wu and Shiu's (2009) research on the job satisfaction of foreign English teachers pointed out that transactional leadership is strongly and positively related to the job comfort. Moreover, transformational and laissez-faire leadership styles have modest effects on the job satisfaction of this group.

Thus there is no doubt that leadership plays the most important role in the accomplishments of an organization, as well as of higher learning institutions (Snodgrass & Schachar, 2008). It has noticed that a higher acceptance for complexity and uncertainty is required by the teacher-leaders because of their being the chief set of educationalists operational within a school setting (Louis and Miles, 1990). Besides, the teachers are the closest to their students, so they certainly are the greatest and the most important change managers. They are thus in a position to construct the specialized communities as well as work towards the improvement of the whole system (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2009).

Leadership Styles and Teachers

The greatest challenge at present for the school leaders is to expedite and assist teacher learning. Dearth of resources; financial as well as human, inadequate time, huge school campuses, huge numbers of students, negative experiences of the teachers and the location of the schools (urban, suburban or rural) are some of the major challenges faced by the school leaders today. Furthermore, making conventional teachers adopt new concepts is quite a difficult task as the teachers fear losing their jobs. Moreover, some school leaders also are scared of making the new teachers adopt the changes, as they are apprehensive of their departure from their schools. Nevertheless, effective school leaders have the abilities and the skills to utilize their own school resources to create plans and policies to enhance their teachers' learning in all sorts of working conditions and environments (Drago-Severson & Pinto, 2006).

Thus it becomes clear that the principals should have the ability to work with their teams to share their vision and make the structures and processes of the school fully aligned to it. Besides, they must also know how to communicate their vision of their schools to their teachers (Alexander, Rose & Woodhead, 1992).

Murphy and Louis (1999) identify the stipulated leadership roles for the improvement of organizational culture of different institutions. Senega (1990) further says that the leaders' roles should be divided among the workforce so that they may bring about a positive change in the institution. It has been observed that it is the need of the time to apply more than one leadership style in the institution according to the given situation for better teaching and learning (Pounder, Ogawa, & Adams, 1995; Leithwood & Duke, 1999; Leithwood et al., 2004).

Katzenbach and Smith (1993) believe in the teamwork of the employees. They believe in collaborative learning where teachers work together to learn from one another and bring about a unique change in the teaching-learning process. According to Murphy, 1992 teachers' interpersonal relationships should be enhanced not only with their colleagues but also with the students and parents at the same time.

Bogler (2001) also claims that the transformational leadership has positive effects on the teachers' performance in a school. Therefore, the principals must be good motivators to increase the efficiency of the teachers. Geijsel, Slegers, Leithwood and Jantzi (2002) laid a desirable emphasis on transformational leadership. Bringing the new teaching techniques to the classrooms will give effective results of classroom learning. For this purpose the teachers must be motivated and appreciated by the principals to increase the job commitment of the teachers.

For the enhancement of teaching and learning process in schools, the administrators should provide a flexible environment to the teachers in order to increase their job commitment. Therefore, these days transformational leadership is considered more effective rather than autocratic leadership. Njuguna, Nyamboga, Gwiyo, Waweru, Nyamweya and Gongera, (2014) observed that a missionary vision of the school should be adopted by the leader of the school. Hence, they believe on transformational leadership. Olaley (2010), Ibukun (1997), Leithwood, Tantz and Steinbach (1999) have clearly observed several tangible evidences and efficient effects of the transformational leadership not only on teachers but students as well (Ukeje, Akabogu & Ndu, 1992). Therefore, it is mandatory for every school leader to inculcate transformational leadership style for a better performance of the teachers. There is no doubt at all that the success of the administrators is highly dependent on the better performance of the teachers and students.

Pakistani Vision of Leadership

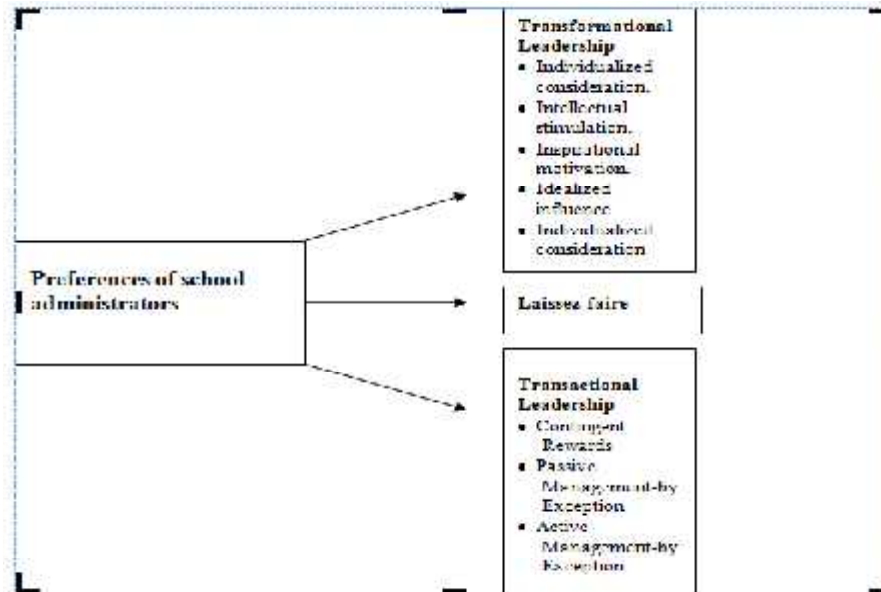
According to Ghavifekr and Ibrahim (2014) Pakistan is trying hard to fulfill the communication gap among different countries of the world as the world has become a global village. Different types of leadership have various roles to perform. Therefore, a good leadership of schools boosts the progressive level of education system and also enhances the visionary goals designed by the leaders. To compete with the world, Pakistan has also set various standards to meet the needs of the educational sector. To meet the challenges of today, many policies have been made and implemented to improve the quality of education and to provide an updated knowledge to the students for better grooming. The delegated duty of all the employees of school, tends to mobilize the smooth flow of teaching and learning in the classrooms. Hence, it has paved the way to meet the global standards of education in Pakistan as well.

Being the principal of a school, it's the demand of the time in order to cope with the changing environments. Principals not only perform their own complex duties but also align the workforce with the same spirit and mission. Kotter (1990) claims that the school principals must have some thought provoking skills and a spark to meet the changing trends of education. Besides, the principal should be flexible enough to provide innovative educational strategies for the improvement of learning among the students.

Research Design

The goal of this study was to investigate the preferred leadership style of the school administrators of Lahore, Pakistan. The research framework of the study is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2
Research framework of the study



(Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt & Van Engen, 2003).

The specific objectives of this study were to document:

1. School administrators' preferences for transformational, transactional and Laissez-faire leadership styles.
2. school administrators' preferences for different dimensions of transformational, transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles.
3. male and female school administrators' preferences for transformational, transactional and laissez faire leadership styles.

Consistent with the objectives of the study, five research questions were derived:

1. What are the school administrators' preferences for transformational, transactional and laissez faire leadership styles?
2. What are the school administrators' preferences for different dimensions of transformation, transactional and lassies faire leadership?
3. What are the male and female school administrators' preferences for transformational, transactional and laissez faire leadership styles?
4. What is the percentage of school administrators' preferences for transformational, transactional and laissez faire leadership styles?
5. What is the percentage of male and female school administrators' preferences for transformational, transactional and laissez faire leadership styles?

Method

Procedure

Existence of different styles in the leadership characteristics among school administrators were aimed to be documented by the researchers. The total population was all the schools of district Lahore which are in hundreds. As the characteristics of all the schools are the same. Thus keeping in view the uniformity in the school mechanics, convenience sampling of fifty school heads was drawn.

A five point Likert scale questionnaire was used to collect the data, including the adapted items from the existing literature (Bass & Avolio, 1997; Den Hartog, Van Muijen, & Koopman, 1997; Hinkin & Tracey, 1999; Avolio &

Bass, 2002) and from The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire - the MLQ 5X (short-version) made by Bass and Avolio (1995). A few changes were made to contextualize the items so as to validate it for the school heads of Pakistan. The researcher finalized an instrument consisting of 30 items for the three leadership styles which included 15 items on transformational leadership, 9 statements on transactional leadership and 6 statements on lassies-faire leadership.

The study was pilot tested and validated through expert opinions. The school administrators were asked to show the degree to which they agreed on each one of the given leadership characteristics. Each item was measured individually on 5 point Likert scale. The instrument had three defining constructs - Transformational, Transactional and Lassies-faire leadership which developed a model to figure out the effects of leadership. The results were calculated on percentage means for all items regarding the three leadership styles.

Results

Table 1

School administrators' indicated the extent to which they were engaged for three defining constructs of transformational, transactional and laissez faire leadership styles.

Styles of leadership	Total number of subjects	Items	Score range of each subject	Means of scores
Transformational	50	15	0-60	45
Transactional	50	09	0-36	22
Lassies faire	50	06	0-24	13

Table 1 represents the transformational leadership style of the school administrators' which ranged between the score 0 to 60 on 15 items of the questionnaire, and transactional leadership style was measured at 0 to 36 on 9 items, while lassies fair leadership style measured via 0 to 24 on 6 items of the scale. The same table also represents the mean score of the school administrators: indicating the qualitative measure of the perceptions of the school administration on transformational leadership practices which is 45. Transactional leadership style had the score 22 and the lassies-faire leadership style gained a score of 13. It is concluded that transformational leadership style is preferably practiced by the school administrators as compared to the transactional and the lassies-faire leadership styles. Most of the school administrators preferred to use transformational leadership style in their institutions.

Table 2

School administrators indicated the extent to which they were engaged for transformational leadership style.

Dimensions	Total number of subjects	Items	Score range of each subject	Mean score
Idealized influence attributes	50	03	0-12	9
Idealized influenced behaviors	50	03	0-12	7
Inspirational motivation	50	03	0-12	10
Intellectual stimulation	50	03	0-12	8
Individualized consideration	50	03	0-12	11

The data in the Table 2 indicates that the school administrators could take mean score 0-12 on each dimension of the transformational leadership style. The mean score of the school administrators' perception regarding every dimension of transformational leadership style is different. This table also shows the mean scores of different attributes of transformational leadership style. Transformational leadership styles' attribute; idealized influence has taken the mean score 9 on its items, and the idealized influence behavior has taken 7 mean score, inspirational motivation took 10, while the intellectual stimulation has 8 and the mean score on individualized consideration is 1.

Table 3*School administrators indicated the extent to which they were engaged for transactional leadership.*

Dimensions	Total number of subjects	Items	Score range of each subject	Mean score
Contingent rewards	50	03	0-12	10
Management by exception (active)	50	03	0-12	7
Management by exception (passive).	50	03	0-12	5

The data in Table 3 indicates that the school administrators could take the mean score 0-12 on each dimension of the transactional leadership style. The mean score of the school administrators' perceptions regarding every dimension of transactional leadership style is different. This table also shows the mean scores of different attributes of transactional leadership style. Transactional leadership styles' attributes contingent rewards have taken mean score 10 on its items, and the management by exception (active) has taken 7 as mean score, while management by exception (passive) took 5. It is concluded that the degree of school administrators' leadership behavior on different dimensions of transactional leadership is different. Moreover, school administrators' management by exception (passive) is less dominant as compared to contingent rewards and management by exception active.

Table 4*School administrators' indicated the extent to which they were engaged for Leadership styles*

Style of leadership	Total number of subjects	Items	Score range of each subject	Mean score
Lassies Faire	50	6	0-24	13

Table 4 demonstrates that score on the perception of school administrators regarding Laissez-faire leadership styles. The mean score of the school administrators for Laissez-faire leadership style is 13.

Table 5*Male and female school administrators indicated the extent to which they were engaged for transformational, transactional and laissez faire leadership styles*

Style of leadership	Total number of subjects		Items	Score range of each subject	Mean scores of each subject	
	Male	Female			Male	Female
Transformational	23	27	15	0-60	52	38
Transactional	23	27	09	0-36	20	24
Lassies faire	23	27	06	0-24	14	12

Table 5 demonstrates that there is a huge variety and differences in the perceptions of male and female school administrators regarding leadership styles. The mean score of the male school administrators for transformational leadership style is 52 as compared with the mean score of female, which is 38. The higher mean score of male school administrators show that male school administrators preferred transformational leadership style more than the female school administrators. On the contrary, for transactional leadership style, the mean score of female administrators was higher in comparison with the male school administrators.

Females' score here is 24 whereas the male score is 20. This difference shows that the female school administrators are more inclined towards transactional leadership style than that of the male school administrators. Lastly, for Lassies Faire leadership style again male school administrators have a higher mean score that is 14 while the

female school administrators have the mean score 12. This higher mean score of the male school administrators indicate that male school administrators support Laissez Faire leadership style more in comparison with the female school administrators.

Table 6

Percentages of school administrators indicated the extent to which they were engaged for transformational, transactional and laissez faire leadership styles

School administrators	Total number of subjects	Transformational style	Transactional style	Laissez-faire style
Total	50	23	15	12
Percentages		46%	30%	24%

Table 6 demonstrates that there is a huge variety and differences in the perceptions of school administrators regarding transformational leadership style, transactional leadership style and Laissez-faire leadership styles, and out of 50 respondents, 46% school administrators demonstrated transformational leadership style, and 30% demonstrated transactional while only 24% demonstrated laissez-faire leadership style. It is concluded that more dominant leadership style among school administration is transformational leadership style as compared to the transactional leadership and laissez faire leadership styles.

Conclusions

Thus the most significant conclusion drawn from the study is that in Lahore, school administrators tend to employ transformational leadership style. Many conclusions can be made about the nature of transformation in contrast with the school administration. This study provided empirical results for the style of transformational leadership and its several amplitudes. It proved that the most prevalent style among the school administrator as correlated to those of the transactional and laissez faire leadership styles. The results of the study showed that the male school administrators are more dominant as compared to the females on transformational leadership style. On the other hand female school administrators are more effective than the males in transactional leadership.

Suggestions and Recommendations for Further Research

A sample consisting of a larger number of public and private sector school administrators should be consulted for further research in this field, in order to discover how their leadership behaviors can be improved through leadership training. This can be achieved through up to date special training programs designed especially for this purpose and meeting the existing global standards.

The findings of the present study indicate the presence of transformational leadership style among the school administration of Lahore which are in line with the previous studies such as Avolio, Bass & Zhu, (2004). This shows a positive correlation of transformational leadership with organizational effectiveness. This style should be improved further and female school administrators should be given due attention in this regard, so that they are also able to improve their leadership styles vis-à-vis their male counterparts. Therefore transformational approaches need to be advocated for an effective management of all the school systems in Pakistan also.

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Received: September 1st, 2015

Revision Received: May 24th, 2016