

## Leadership Styles and Employees Performance: Moderating Role of Cognitive Style Indicator

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### Abstract

*The aim of this study is to find the moderating role of cognitive style indicator which is used for decision making and problem solving on the relationship between transformational leadership styles and transactional styles and employees performance. Survey approach is used for data collection and total population for this study was 100 respondents out of which 70 completed questionnaires were collected back and used in the analysis. Correlation and hierarchical multiple regression is used for testing of hypotheses. Correlation results revealed that there is significant and positive relationship between transformational leadership transactional leadership and laissez faire and employees performance. While cognitive style does not acts as moderator on transformational leadership style but does acts as moderator on transactional leadership styles.*

**Keywords:** Transformational, Transactional, Laissez Faire, Knowing, Planning, Creating, Performance.

### Introduction

Organizations make different plans to improve their cultures sometimes in the shape of better salary structures and other benefits to improve the productivity of their employees (Nanjundeswaraswamy & Swamy, 2014). In addition, Assunta & Agostino (2007) suggested that organizations get improved performance through its quality of leadership and leadership play a very important role in making the reputation of any organization. However, in every organization many situations need careful decision making by its leadership. For this Allinson & Hayes (1996) introduced a decision making approach which is known as cognitive style index. Cognitive style index has two dimensions one is analytical which refers to rational decision making while second one is intuition which refers to decision making on the behalf of experience and judgments. Later on Cools & Van Den Broeck (2007) splitted analytical style into three more dimensions i.e. knowing style, planning style, and creating style to enhance the capability of decision making of leaders and followers as well. Therefore, this study used cognitive style indicator as a

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moderator on the relationship between leadership styles and employee performance.

## **Literature Review**

### *Employee Performance*

Fiedler & House (1988) suggested that effectiveness of any organization's employees is mainly dependent on the quality of its leadership. Leaders influence the behavior of employees towards the work to accomplish the tasks effectively. Leadership has a potential impact on employees' performance (Cummings & Schwab 1973). Various studies demonstrated that leadership styles influence performance and that transformational leadership styles have greater impact on performance than transactional and laissez faire leadership styles (Burns 1978; Bass 1990; Hater and Bass 1988; Howell and Avolio 1993). Kirkpatrick and Locke (1996) identified over 35 different studies and find out positive relationships between leadership and performance. Transformational leadership and its facets have been associated with positive impact in individual's performance in a variety of meta analyses (Lowe et al., 1996), historical archival studies (House et al., 1991), laboratory experiments (Howell & Frost 1989; Kirkpatrick & Locke 1996), field experiments (Barling et al., 1996), and field studies (Baum et al. 1998; Curphy 1992; Hater and Bass 1988; Howell & Avolio 1993; Keller 1992). Different studies have continued to assert the significant and positive relationship between leadership and performance at various levels (e.g., Dumdum et al. 2002; Dvir et al. 2002; Howell et al. 2005).

### *Leadership Styles Definitions*

But later Bass and Avolio (2002), developed a model of full range leadership and combined the different leadership characteristics/styles in one model and now this model has been the subject of extensive research ever since.

### *Transformational Leadership*

Transformational leadership also known as charismatic leadership, in this style of leadership leaders inspire their followers and bring positive changes in their personalities with the help of their own charismatic personalities (Bass & Avolio 2002). According to Bass (1998) transformational leadership has five constructs i.e. i) idealized influence, ii) idealized attitude, iii) intellectual stimulation, iv) inspirational motivation, and v) individualized consideration.

### *Transactional Leadership*

Transactional leadership promotes compliance by followers through both rewards and punishments. In this, leaders motivate employees in exchange of some rewards to achieve organizational objectives.

According to Bass (1985) transactional leadership three constructs i.e. i) contingent rewards ii) management by exception active, and iii) management by exception passive.

#### *Laissez Faire Leadership*

According to Bass (1990) in laissez faire leadership, leaders believe that employees excel when they are left alone to respond to their duties in their own ways. Laissez faire leadership is the opposite of authoritarian approach.

#### *Cognitive Style Indicator*

Basically cognitive style is a decision making criteria of a person in which a person collects data and transforms this data into information (Allinson and Hayes, 1996). According to Mughal et al (2017), cognitive style is a process of systematically getting data and then transforming that data into information. Cognitive style indicator is developed by Cools & Van Den Broeck (2007) and according to them cognitive style indicator has three dimensions which are as under;

#### *Knowing Style*

In knowing style of cognitive style indicator, a person makes accurate decisions through proper analysis and logical arguments or on the basis of rational thinking (Cools & Van Den Broeck, 2007).

#### *Planning Style*

According to Cools (2007) with this style of cognitive style indicator, people make quick decisions because they want to shorten uncertainty that surrounds their decision making process as this confronts them with many doubts.

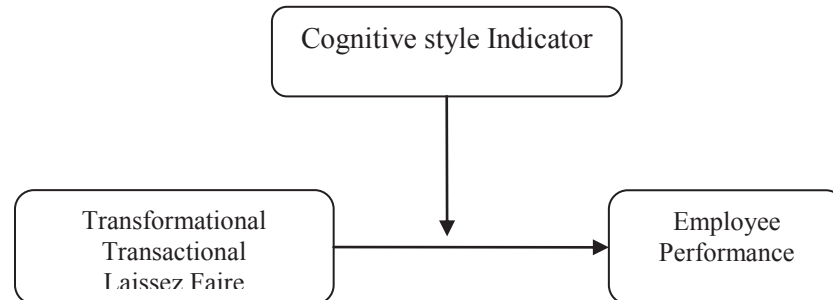
#### *Creating Style*

Individuals, who have creating style, make decisions on the basis of their own intuition and gut feelings and they use data and information in the second phase (Cools and Van Den Broeck, 2007).

*H1: Transformational transactional and laissez faire styles are positively correlated with knowing planning creating styles and performance.*

*H2: knowing style moderates relation between transformational style and performance.*

*H3: Knowing style moderates relation between transactional style and performance.*



*Figure 1: Theoretical Framework*

### Research Methods

Survey approach is used in this paper to collect the data. Close ended questionnaires are used as instrument for data collection. The population of this study was 100 lecturers from public and private degree awarding institutions. non probability purposive sampling technique was used for sample size. Out of 100, 70 complete questionnaires were collected back and used in the analysis.

To test the reliability cronbach alpha was checked. Demographic attributes of the respondents are also displayed in the paper. And to test the hypotheses correlation analysis and in correlation analysis bivariate correlation was used. Pearson product correlation is checked because data was normal. The value of correlation was between -1 to +1.

Instruments are all adopted from different sources. The questionnaire of full range leadership model was adopted from Bass and Avolio (2002). It has 45 items, 20 items for transformational leadership styles i.e. IIA, IIB, IC, IS, IM, while for transactional leadership it has 12 items for CR, MEA, MEP, and for laissez faire it has 13 items. It was measure on 0 = Not at all, 1 = Once in a while, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Fairly Often & 4 = Frequently, if not always likert scale. And questionnaire on cognitive style indicator was adopted from Cools (2007) which has 18 items, 4 items for knowing style and 7 items for planning style while other remaining 7 items for creating style and was measure on 1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree & 5 = Strongly agree likert scale. The third questionnaire on quality of work was adopted from Steffgen et al (2015) and it has 21 items, 6 items for satisfaction and respect, 3 items for communication & feedback, 2 for cooperation, 2 for appraisal, 5 for mobbing, and 3 for mental strain at work. This questionnaire was measure on two different likert scales. For first four facets which are (satisfaction and respect, communication & feedback, cooperation and appraisal) we used likert scale as 1 = Not at all satisfied,

2 = Slightly satisfied, 3 = Moderately satisfied, 4 = Very satisfied & 5 = Extremely satisfied. And for second two facets which are (mobbing & mental strain at work) we used likert scale as 1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Often & 5 = Always.

Table 1 Demographic Characters

Variable	Description	N	%age
Sector	Public	53	75.71
	Private	17	24.29
Designation	Lecturer	46	65.71
	Assistant Professor	19	27.14
	Associate Professor	4	5.71
	Professor	1	1.43
Qualification	Master	29	41.43
	MS/MPhil	30	42.86
	PhD	9	12.86
	Post Doc	2	2.86
Gender	Male	51	72.86
	Female	19	27.14
Length of Service	1-5	35	50
	6-10	22	31.43
	11-15	5	7.14
	16-20	6	8.57
	Above 20	2	2.86
	21-30	27	38.57
Age	31-40	34	48.57
	41-50	6	8.57
	51-60	3	4.29
	Above 60	0	0

In Table 1 demographic results are presented in which informants who participated in the study were 53 from public sector and 17 from private sector and the total sample was 70. Their designations are 46 lecturers, 19 Assistant professors, 4 Associate professors and only 1 Professor. Furthermore qualifications of the informants were i.e. 29 Masters, 30 MS/MPhils, 9 PhDs and the remaining 2 were Post Doc. Total 51 male and 19 female participated in the study and their length of service 35 were between 1 to 5 years, 22 between 6 to 10 years, 5 between 16 to 20 and 2 were above 20 years of service. Ages of the informants were 27 from 21 to 30 years, 34 were from 31 to 40 years of age, 6 were from 41 to 50 and 3 from 51 to 60 years of age.

#### Correlations

	Mean	TFL	TRL	LFL	knowin	plannin	creatin	performanc
	S.D				g	g	g	e
TFL	2.384	1						
	.805							
TRL	2.339	.663*	1					
	.723	*						

LFL	2.451 .672	.706*	.780*	1				
knowing	3.967 .891	.313*	.100	.194	1			
planning	3.973 .745	.184	-.066	.094	.788**	1		
creating	3.924 .628	.079	-.115	-.031	.696**	.744**	1	
performance	3.188 .612	.417*	.440*	.509*	.257*	.123	.151	1

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

From the above Table it is noted that for lecturers transformational leadership style mean is recorded as ( $M= 2.384$ ,  $S.D= 0.805$ ) similarly for Lecturers in Public and Private universities in KPK transactional leadership style mean is recorded as ( $M= 2.339$ ,  $S.D = 0.723$ ). And Laissez faire leadership mean is recorded as ( $M= 2.451$ ,  $S.D= 0.672$ ) While for lecturers with knowing style of cognitive style indicator mean is recorded as ( $M= 3.967$ ,  $S.D=0.891$ ). And planning style mean is recorded as ( $M= 3.973$ ,  $S.D=0.745$ ). Similarly for lecturers who has creating style of COSI mean is recorded as ( $M=3.924$ ,  $S.D=0.628$ ). And at the last performance of the lecturers both public and private universities in KPK mean is recorded as ( $M=3.188$ ,  $S.D=0.612$ ).

The Pearson correlation moment between transformational leadership and transactional leadership is recorded moderate and positive but significant i.e.  $r = 0.663$ ,  $p < 0.05$ , further examination of results revealed that relationship between transformational and laissez faire is recorded as positive and highly significant i.e.  $r = 0.706$ ,  $p < 0.05$ . the Pearson correlation moment between transformational leadership and knowing style is recorded positive and significant i.e.  $r = 0.313$ ,  $p < 0.05$ . Pearson correlation moment between transformational leadership and planning style i.e.  $r = 0.184$ ,  $p > 0.05$ . Similarly Pearson correlation moment between transformational leadership and creating style i.e.  $r = 0.079$ ,  $p > 0.05$ . While Pearson correlation between transformational leadership and performance i.e.  $r = 0.417$ ,  $p < 0.05$ .

Further examination of results revealed that Pearson correlation moment between transactional leadership style and laissez faire is recorded high, significant and positive i.e.  $r = 0.780$ ,  $p < 0.05$ , while Pearson correlation moment between transactional leadership style and knowing style is recorded weak and insignificant i.e.  $r = 0.100$ ,  $p > 0.05$ . similarly correlation between transactional leadership style and planning style is found neative and insignificant i.e.  $r = -0.066$ ,  $p > 0.05$ , while relationship between transactional leadership and creating style is  $r = -$

.115,  $p > 0.05$  but relationship between transactional leadership style and performance is found significant positive i.e.  $r = 0.440$ ,  $p < 0.05$ .

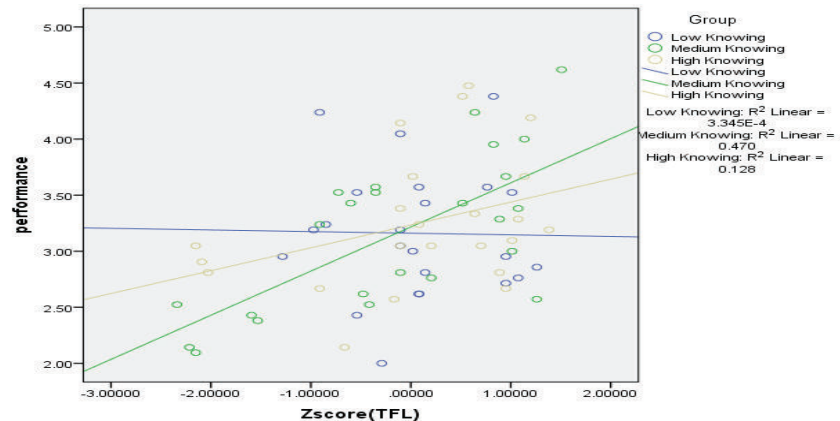
Further examination of results revealed that Pearson correlation moment between laissez faire is recorded as positive significant and moderate i.e.  $r = 0.509$ ,  $p < 0.05$ .

Further analysis was conducted using hierarchical multiple regression suggested by Aiken and West (1991). Researcher has used hierarchical regression because new variable called interaction term is created. So first variables were mean centered i.e. mean of the variable is deducted from the variable. Then multiplied to create interaction term. In first Model 1 transformational leadership and performance were entered in the regression equation. For respondents transformational leadership shows variance upon performance i.e.  $R^2 = 0.174$ , it means that transformational leadership shows 17.4% variance upon performance. Model fitness was checked through  $F = 14.34$ ,  $p = 0.000$ , while beta value  $\beta = 0.417$ ,  $p < 0.05$ .

In model 2 along with transformational leadership style moderator knowing style is also added in second regression equation. It is noted that in this model  $R^2 = 0.192$ , it means that transformational leadership shows 19.2% variance upon performance and  $R^2$  change = 0.018, it means that knowing style brings/shows 1.8% variance upon transformational leadership style and performance. Model fitness was checked through  $F = 7.952$ ,  $p = 0.002$ , while beta value  $\beta = 0.374$ ,  $p < 0.05$ , also  $\beta = 0.140$ ,  $p > 0.05$  for knowing style is recorded.

In Model 3 along with transformational leadership and knowing style interaction term is added in third regression equation. And it is noted that  $R^2 = 0.192$  it means that transformational leadership shows 19.2% variance upon performance and  $R^2$  change = 0.000 it means that interaction term brings 0% variance upon transformational leadership style and performance. Model fitness was checked through  $F = 5.227$ ,  $p = 0.003$ , while beta value  $\beta = 0.375$ ,  $p < 0.05$ , also  $\beta = 0.140$ ,  $p > 0.05$  and  $\beta = -0.014$ ,  $p > 0.05$  for interaction term is recorded. So there is no moderation in this case.

DV	IV	R	R <sup>2</sup>	AdjR <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$	F	Sig	$\beta$	Sig
Performance	Constant	.417	.174	.162	.174	14.34	0.000		
	TFL							.417	0.000
Performance	Constant	.438	.192	.168	.018	7.952	0.001		
	TFL							.374	0.002
	Knowing							.140	.231
Performance	Constant	.438	.192	.155	0.000	5.227	0.003		
	TFL							.375	.002
	Knowing							.134	.298
	Interaction1							-	.911
								.014	



### Interaction

A group variable is created and then splitted into three more groups as suggested by Aiken and West (1991). Then graph shown in Figure 1 was taken which shows the interaction between transformational leadership and performance and knowing style. The group shows low knowing style in blue color, medium knowing style in green color and high knowing style in yellow color.  $R^2$  for low knowing style is 3.34, when it's under root is taken its correlation is found to be 1.827, with transformational leadership and performance. The  $R^2$  for medium knowing style is found to be 0.470 where it correlates with transformational leadership and performance at 0.685. And  $R^2$  for higher knowing style is found 0.128 where it correlates at 0.357 between transformational leadership and performance.

DV	IV	R	R <sup>2</sup>	AdjR <sup>2</sup>	ΔR <sup>2</sup>	F	Sig	β	Sig
Performance	Constant	.440	.193	.181	.193	16.298	.000		
	TRL							.44	.00
Performance	Constant	.489	.239	.216	.046	10.532	.000		
	TRL							.41	.00
Performance	Knowing							.21	.04
	Constant	.496	.246	.212	.007	7.194	.000		
	TRL							.41	.00
	Knowing							.19	.08
	Interaction1							-	.42
								.08	

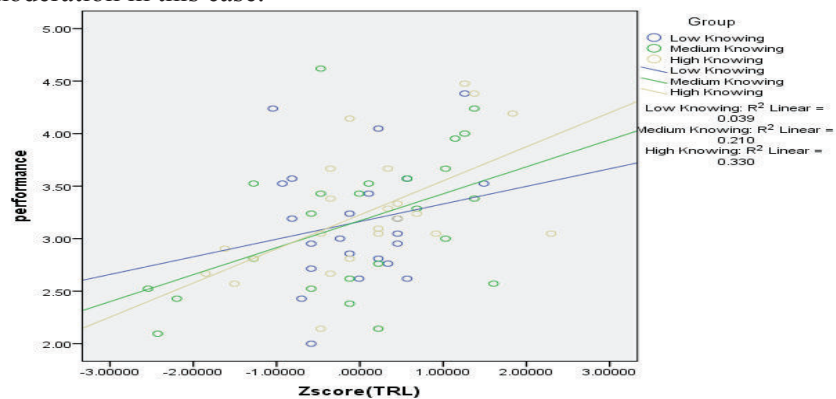
In this table Model 1 transactional leadership and performance were entered in the regression equation. For respondents transactional leadership shows variance upon performance i.e.  $R^2 = 0.193$ , it means that transactional leadership shows 19.3% variance upon performance.



Model fitness was checked through  $F = 16.298, p = 0.000$ , while beta value  $\beta = 0.440, p < 0.05$ .

In model 2 along with transactional leadership style moderator knowing style is also added in second regression equation. It is noted that in this model  $R^2 = 0.239$ , it means that transactional leadership shows 23.9% variance upon performance and  $R^2$  change = 0.046, it means that knowing style brings/shows 4.6% variance upon transactional leadership style and performance. Model fitness was checked through  $F = 10.532, p = 0.000$ , while beta value  $\beta = 0.418, p < 0.05$ , also  $\beta = 0.215, p < 0.05$  for knowing style is recorded.

In Model 3 along with transactional leadership and knowing style interaction term is added in third regression equation. And it is noted that  $R^2 = 0.246$  it means that transactional leadership shows 24.6% variance upon performance and  $R^2$  change = 0.007 it means that interaction term brings 0.7% variance upon transactional leadership style and performance. Model fitness was checked through  $F = 7.194, p = 0.000$ , while beta value  $\beta = 0.415, p < 0.05$ , also  $\beta = 0.192, p > 0.05$  and  $\beta = -0.088, p > 0.05$  for interaction term is recorded. So there is low moderation in this case.



This graph shows the interaction between transactional leadership and performance and knowing style. The group shows low knowing style in blue color, medium knowing style in green color and high knowing style in yellow color.  $R^2$  for low knowing style is 0.039, when it's under root is taken its correlation is found to be 0.197, with transactional leadership and performance. The  $R^2$  for medium knowing style is found to be 0.210 where it correlates with transactional leadership and performance at 0.458. And  $R^2$  for higher knowing style is found 0.330 where it correlates at 0.574 between transactional leadership and performance.

### Discussion and Conclusion

In twenty first century organizations have lot of problems among those problems there is an issue of performance of followers which is affected by their leaders. There are leaders who can motivate employees to achieve their targets well on time while if there is no motivation from leaders then it is impossible to increase the performance of employees. This research project has shed light on the leadership styles of management in Pakistan organizations and performance of the followers also results of cognitive style indicator used for decision making and problem solving are also reported.

Cognitive style indicator given by Cools (2007) for decision making and problem solving is used as moderator. The purpose of moderator is to increase or enhance the strength of relationship between leadership styles and employees performance. It was crucial to add cognitive style indicator as moderator because leaders have to make decision in organizations at every step and if decision is made right it will increase reputation and performance of followers as well as organization but if decision made by leaders is not correct it will harm the organizations as well as followers. So cognitive style introduced by Cools (2007) Allinson and Hayes (1996) and used by Busari (2011) and Mughal, Busari, Saeed (2017), Busari and Mughal (2017), Mughal and Busari (2015) and Busari et al (2017) was used in this study.

The first hypotheses was to check the relationship between leadership styles and performance si from the correlation results it is found that transformational leadership styles, transactional leadership styles and laissez faire have significant and positive relationship with employees performance. These results are in line with the previous results of Jian, Zhao and NI (2017) conducted study on leadership styles and employees performance and found that there is relationship between these two variables and performance of employees is influenced by transformational leadership styles, Similarly Jyoti and Bhau (2015) conducted study on impact leadership styles and performance with moderating effect of Leader member exchange and found that there is impact of transformational leadership styles and performance employees. Burn (1978) suggested that leaders acts as change agents to bring their followers at position of leaders and behaviors of leaders are linked with cognitive and behavioral aspects. So on the basis of above discussion our first hypotheses is accepted.

Second hypotheses was developed to measure the moderating effect of cognitive style indicator on the relationship between transformational leadership styles and transactional leadership styles on performance suggested by Mughal and Busari (2015), Busari, Mughal,

Khan, Rasool and Kiyani (2017) . this decision making cognitive style is used because we want to know that why managers having same positions and same benefits but make different decisions and solve problems in different manners. Moderation method introduced by Aiken and West (1991) and Field (2013) was used. It is found that when interaction term of transformational and knowing style was created and entered in the regression equation it is noted that in second step moderator Knowing was added  $r$  square changes but in third step there is no change in the  $r$  square but interaction term was found insignificant but it changes the direction of relationship between transformational leadership styles and performance before moderation it was positive but now it is negative. Similarly its interaction plot was created by creating a group having three level low, moderate and high decision making cognitive style. It is found that medium level of knowing decision making style correlates highly on the relationship between transformational leadership and performance. Similarly transactional leadership style was used with knowing style and found that yes it does act as a moderator because  $r$  square changes in model 2 and model three although the interaction term is insignificant and  $r$  square change is very low i.e. 0.007 but knowing decision making style does acts as moderator. So hypotheses two is rejected and hypotheses three is accepted.

There are few implications and contributions of this study. First this study has added first time knowing, planning and creating style as moderator in the theory of leadership and performance. Second this study is the first study conducted in Pakistan perspective using cognitive style as moderator.

Also this study has validated the instrument of cognitive style indicator in the Pakistan culture because it was developed and validated in European culture and there was intense need to validate this scale in Pakistan perspective. So this study has validated this instrument. Second this study has used moderator in the relationship between transformational leadership style and transactional leadership styles. It was noted and suggested that managers and leaders in Pakistan should focus on the awareness of the cognitive style for making decision and problem solving. It will help managers to know how to make decision and whether they are rational thinkers or not. It is also suggested that in Pakistan transactional leadership styles are adopted that is leaders provide rewards to followers and get their work done but transformational leadership style is ignored so this needs focus of the leaders to follow transformational leadership style so it can be used in Pakistan organizations settings. These results are in line with the previous studies conducted by Jyoti and Bahu (2015) used LMX as

moderator between transformational transactional leadership and performance. Also Jiang et al (2016) reported that transformational leadership styles if used by leaders it can encourage the followers to bring new ideas and also it help employees to come with novel ideas and when new ideas will come and new ways of making decision and problem solving would be used it will increase performance and hence it is believed that when employees are allowed to take part in decision making process in the organizations it will increase their satisfaction from job and motivate them to increase their productivity.

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